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Remembered space:
Memory and identity in Psalms 137-145

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relation between space, memory and identity in Psalms 137-145. As point of departure, the study claims that Psalms 137-145 form a collection within Book V of the Psalter. These psalms are connected to each other through remembered space. Remembered space combines critical spatial theory and memory studies. Remembered space is, therefore, defined as a space in which the collective memories of a people's shared history are employed to transform their identity in light of changing circumstances.

The perspective of remembered space highlights the postexilic community's quest for identity and a deeper understanding of YHWH's presence in Psalms 137-145. The analysis of each individual psalm on a social-scientific and spatial level revealed that Psalms 137-145 are a spatial narrative grounded in memory. This perception helps the reader to gain insight into the struggles of the postexilic community on a social, political, economic and religious level. The collection of psalms with its spatial ups and downs, alternating between positive and negative, is a blueprint of life itself. What we learn from Psalms 137-145 is that YHWH's presence transcends all classifications of space. Therefore, YHWH is the one that transforms the space of the postexilic community. Psalms 137-145 represent the deconstruction of the postexilic community's theology, which ultimately led to a reconstruction of their identity in the aftermath of the exile.

The collection of Psalms 137-145 grapples with life's ever-changing spaces in order to relate it to faith and understanding the way that God works in, through and around these spaces. In the end, it is remembering-in-space that provided the postexilic community with the hope and courage to move towards the future.

"I remember the days of the past.
I meditate on all Your works.
I muse on the work of Your hands."
– Psalm 143:5

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and motivation for the study

Life takes much away from us as through the years we go –
changes come with changing times. We know it must be so…
But no matter what may come you keep the precious key –
to the private treasure-house we call The Memory.
Nothing that the world can do can rob you of the joy –
of recollections life could never fade nor Time destroy.
They are yours forever. In your mind you have the power –
to resurrect the lovely moment and the golden hour.
What it is or how it works could never be explained –
in spite of all the progress made and all the knowledge gained…
Through the door of memory the past you can renew:
a secret world that nobody can take away from you.

This quotation from the British poet Patience Strong (1972:74) demonstrates the importance of memory as a means of not only accessing, but also renewing the past. The concept of memory plays a significant role in what Hartmann (2004:329) calls *Erinnerungskulturen*. In such a 'culture of remembrance', history and collective memory are combined in the formation of a communal identity, especially in terms of the religious and political spheres of life (Hartmann 2004:330). In this sense, memory creates identity. This happens in a certain space, which is either produced for these purposes or reproduced and adapted in order to form a new identity. Matthews (2013:62) talks about 'remembered space'. He describes it as follows:

> Once space in all of its dimensions has become indelibly defined through repetition of social practice as it serves its domestic, sacred, or official role, then the collective memory of the community tends to perpetuate that spatial conception as part of the "mental map" of their living and working space.

Building upon this description, remembered space can be defined as a space in which collective memories of a people's shared history are employed to transform their identity in the light of changing circumstances.

But how do the above notions relate to biblical studies? According to Bowman (2013:93), the Hebrew Bible echoes a certain 'way of remembering'. The postexilic community can therefore be described as a 'culture of remembrance'. Hermeneutically speaking then, it is crucial to understand the role of remembered space in the creating of texts and identity. Postexilic psalms, such as Psalms 137-145, build upon YHWH's great deeds in history to

address the life setting of the postexilic community (Gerstenberger 2007:87). As a result, these texts in particular reflect how remembered space was shaped by history and experience as well as how memory was utilised in the construction of a new identity.

This study will thus examine the collection of Psalms 137-145 as remembered space in which the community's experience of the historical deeds of YHWH served as the basis for constructing a new identity as the people of YHWH. In the investigation, spatial construction functions as a link between the remembered space of the past and the newly constructed identity of the people.

1.2 Research question and hypothesis

Although Psalms 138-145 are traditionally read as a collection – the last Davidic collection in the Book of Psalms (see Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:2) – one can argue, from the perspective of critical spatiality, that Psalm 137 also belongs to this collection as these nine (postexilic) psalms represent spatial movement through the tripartite dimensions of space (cf. Lefebvre [1974]1991:31-33). Additionally, the collection of psalms is read in the context of the postexilic Persian period. The dating of the psalms is discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. With this in mind, the predominant research question that this study aims to answer can be formulated as follows: What is the relation between space, memory and identity in Psalms 137-145? In order to answer this question, one must of course ask how space is represented throughout Psalms 137-145. Furthermore, if these psalms can be read as remembered space, what will the implications of such a reading be for the interpretative meaning of these texts within the postexilic period?

If Psalms 137-145, as a postexilic collection, are read as remembered space, then the collection can be used to understand how space and memory were employed in shaping a postexilic identity for the people of YHWH.

