

A Trauma Perspective of the Redaction of the Poor at the end of Book I (Pss 3-41) and Book II (Pss 42-72) of the Psalter¹

ALPHONSO GROENEWALD (UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA)

ABSTRACT

In a recent article published Willie Wessels reflects on caring for the poor and according to him the Hebrew Bible has a clear position regarding the question of the poor and the needy. There are a number of words which are used in Hebrew to refer to the poor and to the needy. In the first part of this article a brief overview will be given of the terms used for the poor in the Psalter. This overview forms the background to a discussion in the second part of the redaction of the poor occurring at the end of Book I (Pss 3-41) and Book II (Pss 42-72). In the final part of this contribution a trauma perspective of the redaction of the poor in the Psalter is given. This redaction of the Psalter is essentially a record of the broken and the marginalized within the Judean society. The most important task of this theology of the "piety of the poor" was to restore dignity as well as hope to the oppressed victims of the social crisis.

KEYWORDS: Psalms; Piety of the Poor; Trauma Hermeneutics

A INTRODUCTION

In a recent publication Willie Wessels² reflects on caring for the poor from the perspective of the book of Jeremiah. He states that the Hebrew Bible has a clear position regarding the question of the poor and the needy. He cites the following questions regarding the position and treatment of the poor and the needy: "Are marginal people to be utilised or ignored, depending on their economic potential,

* Submitted: 22/12/2018; peer-reviewed: 02/01/2019; accepted: 09/01/2019. Alphonso Groenewald, "A Trauma Perspective of the Redaction of the Poor at the end of Book I (Pss 3-41) and Book II (Pss 42-72) of the Psalter," *Old Testament Essays* 31 no. 3 (2018): 790-811. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17159/2312-3621/2018/v31n3a22>.

¹ Cf. also Groenewald, *Psalms* 69, 144-153 and A. Groenewald, *In the light of the poor*, 425-441.

² This contribution is dedicated to a friend and colleague Prof Dr W. J. Wessels, whom I appreciate as a scholar of especially the prophetic corpus within the Hebrew Bible. Willie Wessels is well-known for the contributions he has made to the study of the book of Jeremiah. A recent publication links to the topic of this contribution, albeit from a Jeremiaic perspective: W.J Wessels, *To Know Yahweh is to Care for the Poor*, 1-10. Cf. also W. J. Wessels, *Prophets and Ethics* 181-196 in which he focusses on the passage Jer 5:26-29 and on the rights of the poor and the needy, who are the ones who had no protection and/or rights.

or embraced as fellow-members of the community and enabled to live their lives to the full? Are justice and generosity the guiding principles of our economic activity, or greed and jealousy?"³.

The reality of poverty which confronts us on a daily basis, constitutes a major problem for the world and for humanity. As the world becomes smaller and smaller, we are challenged by the extent of poverty and the existence of immense inequality⁴. According to Thomas Piketty⁵ "[t]he concrete, physical reality of inequality is visible to the naked eye and naturally inspires sharp but contradictory political judgements... Some people believe that inequality is always increasing and that the world is by definition becoming more unjust". He furthermore states that "[t]he new global economy has brought with it both immense hopes (such as the eradication of poverty) and equally immense inequities (some individuals are now as wealthy as entire countries)"⁶.

At least one out of every fifth person in our world today falls below the poverty line and it is even estimated that this percentage could reach 25% of the global population as world inequality is constantly increasing. The poor are more likely to become victims of natural disasters, famine or drought. In addition to suffering from a lack of income, poor people are often uneducated, often afflicted with physical illness and political oppression. The majority of the world's poor live in the rural areas and villages of their respective countries, while many have moved to the big cities in the hope to find a better life. However, only a handful will ever find it, as most of the poor now live in slums attached to these big cities⁷.

Scheffler⁸ emphasises that we should not pay attention to the question of the poor in the Psalms merely as a result of political correctness, but because the suffering brought about by poverty is degrading to the human nature and existence. Although it had already been a dream some 2,500 years ago, as expressed in for example the book of Deuteronomy (cf. 15:4-6.11)⁹, that there should be no poverty in an idealised community, poverty is still rife in the world today¹⁰. In the view of Hoppe "[t]hat some members of the one Israelite family

³ Wessels, *To Know Yahweh is to Care for the Poor*, 1.

⁴ Atkinson, *Inequality* 21-23; Piketty, *Economics of Inequality* 1, 5-25; Scheffler, *Poor in the Psalms* 1.

⁵ Piketty, *Capital* 2-3.

⁶ Piketty, *Capital* 471.

⁷ Blomberg, *Poverty nor Riches* 17. Cf. also Groenewald, *In the light of the poor* 425 and Kimilike, *Poverty in the Book of Proverbs* 10.

⁸ Scheffler, *Poor in the Psalms* 1.

⁹ Otto, *Deuteronomium*, 1337.1353-1353.1357-1360. See also Hoppe, *Poverty in the Bible* 30-32.

¹⁰ Scheffler, *Poverty Prevention in the Pentateuch* 6 and Scheffler, *Poor in the Psalms* 1. Cf. also Scheffler, *Deuteronomy* 15:1-18, 97-115.

were without the material blessings promised to all was simply not right in Deuteronomy's view, so the book calls for generosity toward the poor (15:11). Deuteronomy sees no positive value in poverty. It never characterizes the poor as those who have a close relationship with God because they are poor ... Clearly Deuteronomy reflects a socioeconomic situation that needed a more equitable distribution of resources, a goal that the book sees as attainable"¹¹.

However, regarding our academic debates on the issues of poverty Scheffler¹² reminds us to acknowledge the fact that we deliberate and write as being part of the elite, i.e. the non-poor¹³. Our theological reflections thus concern the life circumstances of people who have no voice themselves and who are not represented in the debate: "For the *real* poor are infants who cannot yet speak and who die of hunger every day with desperate mothers unable to feed them". According to Scheffler¹⁴ a simple logic justify this statement, namely that the psalms were written by the scribes and the poor, whether in ancient Israel or contemporary society, could neither read nor write as they were analphabetic. He therefore infers that the positive views expressed in the psalms in favour of the poor do not in the first instance represent the "voice of the poor" but are elitist scribal voices that took the plight of the poor to heart. In other words, we can identify the voices of the non-poor in the text, who, as they champion for the poor and express desperation on behalf of the poor, pretend to be poor themselves¹⁵.

In the following section a brief overview will be given of the "poor in the Psalter". This overview will form the background to a discussion of the redaction of the poor at the end of Book I and Book II. In the last part of this contribution some reflections of a trauma perspective of the poor in the Psalter will be given.

B The "poor" in the Psalter

The poor and/or poverty is referred to in ca. one third (50) of the Psalms¹⁶. The four main terms used for the "poor" in the Hebrew Bible (עָנִי, עָנָו, אֶבְיֹן, דָּל, רָשׁ)¹⁷

¹¹ Hoppe, *Poverty in the Bible* 31.

¹² Scheffler, *Poor in the Psalms* 1. Cf. also Kimilike, *Poverty in the Book of Proverbs* 11.

¹³ Scheffler, *Royal Care for the Poor* 160.

¹⁴ Scheffler, *Pleading Poverty* 194.

¹⁵ Scheffler, *Poor in the Psalms* 1.

¹⁶ See in this regard Groenewald, *Psalms 69*, 147-149.151-153 and Groenewald, *In the light of the poor* 428-431.433-436.