1.3 Research approach and method

This section is devoted to a detailed description of the research approach and methodology to be followed in the study. The discussion will be divided into different units. In the first instance the study will be described in terms of a synchronic or diachronic approach, after which the approach is further refined with regard to the scientific method employed in studying the texts. Throughout, the methodology of this study will be contextualised within the broader framework of the multi-faceted methodological landscape. In the description of the approach and method, the section will work from the broad to the specific. The broader research approach (social-scientific criticism) is discussed, after which the discussion will move more specifically to the method to be

employed (critical spatiality). From there, the research focus is identified as remembered space and collective memory. The approach and method of this study can thus be illustrated as follows:

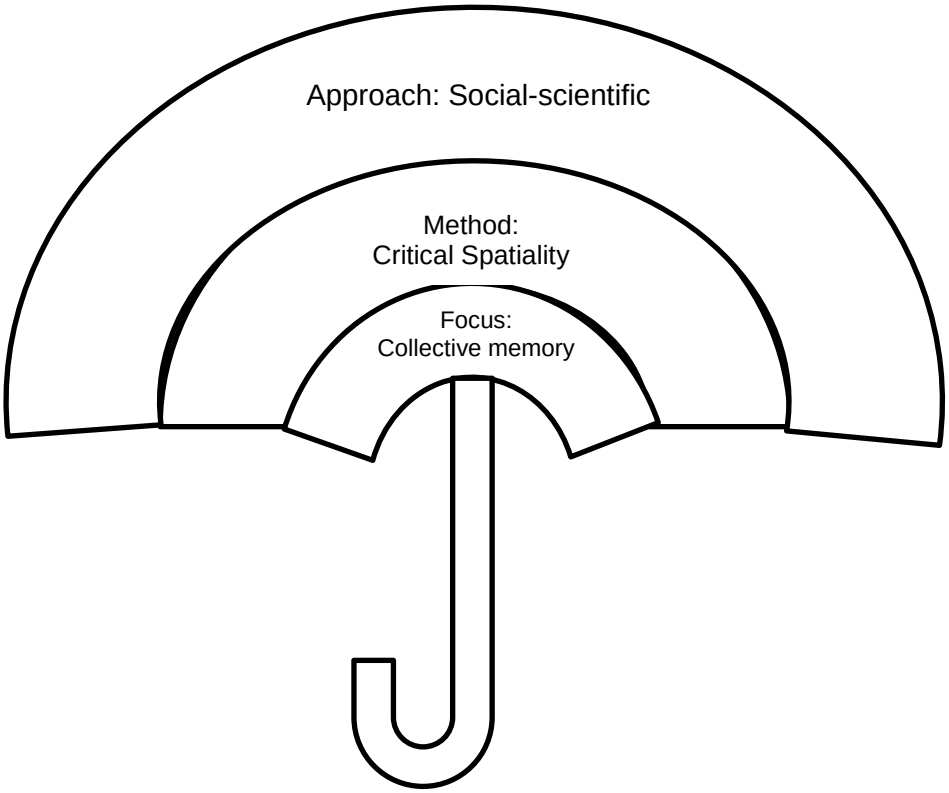

Figure 1: The approach and method of the study

1.3.1 The debate

During the course of the history of biblical interpretation, one can distinguish different eras in which a certain mode of interpretation prevailed. During the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century, the method of historical criticism dominated the field of biblical interpretation (Barton 1998:9). This changed in the latter part of the twentieth century when a paradigm shift started to take place as postmodern values took centre stage.

The move away from the absolutist ideas of modernism and the claims of historical criticism to be *the* means of interpreting biblical texts, led to a debate about which exegetical method was more credible. The historical-critical method, representing the diachronic approach, argues that a text can be best understood when read in terms of the history of its origin and development (De Villiers 2006:824). On the other end of the spectrum, the synchronic approach works with the text in its final form without focusing on the genetic and historical aspects behind the text (De Villiers 2006:824). Literary criticism and methods such as narrative criticism fall under the umbrella of synchronic approaches. Ultimately, scholars have come to the conclusion that the interpretation of biblical texts

does not require an ‘either-or’ decision, but rather an inclusive ‘and-and’ decision. A layered reading of the text, which employs both a diachronic and synchronic approach, assists the exegete in a more thorough reading of a text. Gesundheit (2013:10) therefore proposes a method in which the tradition-historical approach is supplemented by a literary-critical approach. The realisation that both literary and historical features of a text are important in the hermeneutical process led to Human (1999:354) proposing an amalgamation of synchronic and diachronic approaches in the form of a literary historical reading of a text.

In line with the above-mentioned approach of Gesundheit and Human, this study will also follow a method that combines both synchronic and diachronic approaches. This brings us to the next subsection, namely a discussion on the social-scientific method of exegesis.

1.3.2 Research approach: Social-scientific criticism

The 1970’s represent a turning point in biblical interpretation. It is in these years that the sociological approach gained momentum (Whitelam 1998:35). This method drew on the social sciences and ‘social-world studies’ in order to gain insight into different aspects of biblical texts (Flanagan1999:17). The shift was part of the broader turn from modernist models of scientific accuracy to postmodern models of social theory (Flanagan 1999:21).

The social-scientific method of exegesis brought a balance to the divergent historical and literary approaches to biblical interpretation. This approach takes into account the broader social, historical and political setting in which the biblical texts originated (Whitelam 1998:36). Yet, it also appreciates the specific literary features of each text and works with the text in its final form. When applied to the Psalms, for example, the social-scientific approach will reconstruct the socio-historical dimension of the texts within the framework of poetic literature since the way that value systems, customs and cultic practices are expressed is genre-specific. One can therefore not conduct a social-scientific investigation into the Psalms without also taking the poetic language and conventions into account. The social-scientific approach has become one of the most popular approaches in biblical studies, especially in New Testament exegesis, with scholars such as John Pilch and Bruce Malina doing pioneering work in the field of biblical social values (see *Handbook of Biblical Social Values* 1993).

Furthermore, a social-scientific method, as part of the synchronic approach, allows for exploring intertextual links between texts. Tooman (2011:12) understands the phenomenon of intertextuality as a cultural category within literary work. Intertextuality can thus be described as literary innovation based in tradition (Tooman 2011:12). As will

become clear, intertextuality in the form of quotation and allusion plays an important role in the concept of 'remembered space'.

This study employs the social-scientific approach as it considers both socio-historical and literary aspects in the understanding of a text. Each psalm in the collection from Psalm 137 to Psalm 145 will be analysed individually on the basis of social values, institutions and religious symbols and practices. The impetus behind using the social-scientific approach can be found in Gerstenberger's (2007:91) comment that the Bible should be approached from its 'human side' since the texts are embedded in contexts of social conditioning and real-life situations. However, in order to further reconstruct the life setting of Psalms 137-145, this study adds another dimension to the social-scientific approach – a spatial dimension.

1.3.3 Research method: Critical spatiality

The social-scientific approach described above grew to such an extent that a number of independent methods developed from it. Critical spatiality is one such method that is rooted in the social-scientific approach. This method builds on the philosophical work of Henri Lefebvre in his ground-breaking monograph *La Production de l'espace* ([1974]1991). In this work, Lefebvre argued that space is socially constructed. He also introduced a multi-dimensional understanding of space. Lefebvre ([1974]1991:38-39) divided space into three dimensions. Firstly, spatial practice, or conceived space, refers to the 'physical' spaces of a society's daily life, such as workplaces, places of leisure and private space. Secondly, representations of space denote conceptualised space, as space is represented in symbolic systems. The third dimension of space is representational space, also called lived space, which can be appropriated and transformed. The geographer Edward Soja (1996) refined the three spatial categories of Lefebvre. He called it firstspace, secondspace and thirdspace. Soja (1996:38) did seminal work on thirdspace as the place to generate counterspaces. Another geographer worth mentioning is David Harvey whose work on spaces of hope (2000) provides a valuable perspective on the relationship between space and power.

Central to the trialectic of space that these three scholars propose, lies an ontological trialectic of being. Within this trialectic of being, space is understood as relational, consisting of spatiality, sociality and historicity (Schreiner 2016:349). Soja (2009:11) emphasises the link between a historian, someone who works on spatiality and social ontology. He describes a 'spatialiser', that is, a person practising critical spatiality as follows: He/she is

> …the person who believes not just that space matters but that it is a vital existential force shaping our lives, an influential aspect of everything that ever was, is, or will be, a transdisciplinary way of looking at and interpreting the world…

From this quotation it becomes clear that spatiality is much more than a method of investigation. It is rather a worldview, a way of interpreting texts, a way of seeing and experiencing.

Since Lefebvre's contribution in the 1970's, a 'spatial turn' has come about in the scholarly world (Schreiner 2016:340). Disciplines such as sociology, cultural studies, political studies and history have become increasingly spatially oriented (Warf & Arias 2009:1). In biblical studies, Flanagan was one of the first scholars to make the connection between biblical texts and critical spatiality. According to Flanagan (1999:26), critical spatiality finds a middle ground between the over emphases in the past of historical criticism on the one hand and social studies on the other hand. Analysing space as a product of culture and society enables the biblical scholar to understand the culture and society behind the biblical texts (George 2007:15). Moreover, biblical scholars encounter a wide range of spaces in biblical texts. These spaces, such as Babylon, Jerusalem and Israel, are not simply neutral, but have deeper social and religious connotations attached to them. On a more practical level, spatial theory comes into play with regard to the Ancient Near Eastern worldview(s). Upon examining the different worldviews of the Ancient Near East, it is apparent that the Ancient Near Eastern views of the world was influenced and shaped by space. Prinsloo (2013:9) plots the Ancient Near Eastern spatial orientation on a horizontal and vertical axis, where the horizontal axis represents the temporal dimension with 'far' being a negative concept and 'near' being a positive concept. The vertical axis, on the other hand, represents the moral facet with 'ascending' being positive as one is moving toward the jurisdiction of the gods, whilst 'descending' connotes to moving toward the realm of death.