¹⁷ These terms have been discussed in detail in a number of publications. Cf. for example the following: Berges & Hoppe, *Arm und Reich* 11-14; Bremer, *Wo Gott sich auf die Armen einlässt* 318-325; Bremer, *Die Armentheologie als eine Grundlinie* 356-360; Gillingham, *Poor in the Psalms* 16; Mtshiselwa, *The Poor in the Psalms* 4-7; Ro, *Die sogenannte "Armenfrömmigkeit"* 113-126; Scheffler, *Poverty eradication* 131-132; Scheffler, *Poor in the Psalms* 4; Tucker, *Democratization and the Language of the*

are usually seen as references, in varying degrees, to those in society who are materially destitute¹⁸. It is though very difficult to distinguish the meanings inherent in these terms and therefore the context(s) in which they occur, should determine the meaning of the word¹⁹. Kraus²⁰, amongst others, attempts to consolidate all these different viewpoints and functions under one umbrella. Accordingly, the poor in the psalms are those who on the one hand are the materially poor and on the other hand are also the ones in need of justice to be done to them by God, and traumatised as a result of the experience of injustice²¹. Tucker's²² analysis indicates that in the majority of the Psalms the language used for the poor do not refer to a class of pious individuals, but it reasonable to accept that they refer to individuals who are economically poor. Therefore, they belong to the margins of society and live in a constant state of human degradation and traumatisation. One can thus assume that "[t]hey have no wealth or power, and thus live with the constant threat of oppression, abuse and injustice. Overlooking these conclusions in an attempt to identify a "poor group" fails to acknowledge the contexts from which much of the poor language appears to emerge"²³.

Reference has often been made to the Psalter as the prayer book of the poor, namely of the marginalised²⁴. In the Psalms God is portrayed as the saviour of the poor, their hope, their stronghold and liberator – whether these are prayers of an individual or prayers of the community²⁵. The high concentration of the term(s) for the "poor" in the Psalter, in relation to the rest of the books of the Hebrew Bible, indicates a profound affinity for the "poor" in the Psalter. According to Berges²⁶ this is an indication that the Psalter also must have undergone a redaction of the "theology of the poor". This is though not the only

Poor 167-169; Tucker, *A Polysemiotic Approach to the Poor* 425-427. See also Scheffler, *Poverty in the book of Proverbs* 484-485.

¹⁸ Tucker, *A Polysemiotic Approach to the Poor* 427 also identifies a second level of the poverty word field: דָּבַח ("crushed, oppressed"), עֲשׂוּקִים ("oppressed"), הֵלֵקָה ("helpless, unfortunate"), אֶלְמָנָה ("widow"), יָתוֹם ("orphan"). Cf. also J. Bremer, *Wo Gott sich auf die Armen einlässt* 318-325.

¹⁹ Scheffler, *Poverty Prevention in the Pentateuch* 2. See also Bremer, *Die Armentheologie als eine Grundlinie* 356: "Die Beschäftigung mit der Armentheologie der Psalmen weist schon deshalb Vielschichtigkeiten auf, da die Psalmen nicht in pauschaler Weise von "Armut" sprechen. Vielmehr werden sehr unterschiedliche armentheologische Akzente gesetzt und auf differenzierte Weisen zum Ausdruck gebracht".

²⁰ Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* 150-154.

²¹ Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* 152. Scheffler, *Poor in the Psalms* 4, however questions this attempt to systematise the different meanings of these concepts.

²² Tucker, *A Polysemiotic Approach to the Poor* 439.

²³ Tucker, *A Polysemiotic Approach to the Poor* 439.

²⁴ McPolin, *Psalms as Prayers of the Poor* 79.

²⁵ Hoppe, *Poverty in the Bible* 122.

²⁶ Berges, *De armen van het boek Jesaja* 14-15.19.

redaction the Psalter underwent, as Bremer²⁷ emphasises. Therefore, one should take care not to over-generalise in this regard, but to keep in mind the multi-layeredness of the different groups and books within the Psalter, as well the complexities of the contributions of different groups of tradents to the composition of the Psalter.

This high concentration of the language of the poor in the Psalter has convinced scholars in recent years to regard the Psalter more and more as the prayer and meditation book of the marginalised – in other words of those who had a critical view of the post-exilic temple aristocracy as well as their position of power²⁸. The supplicants of the psalms thus did not find protection in the cult first of all, but rather in the praises of the psalms which ascend to Yahweh, the king of the world, who had established his just rule on mount Zion²⁹.

The social and religious fragmentation which occurred within the Judaic society in the second half of the fifth century was the result of an economic crisis which, in all probability, gave rise to the formation of a specific piety within the marginalised and impoverished lower classes. There is enough evidence indicating the marginalisation of these poorer classes in society³⁰. According to Gerstenberger³¹ some biblical texts make it clear that during the Persian rule the gap between rich and poor was widening more and more. Given the financial needs of the Persian Empire taxes were collected mercilessly and more people sank into social misery (see Neh. 5:1-5). The people are lamenting the fact that the rulers drive their subordinates harshly in order to collect taxes for the Persian rulers. The ordinary people lament the fact that they should pawn their fields, their vineyards and their homes to get grain to stave off hunger (Neh. 5:3)³².

²⁷ In this regard Bremer, *Die Armentheologie als eine Grundlinie* 385 infers as follows: "Sie bezeugt dabei die Armentheologie als maßgebliche – nicht einzige! – theologische Aussage des vielschichtigen und komplexen "großen Hauses" Psalter". Janowski, *Ein Tempel aus Worten* 280 outlines an understanding of this metaphor of the "big house" with regard to the Psalter.

²⁸ Berges, *De armen van het boek Jesaja* 14-15.19.

²⁹ Berges, *De armen van het boek Jesaja* 15.

³⁰ Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion* 518-522.

³¹ Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period* 58.

³² See also Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period* 233 in this regard: "Such passages as Neh 5 and Lev 25 illustrate the situation and attest to the community's countermeasures to stem social impoverishment. The financial need of the Persian bureaucracies and armies was huge. At the latest since the imperial reform of Darius, the tax authorities, perhaps their private collectors, worked with amazing precision and severity. The people in the provinces suffered because of the fixed taxes and special obligations for the army and the administration. This resulted in the impoverishment of larger segments of the population, which, as experience shows, also yields gains for a narrower, collaborating elite stratum of the native population".

Often the rich and powerful use their dominance to exploit the weak and marginalised of society, as is portrayed by Psalm 10 in emotive language:

In arrogance the wicked persecute the poor –
 let them be caught in the schemes they have devised.
 For the wicked boast of the desires of their heart;
 Those greedy for gain curse and renounce the Lord (Yahweh).
 In the pride of their countenance the wicked say,
 "God will not seek it out";
 all their thoughts are, "There is no God." (Ps. 10:2-4 NRSV).

The subsequent verses dramatically put into words the immoral actions of some of the rich as they oppress the poor of the community (10:5-11). In this regard Gerstenberger³³ infers that other "psalms of the poor" (e.g. Pss 37; 49; 73) also contain highly poetical language as they broaden our perception of the "theology of the poor" in the Psalter. Passages like Nehemiah 5 and Leviticus 25 illustrate the situation very well and demonstrate the countermeasures undertaken by a community to reduce social impoverishment and the vulnerability of the weak³⁴.

This social split in the society caused the development of a specific kind of personal piety in these classes, namely the so-called "piety of the poor"³⁵. The most important task of this theology of the "piety of the poor", which was developed and practised in these communities, was to restore dignity as well as hope to the oppressed victims of the social crisis. This function of this theology explains why the social terms for "poor" also took on a religious undertone in the "piety of the poor". However, what is meant here is not a religious transfiguration of poverty, but religious compensation for a social lack³⁶. According to their own self-understanding, they were not on the periphery of the community, but they formed the core. This assumption gave them the power to assert themselves within the community of Judah, despite their social

³³ Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period* 233.

³⁴ Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period* 233.

³⁵ Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion* 518-522.

³⁶ In this regard Hoppe, *Poverty in the Bible* 122-123 formulates a warning as well: "The challenge for contemporary believers as they read the psalms is to keep in check the tendency to spiritualize its references to the poor in the attempt to appropriate these texts. But some interpreters insist that a spiritualization of poverty is evident in the psalms themselves". In this regard see Weiser, *Die Psalmen* 63 who interprets the 'ānī and the 'anāw/'anāwīm as the ones who are faithful to Yahweh and accordingly these terms have a liturgical context. He therefore translates these terms, traditionally translated as the "poor", as being "bent low" in the sense of standing before or bowing down in front of Yahweh, instead of referring to material deprivation ("... sind ebenfalls kultischen Ursprungs und als typischer Ausdruck der demütigen Beugung unter Jahwes Majestät und Forderung in äußerer und innerer Haltung der Anbetung... zu verstehen"). For him the social or economic understanding is only secondary in meaning.

marginalisation. They indeed even gained influence over the community as a whole with their "piety of the poor". This influence is, among other things, to be recognised in the redaction of the Psalter, namely a redaction characterised by the "theology of the poor"³⁷.

It has already been indicated before that it should be kept in mind that this is not the only redaction which the Psalter underwent. Furthermore, Johannes Bremer³⁸ also emphasises that one should take into account the differences regarding the concepts and their different emphases when one works with a "theology of the poor" in the Psalter. The "cries of the poor" should thus be heard in all their richness and in the diversity of their contexts³⁹. The focus in the subsequent section will be on the "redaction of the poor" as it occurs at the end of Book I (Pss 3-41) and the end of Book II (Pss 42-72).

C REDACTION OF THE POOR AT THE END OF BOOK I (Pss 3-41) AND BOOK II (Pss 42-72)⁴⁰

According to Zenger⁴¹ the first Davidic Psalter (Pss. 3-41) is fundamentally characterised by the so-called perspective of the "poor". However, in the second Davidic Psalter (51-72) this perspective occurs, for the first time, in the concluding group of Psalms 69-71.⁴² This perspective, however, is lacking in the Psalms 51-68. Noteworthy is the fact that this perspective is totally absent in Psalm 53, in spite of the fact that this psalm is a doublet of Psalm 14⁴³, which is regarded as a psalm of the poor. It seems to be that the perspective of the poor which occurs in Psalm 14:6⁴⁴, has been changed to a perspective of the trauma of war and persecution in Psalm 53:6⁴⁵. This conforms well to the assumption that Psalms 51-68 are rather characterised by the perspective of the traumatic experience of war and persecution⁴⁶. Psalm 14 belongs to a cluster of psalms of

³⁷ Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion* 522.

³⁸ Bremer, *Die Armentheologie als eine Grundlinie* 356-360.

³⁹ Tucker, *A Polysemiotic Approach to the Poor* 439.

⁴⁰ Compare also Groenewald, *Psalm 69*, 144-153; Groenewald, *In the light of the poor* 425-441 and Groenewald, *Psalm 69: A composition-critical contribution* 77-96.

⁴¹ Zenger, *Zur redaktionsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung* 195. Cf. also Hossfeld, *Die unterschiedlichen Profile* 63.

⁴² Cf. Zenger, *Zur redaktionsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung* 193 in this regard: "Die nach 65-68 folgende Komposition der Bittgebete 69-71 setzt sich einerseits von den vorangehenden Davidpsalmen durch die in ihnen auftretende 'Armenperspektive' ab, die andererseits in Ps 72 und vor allem im ersten Davidpsalter konstitutiv ist".

⁴³ See Zimmerli, *Zwillingpsalmen* 105.

⁴⁴ It reads as follows: "you would confound the plans of the poor, but the Lord is their refuge" (NRSV).

⁴⁵ This text reads as follows: "There they shall be in great terror, in terror such as has not been. For God will scatter the bones of the ungodly; they will be put to shame, for God has rejected them" (NRSV).

⁴⁶ Hossfeld, *Die unterschiedlichen Profile* 63.

the poor, viz. Psalms 11-14 which conclude the first section of Psalms 3-14 in the first Davidic Psalter⁴⁷. Roughly speaking, Psalm 53 occurs at the beginning of the second Davidic Psalter (51-71.72).

It has already been recognised by a number of scholars that Psalms 35-41 form the concluding section of the first Davidic Psalter⁴⁸. It seems that we encounter secondary additions in both Psalms 35 and 40, viz. 35:26-28 and 40:14-18. Noteworthy is the fact that these additions have a counterpart in the independent Psalm 70 – which occurs at the end of the second Davidic Psalter. It looks as if these additions in Psalms 35 and 40 are interdependent on Psalm 70 (this would imply that they are later than Psalm 70 and in all probability had this text as *Vorlage*⁴⁹). According to Hossfeld and Zenger⁵⁰ these additions to these two psalms (Pss. 35:26-28 and 40:14-18) can be ascribed to a post-exilic redaction of the poor who seems to have been responsible for a reworking of Psalms 35-41. These psalms are now characterised by a comprehensive interpretation of the existence of the poor ("Existenzdeutung des Armen")⁵¹. It has thus become clear that the concluding sections of both the first as well as second Davidic Psalter (i.e. 35-41 and 69-72) are characterised by a "theology of the poor"⁵².

The description of the affliction and traumatization of the supplicant(s) in Psalm 69 shares a number of commonalities with Psalms 35, 38 and 41⁵³. These psalms also witness to the persecution and subsequent traumatization as experienced by these supplicant(s). Over and above these references, they also

⁴⁷ Hossfeld & Zenger, "*Selig, wer auf die Armen achtet*" 34ff. See also Botha, *Pride and suffering of the Poor* 46-52.

⁴⁸ Cf. for example Bremer, *Wo Gott sich auf die Armen einlässt* 356-367; Bremer, *Eine "Armenredaktion" im 1. Davidpsalter?* 189-191; Gillingham, *The Levitical Singers* 45; Jacobson, *Imagining the Future* 239. In this regard Gillingham, *Psalms through the Centuries* 213 infers as follows: "All seven psalms are concerned in different ways with the fate of the poor, who are characteristically termed 'poor and needy' ('*ani we'ebyon*) as in 35:10; 37:14; and 40:17. The first and last psalms form 'bookends', on a shared theme: in Psalm 35 the enemies are those who once were friends (verses 13-14), and in Psalm 41 the suppliant feels betrayed by a 'familiar friend' (verse 9)".

⁴⁹ Cf. in this regard Braulik, *Psalm 40*, 221: "Ps 70 bildet somit die Vorform der Verse 40,14-18 ...". See also Hossfeld & Zenger, "*Selig, wer auf die Armen achtet* 32: "... 40,14-18 von jener redaktionellen Hand geschaffen wurde, die ihrerseits Ps 35 so bearbeitet hat, daß auch er nunmehr als ein "Armenpsalm" zu lesen ist, der zusammen mit Ps 40-41 einen über-greifenden Bogen bildet" and Gillingham, *Psalms through the Centuries* 379: "Psalm 70 is an independent psalm with a curious history. It has been appended to Ps. 40:1-12 where it assumes the name Yahweh, not Elohim, for God".

⁵⁰ Hossfeld & Zenger, "*Selig, wer auf die Armen achtet*" 23ff.

⁵¹ Hossfeld & Zenger, "*Selig, wer auf die Armen achtet*" 34.

⁵² Hossfeld, *Die unterschiedlichen Profile* 66f.

⁵³ Weber, *Werkbuch Psalmen* 313.

contain allusions to parallel rites of mourning, for example Psalms 35:13-14; 38:7; 69:11a-12b. We can furthermore add the parallel way in which the complaints about the constellation friend – enemy occurs in Psalms 35:11-18; 41:5-11 and 69:9ab. The depiction of affliction which is spread over a few psalms at the end of the first Davidic Psalter, is thus concentrated in one text at the end of book II, namely in Psalm 69. This Psalm thus shares commonalities with strategic psalms in the concluding section of the first Davidic Psalter (35-41), namely, with psalms which appear in the introduction, centre as well as the conclusion of this section⁵⁴.

Psalm 70 is, according to the statement contained in 70:6, *expressis verbis* a psalm of the poor ("But I am poor and needy⁵⁵; hasten to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay!"). This short psalm is characterised by two themes, viz. the themes of the enemies and of the poor. Both these themes occur extensively in Psalm 69, through which these two texts are closely linked to one another. Psalm 70 – which is a psalm of the poor – is followed by Psalm 71 which focusses more on the aspect of old age⁵⁶. When assessing the religious experience underlying this psalm, we are struck by the vulnerability (and subsequent traumatization) of the supplicant who believed that vicious enemies stalked his every move, but also by his exceptional confidence

⁵⁴ Hossfeld & Zenger, "*Selig, wer auf die Armen achtet*" 26-34.