The practical links between the Ancient Near Eastern worldview (social-scientific approach) and critical spatiality that Prinsloo (2006, 2013) establishes, will be used to study the texts of Psalms 137-145. In recent years, a number of scholars (cf. Prinsloo 2005, 2006; Schäder 2013) have begun to read the book of Psalms from the perspective of critical spatiality. In line with this, Tucker (2014:161-163) argues that spatial tension is created throughout Book V of the Psalter. Furthermore, shifts in the spatial location of significant characters, such as YHWH, are present in Book V, which contains Psalms 137-145. These observations strengthen the need for a spatial reading of the collection of psalms under consideration in this study.

The study will thus employ the method of critical spatiality by analysing the texts of Psalms 137-145 in terms of firstspace, secondspace and thirdspace. Thirdspace, as representational space, will be of special significance in the religious realm of the collection of psalms (Matthews 2013:68). But the spatial investigation in this study will go beyond the conventional categorising of space by also examining remembered space, which Matthews (2013:62) coins as 'fourthspace'. The concept of remembered space will aid in exploring the relation between space and identity. Since space is produced by society, attention should also be given to the power dynamics of space in the postexilic community (see Briant 2002:175-177).

Prinsloo (2013:8), however, warns against an uncritical application of the method of critical spatiality to ancient texts. It is imperative that scholars remain aware of the distance between our hermeneutical and epistemological methods and the customs and practices of the ancient world. The study therefore acknowledges that the rich social world and worldviews of the postexilic community in Yehud are not limited to the reconstruction thereof in this study. Furthermore, the theory of critical spatiality will not provide an all-encompassing perspective on Psalms 137-145 but will provide an essential dimension to the interpretation of these psalms.

1.3.4 Research focus: Remembered space and collective memory

According to Craven (2004:24), every psalm in the book of Psalms depends on memory about God, the self or the community. Therefore, the focus of this study falls on remembered space as subsection of critical spatiality. Some theoretical considerations with regard to memory will be discussed in section 1.4 of this chapter. Here the emphasis is more on collective memory as a method through which texts are studied. In memory studies, a distinction is made between personal memory and public memory (Brenner & Long 2009:2). The concept of 'public' or 'collective' memory plays an important role in memory studies that focus on biblical texts. The reason behind this lies in the categorisation of collective memory as social memory (Brenner & Long 2009:3). Since biblical texts are social products, it is only natural that social or collective memory played a part in their creation. As this study progresses, it will become clear how collective memory contributed to the creation and maintaining of Jewish identity in the post-exilic era (cf. Bosman 2014:1).

From a methodological point of view, collective memory ought to be studied within the confines of a group such as a religion or family, seeing as these are sources that create a group identity (Rossington 2007:134). Therefore, collective memory entails the support of a group defined in time and space (Rossington 2007:135). For this reason, the study examines the concept of collective memory in Psalms 137-145 against the background of

a religious grouping within the postexilic community. A crucial part of the study on remembered space is the way in which collective memory is passed on from one generation to the next. Whitehead (2009:132-133) states that memory is passed on through the body as certain behaviours are repeated (i.e., rituals). This can be referred to as 'habit memory' (cf. Whitehead 2009:132). For Israel, 'habit memory' is to be found in celebrations such as Passover. Through these rituals and stories of the Exodus, monarchical period and the exile, Israel took shape as a unified community with a common identity as the people of YHWH (Hendel 2005:8). The identity of the postexilic community was therefore formed in large part by reciting these stories. As a result, the collective memory of Israel will be studied through these stories and traditions.

In order to analyse Psalms 137-145 from the perspective of memory studies, we need to distinguish between different types of social, or collective, memory. Two types of memory that Assman (1995:126) discusses, will be important in our study of Psalms 137-145. Those two are communicative memory and cultural memory. Communicative memory refers to the variations in collective memory that has to do with everyday communication. Brenner and Long (2009:3) describe this type of collective memory as 'residues of the past in language and communication'. Assman (1995:126) relates communicative memory to the oral transmission of history. It is widely known that large parts of the Hebrew Bible were transmitted orally until it was finally written down during the Persian period.

Assman (1995:129) writes that there are 'fixed points' in cultural memory. Researchers stress a number of elements related to cultural memory (Assman 1995:130-133). These aspects will also form part of the memory analysis on Psalms 137-145. First, cultural memory has to do with the consolidation of identity. In an attempt to create a certain identity, borders are drawn between those who belong and those who do not belong to the group. Second, cultural memory has the capacity to reconstruct the past 'in a contemporary frame of reference' (Assman 1995:130). Moreover, cultural memory is cultivated in the sense that it rests on a specialised practice. The last important characteristic of cultural memory is that it is reflexive. It interprets rituals and other common practices through proverbs (Assman 1995:132). It also reflects the self-image of the group and draws upon itself to reinterpret and criticise its memories. These few fixed points will form the backbone to the discussion in Chapter 4 on collective memory.