⁵⁵ Cf. in this regard Gillingham, *Levites and the Editorial Composition 207* who infers as follows: "To see the Levitical singers as editors and compilers might also account for a fifth element in the Psalms: the references to the psalmists as 'poor and needy.' Sometimes this assumes a physical dimension, sometimes spiritual, and sometimes both. It is often found in those psalms questioning the value of cultic sacrifice: Psalms 40:18[17]; 69:34[33], and 140:13[12] are the best examples. So does this suggest a disenfranchised community living far from the Temple? It could just as easily be a term adopted by the Levitical singers, who had been divested of any priestly privileges and hence of the opportunity to live off the offerings brought to the Temple. They had no inheritance in the land, and their livelihood and lifestyle fits admirably the description of being 'poor and needy'. This is not to say the Levitical singers composed such psalms but rather that they sought to include them and set them in strategic places within the collections. For example, they seem to have deliberately placed royal psalms, which speak of those with power, authority, and privilege, alongside psalms of the poor and oppressed. Psalm 3 follows Psalm 2, 72 precedes 73, and 88 precedes 89. Similarly, Psalms 17/18, 21/22, 101/102, 109/110, and 143/144 fit this pattern. Such placements make clear that God is not only the defender of those in positions of power but also the protector of those who have no voice yet trust in God's deliverance".

⁵⁶ In this regard Hossfeld, *Die unterschiedlichen Profile 67* infers as follows: "In der Ausführlichkeit, mit der hier auf das Alter Bezug genommen wird, ist Ps 71 im gesamten Psalter einmalig ...". Weber, *Werkbuch Psalmen 322* raises the question whether the occurrences of Ps. 71 at the end of book II and Ps. 90 at the beginning of book IV (90-106) could reflect a specific redactional intention. Both psalms refer to old age as well as reflect on the life span of humankind, and both these psalms occur at strategic positions, viz. the transition from one book to another.

in the divine rescue⁵⁷. The elderly supplicant takes his whole life span into consideration. He, however, especially emphasises the continual praise of God, which is now defining his whole existence. Psalm 71 is closely linked to Psalm 70 by means of the lack of a superscription⁵⁸. This close link between these two texts is also strengthened by means of the connection of several words as well as parallel motifs occurring in both of them.⁵⁹ Both psalms refer to the enemies who are pursuing them, and both stress the aspect of shame and reproach when referring to these enemies. Psalm 71, however, is not only linked to the preceding text of Psalm 70, but also to some psalms occurring in the concluding section (35-41) of the first Davidic Psalter. Psalm 71 displays parallels to both Psalms 35 and 38; in any case, also to Psalm 40 – since 40:14-18 is related to Psalm 70⁶⁰. The occurrence of these parallels furthermore strengthens the assumption that the concluding section (69-71) of the second Davidic Psalter was intentionally reworked as well as put together by the redactors so that they could form the concluding section of book II, which has clear parallels to the concluding section of book I.

Psalm 72 – a royal psalm – concludes both the second Davidic Psalter (51-72) and book II (42-72)⁶¹. According to the text of Psalm 72 the sovereign authority unfolds in three different directions⁶²: 1) the king as judge and saviour of the poor (72:2-4.12-14)⁶³; 2) the king as the mediator of blessing for both the land and the people (72:5-7.15-17); 3) and finally, the king as the universal ruler over the whole of the earth (72:8-11)⁶⁴. In spite of all the similarities which exist

⁵⁷ Crenshaw, *The Psalms* 154.

⁵⁸ In this regard Weber, *Werkbuch Psalmen* 321-322 infers as follows: “Diese Überschriftslosigkeit, der Umstand, dass manche hebr. Handschriften Ps 71 zusammen mit Ps 70 als einzigen Psalm darbieten und die engen inhaltlichen Berührungen dieser beiden Psalmen ... äussert sich darin, dass in der hebr. Überlieferung hinsichtlich Ps 71 ein Schwanken zwischen Eigenständigkeit und Verbindung mit Ps 70 feststellbar ist”. Cf. also Crenshaw, *The Psalms* 153 and Declaissé-Walford, *The Meta-Narrative of the Psalter* 369.

⁵⁹ In this regard it can be referred to, for example, the following: the motif of “shame” (70:3f; 71:1.13.24); the ptc. pl. “those who seek” (שׁוֹמְרֵי – 70:3.5; 71:13.24); and the statements on redemption and salvation.

⁶⁰ For 71:8 see 40:4; 71:12 – 35:2.22; 71:13 – 35:4.26, 38:13, 40:15 – 70:3; 71:19 – 35:10; 71:24 – 35:28. See also Crenshaw, *The Psalms* 153.

⁶¹ Hoppe, *Poverty in the Bible* 123-124 and Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period* 358. Cf. also Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms* 2.9-10.311-316; Gerstenberger, *Psalms* (Part 2) 68 and Gillingham, *Psalms through the Centuries* 386-394.

⁶² In this regard see Zenger, “So betete David für seinen Sohn Salomo 65ff. Cf. also Hossfeld & Zenger, *Die Psalmen II*, 412f.

⁶³ Smith, *Canaanite Backgrounds* 48.

⁶⁴ Cf. also Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms* 314 who postulate as follows: “The juxtaposition of verses 1–4 and 12–14 concerning *care for the vulnerable by the regime*

between Psalms 71 and 72, the main link between these two psalms is the theme of the "poor"⁶⁵. If we thus consider the concluding colophon in 72:20⁶⁶ together with the superscription (72:1 – לְשׁוֹן דָּוִד), it seems that the elderly David here draws up a royal will for his son Solomon – in the form of a prayer of petition⁶⁷. Thematically it seems that this petition for justice for his son, as well as for his son's kingship, is actually a concretization of the objective which was formulated at the end of Psalm 71 (71:24)⁶⁸ – namely while praying to attest to the justice that he had experienced through salvation⁶⁹. The king, as receiver of God's

and verses 5–7, 8–11, and 15–17 envisioning extravagant *well-being for the regime* constitutes the central claim and affirmation of the psalm. These two accents are placed next to each other, but without any explicit connection. Without a clear link, however, we are surely free to conclude that it is *care for the poor* that becomes the basis for *economic prosperity* in the realm. The unstated but surely implied negative counterpoint is the recognition that neglect of the poor through economic indifference will inevitably lead to military failure and economic collapse. This link is elemental for a biblical understanding of royal practice and polity. What is outlined here in grand doxological fashion is made concrete in Jeremiah's oracle concerning monarchy, wherein the son Jehoiakim is accused of "unrighteousness" and "injustice" (Jer 22:13–14), whereas his father, Josiah, is celebrated as a king who did "justice and righteousness" toward "the poor and the needy." As a consequence of this policy, "it was well with him" (Jer 22:15–16). This link, generically asserted but connected to specific cases, is a prime claim of the Bible concerning the practice of public power".

⁶⁵ Gerstenberger, *Psalms (Part 2)* 65.

⁶⁶ It reads as follows: "The prayers of David son of Jesse are ended" (NRSV).

⁶⁷ Hossfeld & Zenger, *Psalmen 51-100*, 72. Cf. also Human, *An ideal for leadership* 665. According to Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms 313* "this psalm concludes Book II of the Psalter, after which the Psalter moves on in Book III to public trouble (Psalms 74, 79) and loss (Psalm 89), and in Books IV and V the praise of YHWH, making human kingship much less prominent".

⁶⁸ It reads as follows: "All day long my tongue will talk of your righteous help, for those who tried to do me harm have been put to shame, and disgraced" (NRSV).

⁶⁹ The preceding statements referring to David necessitate some remarks on, as well as clarification of the "Davidization" of the Psalter. This will, however, not be dealt with in great detail and a few short remarks will suffice (cf. Kleer, "*Der liebliche Sänger der Psalmen Israels*" for a detailed study of the Davidization of the Psalter). According to Kleer, *Der liebliche Sänger* 126 the beginning of the Davidization of the Psalter can be traced back to the identity crisis the Judaeans experienced during the exile (cf. also Zenger, *David as musician* 264ff.). In spite of this, David was still not portrayed as the author or poet of the psalms during this period. The starting point for this motif, in terms of tradition history, lies in the composition of the books of Samuel. They even portrayed the young shepherd boy David as a gifted musician at his first appearance (Mays, *David of the Psalms* 146ff.). But most importantly, the redactors of the books of Samuel presented the David Vita in the form of a psalm which was spoken by David (2 Sam. 22 = Ps. 18). According to Mays, *David of the Psalms* 148, this text is the earliest literary evidence of a connection between David and the psalms, and the only specific witness in the David story linked to that relationship. The redactors even

justice and righteousness (72:1)⁷⁰ and due to his divine commission, is regarded as a medium or agent who is responsible to concretise and to actualise God's justice; specifically God's justice for the poor⁷¹.

let him recite a poem as his last words before his death (2 Sam. 23:1-7). This conception of the books of Samuel was the impetus for the explicit, multi-staged Davidization of the Psalter. The notion stemming from the books of Samuel is that it was David who, in spite of being persecuted, still stood under God's protection und composed psalms – whether in the conflict with Saul or as the king in confrontation with his enemies and, specifically, when he was on the run from his son Absalom (cf. also Auld, *First and Second Samuel* 590-592.594-595). McKenzie, *King David* 26 infers as follows: "The story in Samuel-Kings is by far the most important of the three for our purposes. It contains the longest and most detailed account of David's life. It is also the source for most of the information about him in Chronicles and Psalms". Kleer, *Der liebliche Sänger* 126, infers that by means of the Psalter's Davidization "der Beter is eingeladen, mit David in eine Schicksalsgemeinschaft zu treten, so seine Not zu bewältigen und Hoffnung für die Zukunft zu schöpfen" (cf. also S.L. McKenzie, *King David*, 38ff regarding the Davidization of the Book of the Psalms). Thus, to pray and praise through the psalms is to speak the language of those who depend on and trust in the reign of Yahweh. The Davidic connection discloses that suffering borne in trust and hope is a suffering that has a place and role in this reign of Yahweh (Mays, *David of the Psalms* 155). In turn, David's life becomes an illustration for those who use the psalms of the way in which a life whose hope is in the reign of Yahweh is to be lived. See also Ballhorn, "Um deines Knechtes David willen" 20; Childs, *Psalm Titles and Midrashic Exegesis* 137-150; N. Füglistler, *Die Verwendung und das Verständnis* 368-384; Hossfeld & Zenger, *Neue und alte Wege* 336-338; Millard, *Die Komposition des Psalters* 230-234.

⁷⁰ It reads as follows: "Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son" (NRSV). In this regard Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms* 313 state as follows: "In verses 1-4, the royal mandate, mouthed by Israel but taken as a divine imperative, is to maintain *justice* and *righteousness* for the poor, the needy, and the oppressed. Evidently the notion of justice and righteousness has to do with economic maintenance and surely with the maintenance of an independent judiciary that would not be merely an exploitative tool of the powerful. Thus, the verbs in verse 4, "defend, deliver, crush," surely concern a viable court system in which the marginal can expect reliable redress from the rapaciousness of an acquisitive society (see Deut 16:18–20; 17:8–13; 2 Chr 19:4–11). The same active role of monarchy is urged in verses 12–14. The king, it is affirmed or perhaps anticipated, is the one who acts decisively on behalf of the poor and the needy, with economic policies that protect the poor and vulnerable from rapacious economic forces, and in solidarity that sustains them. These verses amount to a powerful assertion that the Davidic government – surely offered in the tradition as a model government – is to be proactive in its economic policies, which would curb the acquisitiveness of a socially irresponsible economy that pursued only the freedom of what we would now term 'the market'".

⁷¹ See Human, *An ideal for leadership* 665-667; Houston, *Contending for Justice* 139-150; Prinsloo, *Psalm 72*, 540 and Wessels, *To Know Yahweh is to Care for the Poor*, 2. Hossfeld & Zenger, *Psalmen* 51-100, 328 defines the character of this "justice"

If we once again consider the four concluding psalms of the second Davidic Psalter, the following three characteristics can be emphasised: 1) their relationship to the concluding section of the first Davidic Psalter (35-41); 2) the connection of these four psalms to one another by means of the theme of the "poor"; 3) and finally, the conclusive character they display. After an extensive doxology in 72:18-19⁷², the second Davidic Psalter is concluded with a single colophon (72:20)⁷³. This colophon designates the end of David's prayers of petition and lamentations. This concluding section is characterised by both the compact nature and the multi-faceted nature of the utterances it contains.

It is, however, coloured in a distinct manner by means of the specific arrangement of the four texts it contains (69-72). Psalm 69 expresses in a very concentrated manner the diversity of the affliction and traumatization experienced by the supplicant. This supplicant is simultaneously characterised as belonging to the "poor". Psalm 70 – which is *expressis verbis* a psalm of the "poor" – once again focusses on the traumatising conflict with the enemies, but simultaneously it spells out confidence in a sure victory over the enemies. Psalm 71 also displays a conclusive character: it portrays the supplicant as the elderly, and specifically as the elderly who reflects on his life which was characterised by affliction, conflict and trauma, but also by the sure protection of God⁷⁴. The concluding Psalm 72 identifies the elderly supplicant as the king who recites a prayer for his son – namely, in the form of a sacred royal will. This also implies that these four psalms do not only serve as a conclusion for the second Davidic Psalter, but for the first Davidic Psalter as well. The clear arrangement of these four texts supports the assumption that the single colophon of 72:20 serves as a finale for a unified Davidic Psalter, i.e. for the first (3-41) as well as second Davidic (51-72) collection.⁷⁵

A concluding remark: within Book I and Book II the Psalms 40⁷⁶, 50⁷⁷, 51⁷⁸ and 69 contain a cult-critical relativisation. It is first of all important to take note of the respective positions these psalms hold within the Psalter. Psalm 40 is the

as follows: "Im Psalmkorporus selbst wird diese Gerechtigkeit dann zum einen armentheologisch expliziert, was konsequent im Horizont der Armentheologie von Ps 69-71 geschieht, doch nun so, daß der König als Retter der Armen definiert wird".

⁷² This doxology reads as follows: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be his glorious name forever; may his glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen" (NRSV).

⁷³ Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms* 314 and Gerstenberger, *Psalms (Part 2)* 68.

⁷⁴ Hossfeld, *Die unterschiedlichen Profile* 68 formulates this assumption as follows: "... der auf ein an-gefochtenes und zugleich von Gott gehaltenes Dasein zurückblickt".

⁷⁵ Hossfeld, *Die unterschiedlichen Profile* 68.

⁷⁶ Groenewald, *Psalm 69: A composition-critical contribution* 81-82. Cf. furthermore Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms* 197; Gerstenberger, *Psalms (Part 2)* 50-51; Hrobon, *Ethical Dimension of Cult* 113-115 and Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* 95-97.

⁷⁷ Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms* 232-233.

⁷⁸ Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms* 238.

penultimate psalm in Book I (Pss 3–41); which at the same time also builds the first Davidic collection (Pss 3–41). Psalm 50, the only Asaph psalm in the second book of the psalms (42–72), occurs between the Korahite psalms (Pss 42–49) and the second Davidic collection (Pss 51–72). Psalm 51 thus introduces the second Davidic collection which ends with Psalm 72. Psalm 69 is part of the three Psalms 69–71, which form a subgroup within the second book of the psalms; occurring just before the final Psalm 72.

It is furthermore noticeable that the third book of the psalms (Pss 73–89) commences with a collection of Asaph psalms (73–83)⁷⁹. According to Psalm 40:7–9 the offering of sacrifice (alone) was not enough. These verses refer to the characteristics required of the supplicant, beyond the cultic offerings and sacrifices. It is expected of the supplicant to do the will of God with delight; additionally, he must keep God's *Torah* within his being (heart). In face of Yahweh's *Torah* the supplicant offers him (Yahweh) – instead of the sacrifice – a statement of obedience and subordination (Ps 40:9)⁸⁰. The roots of these cult-critical statements were to be found within those groups who held a critical view of the official temple cult as well as the temple aristocracy⁸¹. The expansion of a text through the later addition of the verses 14–18⁸², identifying this text as a prayer of the "poor and needy" (40:18)⁸³, strengthens this interpretation⁸⁴.