1.4 Literature review

This section deals with an outline of the key sources – primary as well as secondary – to be used in the study. The review offers an overview of the main point of view of each work as far as it corresponds to the topic of the study.

1.4.1 Primary sources

Psalms 137-145 are the primary source and focus of the study. These psalms appear in Book V of the Psalter. Book V consists of Psalms 107-150. This specific collection of psalms (137-145) was chosen due to the spatial movement apparent in it as well as the details that these psalms reflect about the postexilic Judaic community. The text to be used will be taken from the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS). The basis of the BHS is found in Codex *Leningradensis*, dating back to 1008 CE (Botha 2015:5-8). A translation of the Masoretic text of Psalms 137-145 is attached as Addendum A to this study.

1.4.2 Secondary sources

Building upon the primary source, we now consider the secondary literary sources to be consulted throughout the study. This discussion is divided into different categories based on the various themes that the study addresses. As point of departure, the study examines work done on the shape and structure of the book of Psalms. Gerald Wilson's 1985-publication *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* opened up new doors to studying the structure of the Psalter. A more recent contribution to the composition of the book of Psalms is found in *The Book of Psalms: Composition and Reception* of which Peter Flint and Patrick Miller were the editors (2005). The book covers a wide range of topics on the Psalter that includes the theology of the book of Psalms, commentary on specific psalms and a study of various smaller collections within the Psalter. In the book the well-known Old Testament scholar, Klaus Seybold, also contributed a paper on the history of the Davidic collection of Psalms 138-145. The paper entitled *Zur Geschichte des vierten Davidpsalters (Pss 138-145)* is of particular interest to the present study since the article gives a thorough exposition on the place of this collection in relation to the neighbouring psalms as well as the interrelationships between the psalms in the collection.

Another work to take note of in the category of the structure of the book of Psalms, is the SBL publication *The Shape and Shaping of the Book of Psalms: The Current State of Scholarship* (DeClaissé-Walford [ed.] 2014). The book contains a number of essays written from various perspectives such as philosophical and canonical approaches. The essay of W. Dennis Tucker, *The Role of the Foe in Book 5: Reflections on the Final Composition of the Psalter*, treats the theme of power and the role of enemies in the psalms of Book V. Tucker's contribution is especially relevant to this study. As will be seen when investigating the texts of Psalms 137-145, the enemy is a common motif present throughout the collection. Furthermore, Tucker's book on *Constructing and Deconstructing Power in Psalms 107-150* (2014) will play an important role in discussions with regard to the relation between space and power.

In addition to the above works, the part of the study that deals with the social-scientific analysis will make use of a number of commentaries on the Psalms. Exploring commentaries on Psalms 137-145 will assist in placing these psalms in the life setting of the postexilic era. Among the numerous commentaries on the book of Psalms, the two most prominent ones to be used in this study is the New Cambridge Bible Commentary entitled *Psalms* (2014) by Walter Brueggemann and William Bellinger. This commentary not only gives a comprehensive general introduction to the Psalter, but also features a section on specific literary, theological and historical studies on the psalms. The supplementary sections are, however, what make this commentary exceptional. The sections on 'A closer look' provide a more in-depth look at theological topics present in the text, whilst the 'Bridging the Horizons' sections apply the message of that particular psalm in a practical way to our faith. Another recent and influential commentary to be consulted is the *Hermeneia* commentary, *Psalms 3: A Commentary on Psalms 101-150* (2011), written by Erich Zenger and Frank-Lothar Hossfeld. This thorough commentary covers text-critical matters and places the psalms in the broader historical context after which the reception and theological significance of the psalm are discussed. The older, but still relevant work of Michael Goulder, *The Psalms of the Return: Book V, Psalms 107-150* (1998), interprets Psalms 137-145 in the postexilic period coinciding with the work of Ezra. Goulder (1998:212-301) then meticulously interprets each psalm within the identified life setting. The publication of Erhard Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period* (2011), provides a further look into life in the postexilic period in which the psalms under discussion originated.

Now that an overview of the psalm-specific secondary sources was given, the remainder of the discussion focuses on sources on critical spatiality, memory and identity. Some sources on the method of critical spatiality were already mentioned in section 5.3. It will therefore not be repeated here, yet it is worth mentioning that the work of Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja and David Harvey will act as the point of departure of the spatial study. The trialectic of space as perceived, conceived, and lived space as well as Harvey's (2000:161) view on spaces of hope will form part of the spatial analysis of Psalms 137-145. The perspective of Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) in his groundbreaking work on the impact of experience on space will be added to this. Besides these theoretical sources on space, there is also literature on critical spatiality and biblical studies that will be consulted throughout the study. The series *Constructions of Space* provides inclusive and wide-ranging essays on the topic of space in biblical texts. Prinsloo's essay, *Place, Space and Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean world: Theory and Practice with Reference to the Book of Jonah*, in the *Constructions of Space V (2013)* publication, provides a comprehensive methodological exposition on spatiality in the Ancient Near East. This essay, together with work done by Prinsloo in previous articles (2005 & 2006) on how to

practically apply the principles of spatiality to ancient texts will lead the way in the spatial analysis of Psalms 137-145 in this study.