Ps 69:32–33b contain cult-critical statements which are combined with a "theology of the poor"⁸⁵ and in doing so, elevates the laudation above the sacrifice⁸⁶. The possibility thus exists that this inscription, which is clearly

⁷⁹ Groenewald, *Psalm 69: A composition-critical contribution* 81–82.

⁸⁰ According to Hossfeld & Zenger, *Die Psalmen I* 256 "das Tun der Tora ist die "Opfergabe"". Cf. also Lindström, *Suffering and Sin* 277.

⁸¹ In this regard Hossfeld & Zenger, *Die Psalmen I* 252 infer as follows: "Mit seiner Rede von der "Herzenstora" hebt der Psalm die Gottunmittelbarkeit gegenüber dem Tempel und gegenüber der schriftlichen Tora heraus . . . Man könnte ihn sich auch als Gebet von Gruppierungen denken, die zunehmend (aus theologischen und aus politischen Gründen) in Opposition zum Machtanspruch der Priesterhierarchie am Tempel traten." See also Zenger, *Die Nacht wird leuchten* 98.

⁸² Ps 40:14–18 concurs with Ps 70:2–6. According to Hossfeld & Zenger, *Die Psalmen I* 252–253 it is most likely that Ps 70 had already existed independently and only later on was added to Ps 40 as part of the multi-stage redactional process this text underwent (cf. also Hossfeld & Zenger, *Psalmen 51–100*, 283–284). Braulik, *Psalm 40*, 221, 268ff and Weber, *Werkbuch Psalmen* 316 hold the same opinion.

⁸³ Cf. Hossfeld & Zenger, *Die Psalmen I* 252: "Das dürfte, zumal 14–18 ja ein gezielt aufgenommenen Text (Ps 70!) ist, nicht als biographische Einzelaussage, sondern als "Gruppenbewußtsein" zu verstehen sein".

⁸⁴ Cf. furthermore Brueggemann & Bellinger Jr., *Psalms* 197–198.

⁸⁵ Cf. Groenewald, *Psalm 69*, 261ff for a discussion of this last textual layer added to the text of Psalm 69 as part of its redactional growth.

⁸⁶ In this regard Ro, *Die sogenannte "Armenfrömmigkeit"* 194 infers as follows: "Das mußte nicht unbedingt eine prinzipielle Ablehnung des Tempels und des Kultes

marked by a "theology of the poor", came from the hands of the same redactors who put together Psalms 69–71.⁷² in order to form the concluding part of the second Davidic Psalter: in the Davidic Psalter 51–72 the "theology of the poor" occurs for the first time in Psalms 69–71⁸⁷.

D TRAUMA AND THE "PSALMS OF THE POOR": A BRIEF PERSPECTIVE

Trauma shatters all interpretative frameworks and therefore poses serious challenges to the theologian who has the responsibility of interpret human experience and existence. It challenges theology, which understands itself as a meaning-making enterprise⁸⁸. Rambo⁸⁹ makes the important point that theologians have always been reflecting on the questions of human suffering and have always been struggling with the question how to understand suffering in the world, given the theological claim that God is in a relationship with the world⁹⁰.

The relatively new and emerging field of Trauma Studies has sensitised theologians that the impact of trauma – whether it is experienced in a direct or indirect manner – can impact an individual or the collective. The ancient texts, as we have them in the Hebrew Bible, provide us with manifold possibilities how ancient Israel tried to cope and deal with the experiences of trauma and tension. These traumatic experiences often do not just come to us in what is said in a straightforward manner, but also in the unsaid – as they echo in the literature of the Hebrew Bible⁹¹. It is an imperative for exegetes to explore the many and different ways in which the texts of a certain period (whether it be pre-exilic, exilic or post-exilic) speak about and speak through the story of a traumatic experience⁹². These texts ask what it means to transmit and to theorise around a

implizieren; zu Aversionen gegenüber den derzeit für den Tempel offiziell zuständigen Kreisen, und zwar wegen deren inkorrekt Kulturpraxis, vgl. z.B. Jes 66,3f.; Zef 3,4; Ps. 69:32".

⁸⁷ Groenewald, *Psalm 69: A composition-critical contribution* 80-81. Cf. also Zenger, *Zur redaktionsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung* 193: "Die nach 65–68 folgende Komposition der Bittgebete 69–71 setzt sich einerseits von den vorangehenden Davidpsalmen durch die in ihnen auftretende 'Armenperspektive' ab, die andererseits in Ps. 72 und vor allem im ersten Davidpsalter konstitutiv ist."

⁸⁸ Rambo, *Introduction*, 4. Cf. also Groenewald, *Trauma is suffering that remains* 88-102.

⁸⁹ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma* 4.

⁹⁰ Cf. also Ackermann, *Surprised by the Man* 19: "I believe that the God question is the same as the human question. All faiths have their origins in the human heart and in contexts that are at times overwhelming".

⁹¹ Esterhuizen, *A Study of the Tension* 4, 8. Cf. also Hays, *Trauma, Remembrance, and Healing* 192.

⁹² Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience* 4.

crisis⁹³ and even when these texts occur in a language that is literary, it is a language that defies and "it stubbornly persists in bearing witness to some forgotten wound"⁹⁴.

In the act of verbalising the trauma, these words become the lament crying out against the trauma (whatever may have caused the trauma event). Ackermann⁹⁵ emphasises that when injustice is lamented, this expression of the lament is transformed to become an expression of hope for it "calls God to account and rests on the unshakable belief that God will act".

Westermann⁹⁶ underlines the theological significance of the cry of distress which is fundamentally interconnected with the event of deliverance. In the lament – this "call of distress", the "cry out of the depths" – the traumatised sufferer reaches out for life; and begs that his/her suffering and trauma be taken away as this is the only possibility which is still available for him/her as long as he/she has breath to cry out. The lament is theologically significant as it is the language of trauma and suffering and therefore provides a powerful voice for those who are suffering as a result of being traumatised. In lamenting, the dignity of language is restored for traumatised sufferers as it shouts aloud: It will not stay silent!⁹⁷ Furthermore, according to Westermann⁹⁸, it is important to lay suffering and trauma before the feet of God, as human suffering – no matter what it is – does not only affect the sufferer and the traumatised alone. When regarded from this perspective, the lament is a movement towards God as it is the way to bring suffering and trauma in the presence of the one who can take it away.

The major contribution of the Hebrew Bible, according to Stulman⁹⁹, is the fact that it does not represent the story of the winners, but of the losers. This fact had a major impact on the character and development of the texts it contain. The texts image a nation that experienced trauma, a nation that finds itself on the margins. But even within this nation of "losers," we read about those who are on the margins, dislocated and vulnerable; as the Psalter tells us. In spite of experiencing suffering, they are still resilient and survivors against all odds. A trauma reading of the Psalter – and here specifically the "redaction of the poor"

⁹³ Cf. in this regard Römer, *The Hebrew Bible as Crisis Literature* 161: "The attitude of the 'Prophet' considers the crisis as the beginning of a new era. The representatives of this view are people who stand somewhat at the margins of society, but who are nevertheless able to communicate their views. They legitimate their discourse by appealing to personal inspiration".

⁹⁴ Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience* 5. Cf. also J.-P. Sonnet, *Writing the Disaster* 350-353.

⁹⁵ Ackermann, *Surprised by the Man* 33.

⁹⁶ Westermann, *The Role of the Lament* 21-22.

⁹⁷ Westermann, *The Role of the Lament* 31.

⁹⁸ Westermann, *The Role of the Lament* 31-32.

⁹⁹ Stulman, *Reading the Bible as Trauma Literature* 4.

– also indicates and addresses “devastating power disparities, but it does so by focusing on the haunting voices of pain and liminality that inundate the text, largely as the result of traumatic violence”¹⁰⁰.

It can be stressed that a hermeneutics of trauma can indicate the existence of a relationship between experience(s) of a traumatic event(s) as well as the production and appropriation of texts which are related to these experiences. Trauma hermeneutics stresses that language react to trauma in such a way that it also creates the tools of survival, recovery and resilience¹⁰¹. The social and religious fragmentation within society (5th century) as a result of the economic crisis, resulted in the marginalisation and traumatisation of the poorer classes in society¹⁰². The special piety which developed in these marginalised and impoverished lower classes though is a sign of the resilience still inherent in these groups and a trauma reading opens our eyes for this “textual art” which denies giving up. This textual art bears witness to the struggles of shattered communities and has the courage to confront human brutality and the wreckages of its times. It creates a metanarrative in which the readers can dream of the unimaginable as it insists that raw power is not the ultimate power¹⁰³.

E CONCLUSION

In this contribution a brief overview was provided of the “poor in the Psalter” in order to discuss the redaction of the poor at the end of Book I and Book II. A trauma perspective of the redaction of the “theology of the poor” in the Psalter was also given. The conviction was expressed that the Psalter, through this redaction, is essentially a record of the broken and the marginalized within the Judean society. The most important task of this theology of the “piety of the poor” was to restore dignity as well as hope to the oppressed victims of the social crisis. According to their own self-understanding, they were not on the periphery of the community, but they formed the core. This influence is, among other things, to be recognised in the redaction of the Psalter, namely a redaction characterised by the “theology of the poor”.

The redaction of the poor, which took place at the end of Book I and Book II, transforms both books into meaning-making literature. A voice is given to the marginalised, to the community represented within these texts. The formulation of the trauma of marginalisation is transcended to become a language of dignity,

¹⁰⁰ Stulman, *Reading the Bible as Trauma Literature* 5. Cf. also Hays, *Trauma, Remembrance, and Healing* 192: “The Psalter – and indeed the whole Hebrew Bible – bears witness to different kinds of trauma, different views of its causes, and different ways to reconcile the experience of trauma theologically”.

¹⁰¹ Groenewald, *Micah 4:1-5*, 56.

¹⁰² Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion* 518-522.

¹⁰³ Stulman, *Reading the Bible as Trauma Literature* 7.

a language crying out against the injustices often experienced by the poor of the world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ackermann, D.M. *Surprised by the Man on the Borrowed Donkey: Ordinary Blessings*, Cape Town, 2014.
- Albertz, A. *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament period. Vol. I: From the Beginnings to the End of the Monarchy. Vol. II: From the Exile to the Maccabees* (OTL), London, 1994.
- Atkinson, A. B. *Inequality. What can be done?*, Cambridge, MA, 2015.
- Auld, A. G. *First and Second Samuel: A Commentary* (OTL), Louisville, KY, 2012.
- Ballhorn, E. "“Um deines Knechtes David willen” (Ps 132, 10): die Gestalt Davids im Psalter," *Biblische Notizen* 76 (1995): 16-31.
- Berges, U. *De armen van het boek Jesaja. Een bijdrage tot de literatuurgeschiedenis van het Oude Testament*, Nijmegen, 1999.
- Berges, U & Hoppe, R. *Arm und Reich*, Die Neue Echter Bibel – Themen 10, Würzburg, 2009.
- Blomberg, C.L. *Neither Poverty nor Riches. A Biblical Theology of Material Possessions*, vol 7 of *New Studies in Biblical Theology*, Leicester, 1999.
- Botha, P.J. "Pride and suffering of the Poor in the Persian Period. Psalm 12 and its Post-Exilic Context," *OTE* 25/1 (2012): 40-56.
- Braulik, G. *Psalm 40 und der Gottesknecht (FzB 18)*, Würzburg, 1975.
- Bremer, J. *Wo Gott sich auf die Armen einlässt. Die sozio-ökonomische Hintergrund der achämenidischen Provinz Yəhūd und seine Implikationen für die Armentheologie des Psalters*, BBB 174, Göttingen, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.14220/9783737003292>
- _____. "Die Armentheologie als eine Grundlinie einer Theologie des Psalters," *HeBAI* 5 (2016): 350-390.
- _____. "Eine "Armenredaktion" im 1. Davidpsalter? Impulse vor dem Hintergrund sozio-ökonomischer Entwicklungen," in *Trägerkreise in den Psalmen* ed. Hossfeld, F.-L. Bremer, J. and Steiner, T.M., BBB 178, Göttingen, 2017, 181-205.
- Brueggemann, W & Bellinger B.H. Jr., *Psalms (New Cambridge Bible Commentary)*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, New York, NY, 2014.
- Caruth, C. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Baltimore, MD, 2016 (20th Anniversary Edition).
- Childs, B. "Psalm Titles and Midrashic Exegesis," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 16/2 (1971): 137-50. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jss/XVI.2.137>
- Crenshaw, J.L. *The Psalms – An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI, 2001.
- Declaissé-Walford, N.L. "The Meta-Narrative of the Psalter," *The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms*, ed. Brown, W.P. Oxford, 2014, 363-376.
- Esterhuizen, E. *A Study of the Tension between Despair and Hope in Isaiah 7 and 8 from a Perspective of Trauma and Posttraumatic Growth* (Unpublished DTh-thesis: University of South Africa), Pretoria, 2017.
- Füglister, N. "Die Verwendung und das Verständnis der Psalmen und des Psalters um die Zeitenwende," in *Beiträge zur Psalmenforschung. Psalm 2 und 22 (FzB 60)*, ed. Schreiner, J., Würzburg, 1988, 319-384.

- Gerstenberger, H.S. *Psalms (Part 2) and Lamentations (FOTL 15)*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2001.
- _____. *Israel in the Persian Period: the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E.* Leiden, The Netherlands: BRILL, 2011. Translated by Schatzmann, S.S. from the German original: *Israel in der Perserzeit: 5. und 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Biblische Enzyklopädie, 8; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2005.
- Gillingham, S. "The Poor in the Psalms," *The Expository Times* 100 (1988) 15-19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001452468810000105>
- _____. "The Levites and the Editorial Composition of the Psalms," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms*, ed. Brown, W.P. Oxford, 2014, 201-213. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199783335.013.013>
- _____. "The Levitical Singers and the Compilation of the Psalter," in *Trägerkreise in den Psalmen*, ed. Hossfeld, F.-L. Bremer, J. and Steiner, T.M., BBB 178, Göttingen, 2017, 35-59.
- _____. *Psalms through the Centuries (vol. Two): A Reception History Commentary on Psalms 1-72 (Blackwell Bible Commentaries)*, Malden, MA, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018.
- Groenewald, A. *Psalms 69: Its structure, redaction and composition (ATM 18)*, Münster, 2003.
- _____. "Psalm 69: A composition-critical contribution," in *One Text, a Thousand Methods. Studies in Memory of Sjeff van Tilborg*, ed. U. Berges and P. Chatelion-Counet (BIS 71), Leiden: Boston, MA, 2005, 77-96.
- _____. "Psalms 69:33-34 in the light of the poor in the Psalter as a whole", *Verbum et Ecclesia* 28/2 (2007): 425-441.
- _____. "Micah 4:1-5 and a Judean Experience of Trauma," *Scriptura* 116/2 (2017): 55-65. <http://doi.org/10.7833/116-2-1329>
- _____. "'Trauma is suffering that remains'. The Contribution of Trauma Studies to Prophetic Studies," *Acta Theologica* Suppl 26 (2018): 88-102. <http://doi.org/10.18820/23099089/actat.Sup26.5>
- Hays, R.W.P. "Trauma, Remembrance, and Healing: The Meeting of Wisdom and History and Psalm 78," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 41/2 (2016): 183-204. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309089216628420>
- Hoppe, L.J. *There shall be no poor among you. Poverty in the Bible*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2004.
- Hossfeld, F.-L. Die unterschiedlichen Profile der beiden David-sammlungen Ps 3-41 und Ps 51-72, in *Der Psalter in Judentum und Christentum*, ed. Zenger, E. (HBS 18), Freiburg, 1998, 59-73.
- Hossfeld, F.-L. & Zenger, E. "'Selig, wer auf die Armen achtet' (Ps 41,2). Beobachtungen zur Gottesvolk-Theologie des ersten Davidpsalters," in *Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie* 7, 21-50. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1992, 21-50.
- _____. *Die Psalmen I. Psalm 1-50*. Die Neue Echter Bibel 29, Würzburg: Echter Verlag 1993.
- _____. "Neue und alte Wege der Psalmenexegese. Antworten auf die Fragen von M. Millard und R. Rendtorff," in *Biblical Interpretation* 4 (1996), 332-343. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156851596X00068>
- _____. *Psalmen 51-100*. HThKAT, Freiburg 2000.