In the last two decades memory studies have become an increasingly popular methodological tool, used to investigate the past as it is constructed in the Hebrew Bible (Pioske 2015:2). Craven (2009:24) describes the significance of this trend as follows:

> Though this interest represents 'a new and emerging field', once you start to think about memory, you realize it is a practice essential to the very way in which meaning is made.

In this paragraph, a few considerations about the theoretical foundation of memory studies will be discussed. Afterwards a number of works on memory to be consulted in this study will be listed. Maurice Halbwachs is considered to be the 'father' of memory studies because of his monograph *On Collective Memory* ([1925]1992), in which he unpacked the social framework of memory. One of his important contributions is found in his distinction between history and (collective) memory. Collective memory, defined as a recollection of the past that shapes social identities, should not be confused with history (Brenner & Long 2009:3). It should be kept in mind that social memory cannot be used as historical information, since the primary function of collective memory was to make meaning. This was also the main critique of Klein (2011 in *From History to Theory*) against memory studies. He warned that memory should not be given the status of being a more authentic account of events and therefore become a 'historical agent' (Craven 2011:27). With these valid remarks in mind, this study will not attempt to reconcile history in the traditional sense with memory, but rather investigate the way in which history and memory were utilised in creating a collective identity for the people of YHWH.

In order to do this, a number of works will be consulted. In addition to the few already mentioned, the book of Ronald Hendel, *Remembering Abraham: Culture, Memory, and History in the Hebrew Bible*, will also be used. Another scholar to take note of is Jan Assman. He did noteworthy work on systematising memory studies by categorising social memory in four types: mimetic, material, communicative and cultural. His book, *Das Kulturelle Gedächtnis*, focuses on the link between collective memory and cultural identity. Two other sources on memory are worth mentioning. First, *Theories of Memory: A Reader* (ed. by Rossington & Whitehead 2007) provides a general introduction to memory theories spanning from the classical period to the present. Second, the book *Performing Memory in Biblical Narrative and Beyond* (ed. by Brenner & Polak 2009) interprets a wide variety of texts and narratives from the Hebrew Bible from the perspective of memory studies.

With the theoretical considerations of memory studies discussed, we can now move on to discussing resources on the link between space, memory and identity. In order to

demonstrate this link, the study will build on the essays of Matthews, *Remembered Space in Biblical Narrative* and Bowman, *The Place of the Past: Spatial Construction in Jeremiah 1-24* in *Constructions of Space IV (2013)*. In his essay, Matthews (2013:61) argues that memory has an influence on the construction of (symbolic) space. Bowman (2013:92) takes a look at the role that memories of the past have in forming the social identity of a people.

In 2001, *Memory and History in Christianity and Judaism* was published. Two contributions in this book are of particular interest to this study. Marc Brettler (2001:1) wrote on memory in Ancient Israel in which he discusses how the historiography of the Hebrew Bible is in actual fact memory instead of history. In addition, Mary Gerhart (2001:35-40) wrote on space, time and memory. Space and time cannot be separated (Harvey 2000:182). This is the underlying principle behind remembered space. This is also the reason why remembered space, or memory, is examined in conjunction with history. In accordance with this principle, Mark George argued for a historical understanding of space as tied to time and place in the first volume of *Constructions of Space* (2007:15-31).

The last set of secondary sources to be discussed has to do with identity. The publication *Memory and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A conversation with Barry Schwartz* (2014) provides useful resources on the topic of how memory influences the construction of identity in Israel. Tim Langille wrote an essay on the impact that traumatic memories of the exile had on identity formation. In the essay, Langille (2014:57) discusses how the memories of the traumatic events of the destruction of Jerusalem and subsequent Babylonian exile contributed to the exclusivist identity of the postexilic community. Although Langille applies these insights to Pesher Habakkuk and the Damascus document, his findings are nevertheless relevant for the postexilic collection of psalms that this study examines. Another interesting perspective regarding identity is found in the essay of Joel Kaminsky entitled *Israel's Election and the Other in Biblical, Second Temple and Rabbinic Thought*. This essay was published in the book *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism* (2011) that appeared in honour of John J. Collins. Kaminsky explores the role that the category of the 'other' plays in identity formation. Especially curious is Kaminsky's (2011:21) observation of the trend in the postexilic community to exclude some people from their own group on the basis of certain behaviour that was regarded as unacceptable. This idea will be further explored in the study, as it is also present in some of the psalms in the collection to be studied, such as Psalm 141.