- _____. *Die Psalmen II: Psalm 51-100*. Die Neue Echter Bibel 40, Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2002.
- Houston, W.J. *Contending for Justice: Ideologies and Theologies of Social Justice in the Old Testament* (LHB/OTS 420), London/New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2006.
- Hrobon, B. *Ethical Dimension of Cult in the Book of Isaiah* (BZAW 418.) Göttingen 2010.
- Human, D.J. “An ideal for leadership – Psalm 72: The (wise) King – Royal mediation of God’s universal reign. FS. Desmond Tutu,” in *Verbum et Ecclesia* 23/3 (2002): 657-678.
- Jacobson, R.A. “Imagining the Future of Psalms Studies,” in *The Shape and Shaping of the Book of Psalms. The Current State of Scholarship*, ed. de Claissé-Walford N.L. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014, 231-246. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt9qh23j.20>
- Janowski, B. “Ein Tempel aus Worten: Zur theologischen Architektur des Psalters,” in *The Composition of the Book of Psalms*, ed. Zenger E. (BETHL 238), Leuven/Paris/Walpole, MA: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2010, 279–306.
- Kimilike, L.P. *Poverty in the Book of Proverbs. An African Transformational Hermeneutic of Proverbs on Poverty* (*Bible and Theology in Africa* 7), , New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008.
- Kleer, M. “*Der liebliche Sänger der Psalmen Israels.*” *Untersuchungen zu David als Dichter und Beter der Psalmen*, BBB 108, Bodenheim 1996.
- Kraus, H-J. *Theology of the Psalms*. translated by Crim, K. 1992, *Theologie der Psalmen*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing, 1979 .
- Lindström, F. *Suffering and Sin: Interpretations of Illness in the Individual Complaint Psalms*, ConBOT 37, Stockholm 1994.
- Mays, J.L. “The David of the Psalms,” *Interpretation* 40 (1986): 143-155.
- McKenzie, S.L. *King David: A Biography*, Oxford 2000.
- McPolin, J. “Psalms as Prayers of the Poor,” in *Back to the Sources. Biblical and Near Eastern Studies* (in honour of Dermot Ryan), ed. Cathcart, K.J. and Healey, J.F., Dublin: Glendale Press. 1989, 79-103.
- Millard, M. *Die Komposition des Psalters. Ein formgeschichtlicher Ansatz*, FAT 9, Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1994.
- Mtshiselwa, V.N.N. “The Poor in the Psalms and in Tsepo Tshola’s song Indlala: African liberationist remarks,” *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72/1 (2016) Art. #3173, 7 pages. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v72i1.3173>.
- Otto, E. *Deuteronomium 12–34*. Erster Teilband: 12,1–23,15 (HThKAT), Freiburg 2016.
- Piketty, T. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, translated form *Le capital au XXI siècle*, Cambridge, MA, 2014.
- Piketty, T. *The Economics of Inequality*, translated from *L’économie des inégalités*, Cambridge, MA, 2016.
- Prinsloo, W.S. “Psalm 72: ‘n verskuiwing van die mistieke na die politieke?” *Old Testament Essays* 12/3 (1999), 536-554.
- Rambo, R. *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining*, Louisville, KY, 2010.
- _____. “Introduction,” in *Post-traumatic Public Theology*, ed. Arel, S.N. Rambo, S., New York, NY, 2016, 1-21. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-40660-2_1
- Ro, J.U. *Die sogenannte “Armenfrömmigkeit” im nachexilischen Israel* (BZAW 322), Berlin 2002.

- Römer, T. "The Hebrew Bible as Crisis Literature," in *Disaster and Relief Management / Katastrophen und ihre Bewältigung*, ed. Berlejung, A. (FAT 81), Tübingen 2012, 159–177.
- Scheffler, E.H. "Deuteronomy 15:1-18 and Poverty in (South) Africa," in *A Critical Study of the Pentateuch. An Encounter between Europe and Africa*, ed. Otto E. and le Roux, J., (ATM 20), Münster 2005, 97–115.
- _____. "Pleading poverty (Or: Identifying with the poor for selfish reasons): On the ideology of Psalm 109," *Old Testament Essays* 24/1 (2011) 192-207.
- _____. "Poverty in the book of Proverbs: Looking from above?," *Scriptura* 111 (2012): 480-496. <http://doi.org/10.7833/111-0-30>.
- _____. "Poverty eradication and the Bible in context: A serious challenge," *Studia Historiae Ecclesasticae* 24 (2013) 129-153.
- _____. "Of Poverty Prevention in the Pentateuch as a Continuing Contemporary Challenge," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 34/2 (2013) Art. #869, 14 pages. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v36i1.1478>.
- _____. "The Poor in the Psalms: A Variety of Views," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 36/1 (2015) Art. #1478, 9 pages. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v36i1.1478>.
- _____. "Royal care for the Poor in Israel's First History: the Royal Law (Deuteronomy 17:14-20), Hannah's Song (1 Samuel 2:1-10), Samuel's warning (1 Samuel 8:10-18), David's attitude (2 Samuel 24:10-24) and Ahab and Naboth (1 Kings 21) in Intertext," *Scriptura* 116/2 (2017 Special Edition): 160-174. <http://doi.org/10.7833/116-2-1317>.
- Smith, M.S. "Canaanite Backgrounds to the Psalms," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms*, Brown, W.P. Oxford 2014, 43-56.
- Sonnet, J.-P. "Writing the Disaster. Trauma, Resilience and *Fortschreibung*," in *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Rise of the Torah* Dubovský, P. Markl, D. and Sonnet, J.-P., (FAT 107), Tübingen 2016, 349-357.
- Stulman, L. "Reading the Bible as Trauma Literature: The Legacy of the Losers," *Conversations with the Biblical World* 34 (2014) 1-13.
- Tucker, W.D. Jr., "Democratization and the Language of the Poor in Psalms 2-89," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 25 (2003): 161-178. <https://doi.org/10.1163/187122003X00123>
- _____. "A Polysemiotic Approach to the Poor in the Psalms," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 31/4 (2004), 425-439.
- Weber, R. *Werkbuch Psalmen I: Die Psalmen 1 bis 72*, Stuttgart 2001.
- Weiser, A. *Die Psalmen* (ATD 14/15), Göttingen 1963 (6. Auflage).
- Wessels, W. J. "Prophets and Ethics: A Study of Jeremiah 5:26-29," in *Psalmody and Poetry in Old Testament Ethics*, ed. Human, D.J. (LHB/OTS 572), London/New York, NY, 2012, 181-196.
- _____. "To Know Yahweh is to Care for the Poor. Reflections from the Book of Jeremiah," *Pharos Journal of Theology* 99 (2018): 1-10 (Online volume 99: <http://www.pharosjot.com>).
- Westermann, C. "The Role of the Lament in the Theology of the Old Testament," *Interpretation* 28 (1974): 20-38.
- Zenger, E. "'So betete David für seinen Sohn Salomo und für den König Messias' – Überlegungen zur holistischen und kanonischen Lektüre des 72. Psalms," *Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie* 8, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1993, 57-72.

- _____. "Zur redaktionsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung der Korachpsalmen," in *Neue Wege der Psalmenforschung*, ed. Seybold, K. and Zenger, E., (HBS 1), Freiburg 1994, 175-198.
- _____. *Die Nacht wird leuchten wie der Tag: Psalmenauslegungen*, Freiburg i.B. 1997.
- _____. "David as musician and poet: plotted and painted," in *Biblical Studies / Cultural Studies*, ed. Exum, J.C. and Moore, S.D., The third Sheffield Colloquium (JSOT.SS 266), Sheffield 1998, 263-298.
- Zimmerli, W. "Zwillingspsalmen," in *Wort, Lied und Gottesspruch. Beiträge zur Septuaginta*, ed. Schreiner J., FS. J. Ziegler (FzB 1), Würzburg 1972, 105-113.

Alphonso Groenewald, Department of Old Testament Studies, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, alphonso.groenewald@up.ac.za. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4953-2230>.