1.5 Objectives of the study

This section lists the aims of the study. These aims are attended to in the relevant chapters of the study:

- To indicate that Psalms 137-145 form a spatially structured collection within Book V of the Psalter.
- To examine Psalms 137-145 from a social-scientific perspective in order to:
  - place these psalms within a certain time and place in the history of Israel (postexilic Jerusalem);
  - gain an understanding of the customs, cultic and religious workings of the postexilic community;
  - grasp the nature of the conflicts between different groupings in the postexilic Judaic community.
- To investigate Psalms 137-145 from the perspective of critical spatiality in order to:
  - identify the collection of psalms as remembered space;
  - explore the relationship between remembered space (memories), history and identity in these psalms.
- To gain an understanding of the influence of remembered space on the postexilic community's understanding of God in the sense that:
  - it altered their understanding of God;
  - they constructed a new identity as the people of YHWH in light of their renewed understanding of God.

1.6 Expected results

Once Psalms 137-145 are read from a spatial perspective, it will become clear that these psalms draw on the memory of the Babylonian exile as well as the monarchical period in the history of Israel, as can be seen from the references to the life of King David in the Davidic collection (Psalms 138-145). These memories (remembered space) are used by the postexilic writers to reconstruct their social space as well as their (abstract) spaces of representation that are linked to the Divinity, YHWH. This will prove how the writers of the psalms used space to construct a new identity for themselves as the people of YHWH and how their faith and understanding of God are closely connected to memory and space.

1.7 Outline of chapters

Chapter 2 deals with some preliminary issues concerning the structural organisation of Book V of the Psalter. This chapter contains a general introduction to the Book of Psalms, discussing smaller collections within Book V. Thereafter the place of the psalms under discussion in this study, Psalms 137-145, is discussed in order to indicate why the study considers these psalms to belong together as a collection.

Chapter 3 contains the social-scientific analysis of the collection of psalms. In the first place, Psalms 137-145 are sketched against the background of the Persian period. In addition to that, a few basic social values, as discussed by Pilch and Malina (1993), are identified and their role in Psalms 137-145 is determined.

Chapter 4 forms the backbone of the study. In this chapter the spatial and memory analysis of Psalms 137-145 is done. The collection is examined and described by means of the different dimensions of space within the framework of collective memory – thus arriving at the role of remembered space in Psalms 137-145. The specific role of remembered space as a meaning-making mechanism within these psalms is discussed. In addition to that, the relation of space to the power dynamics in the psalms is also discussed.

Building upon the spatial analysis of the previous chapter, Chapter 5 explores the relation between remembered space, history and identity formation. This chapter explores the deconstruction and reconstruction of Judaic identity as well as the way in which a postexilic identity came into being. The chapter argues that the postexilic identity, as reflected in Psalms 137-145, is a product of remembered space.

Chapter 6 connects the study to the religious life of the postexilic community. The chapter explores the implications of remembered space on the people's understanding of God and regards the remembered space in Psalms 137-145 as a way of reconstructing faith in YHWH. In order to get to this point in the discussion, the chapter first studies the postexilic understanding of YHWH and the image of YHWH as manifested in Psalms 137-145.

The concluding chapter reflects upon the findings of the study and discusses the shortcomings and further opportunities for research that the study has opened up.

1.8 Concluding remarks

This chapter explained the basic idea behind the study and established a broad outline on which the study will be modelled. It serves as a foundation for the investigation. However, before the methodological umbrella, as proposed in section 1.3, is unpacked, it is necessary to deal with organisational matters that pertain to Book V of the Psalter. For this reason, Chapter 2 is devoted to a sketch of the composition of Psalms 107-150.

CHAPTER 2
STRUCTURAL MATTERS

2.1 Introduction

William Brown (2010:85) writes in his monograph, *Psalms*, that the Psalter is not simply a collection of various psalms. It is rather a collection of collections. No psalm should be read in isolation – it should rather be read as part of a network of psalms that are either closely or loosely connected to each other. Vos (2005:206) is of the opinion that the grouping of psalms was based on theological concepts. Keywords connect psalms to each other as well as make cross-references. Psalms take on new meaning when they are read as part of collections (Vos 2005:206). Identifying and interpreting the various collections is, however, not a simple task. Yet it is of the utmost importance for this study to describe the shape of the Psalter. Hence, this short chapter considers the structure of the book of Psalms with specific reference to the place of Psalms 137-145 in Book V of the Psalter.

It has become somewhat of a given in scholarship that the Psalter consists of five books. This notion has become popular in Psalms scholarship since a shift has taken place from studying individual psalms to studying the Psalter as a composition (Ahn 2017:208). This demarcation is mainly due to the work of Gerald Wilson. According to him, there was a purposeful editing of the Psalter that led to the fivefold shaping thereof (Wilson 1984:337). Wilson (1984:341) arrived at his conclusion of the existence of different groupings within the Psalter by paying attention to the specific classifications assigned to the Psalms. He noted that groups of Psalms are formed primarily by genre and authorship.

The five books are identified as follows (Brown 2014:3):
Book I – Psalms 1-41
Book II – Psalms 42-72
Book III – Psalms 73-89
Book IV – Psalms 90-106
Book V – Psalms 107-150

The 150 psalms are divided into these five books because of the four doxologies that conclude each book (Brown 2014:3): They are found at the end of Psalms 41, 72, 89 and 106. These four psalms were supposedly inserted later to demarcate the end of the first four books (Sanders 2010:677). In addition to this, Psalm 145 is seen as the conclusion to book V with a concluding doxology – Psalms 146-150 – added later (Zenger 1998:83). In keeping with the rabbinic tradition, the fivefold structure of the Book of Psalms corresponds to the five books of Moses (Brown 2014:3). Yet, it has been a matter of scholarly debate whether the doxologies were added at a later stage to divide the Psalter

into these five books or if they were originally part of the Book of Psalms (Sanders 2010:678). Sanders (2010:683) mentions that some scholars reject the notion of a fivefold structure for the Book of Psalms on the basis of the argument that this division is not stated in the oldest manuscripts of the Peshitta and Septuagint. On the other hand, Willgren (2016:204) notes that doxologies were used to conclude collections in the Ancient Near East. This suggests that the doxologies were indeed meant to demarcate certain collections within the Psalter.

As already mentioned, Gerald Wilson, in his reading of the Psalter as a coherent unit, emphasised the fivefold structure of the Book of Psalms as identified in Rabbinic literature. In his monograph, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter,* he holds that the Book of Psalms tells a story about Israel's history; a story of hope for the future (DeClaissé-Walford 2014a:2). In line with this view, Koorevaar (2010:579) notes that the Psalter is a structured theological story. To prove his point, he focuses on the subscripts and superscripts in the Psalter, especially those with relation to David. According to Koorevaar (2010:581), the psalms tell a theological story pertaining directly and indirectly to the narrative of King David. For example, in Books III-V the psalms attributed to David are used within the theological framework of the exile and post-exilic eras (Koorevaar 2010:581). He interprets all the psalms in the Psalter against the background of the 'Davidic Messianic drama' (Koorevaar 2010:582). Although the story and character of David plays a defining role in the Psalter, I do not want to reduce the rich diversity of the Psalter's story to David alone. It is, however, true that the five books in the Psalter all tell the story of Israel from different perspectives. DeClaissé-Walford (2019:671-672) agrees that the Psalter tells the story of Israel from the time of the Davidic reign up to the return of the exiles from Babylon. Therefore, this study agrees that the Psalter consists of these five books – each written with a specific agenda in mind against a specific historical background.

From the discussion up to this point, it is clear that the arguments for and against the fivefold structuring of the Psalter certainly are complex. Due to a lack of space, these arguments can unfortunately not be discussed here in detail. But despite critique against the fivefold structure, the study maintains the understanding of the five books of the Psalter and uses this demarcation as point of departure in this chapter's discussion.

Before moving on to the next section, it is necessary to mention something about the character and contents of the five books of the Psalter. According to DeClaissé-Walford (2019:672), the story of the Psalter as a book is 'the story of the shaping of survival'. The Book of Psalms is a document that shaped the identity of Israel amid the threat of identity loss at the hands of foreign empires, cultures and religions.

Koorevaar (2010:584) discusses the interrelationships between the five books. He groups Books I-III and Books IV-V together. Books I-II are connected by the Davidic psalms present in both, while Books II-III are connected by the collections of the psalms of Asaph and those of the sons of Korah (Koorevaar 2010:584). Books IV-V thematically belong to the exile and the return from exile. Book V is seen as an answer to Book IV, which asks that Israel be gathered from among the nations. Book V starts with a confirmative praise to God for indeed having gathered Israel from among the nations (Koorevaar 2010:584). From this description of the five books, it is clear that Books I-III are bound together by the classification of authorship, whilst Books IV-V are bound together by a historical situation that features thematically throughout the psalms in these books. Wilson (1984:352) therefore argues that Books I-III existed independently prior to Books IV-V. Zenger (1998:81), on the other hand, is of the opinion that the first four books formed a composition before Book V was added to the Psalter. This is based on a study of the chiastic structure and themes of the four doxologies (Psalms 41, 72, 89 and 106). Demonstrating his point, Zenger (1998:80) lists the themes of these four psalms as follows: persecution (Psalm 41), messianic promise (Psalm 72), absence of messianic promise (Psalm 89) and the fulfilment of (covenantal) promise by YHWH (Psalm 106). Taken from this perspective, it seems likely that Book IV formed part of Books I-III prior to the addition of Book V. Regardless of which perspective one accepts (Books I-III as prior existent composition, or Books I-IV as prior existent composition), it is clear that Book V was a later addition to the Psalter. This is especially evident in the technique used to demarcate collections of psalms within Book V. A detailed discussion on the differences between Books I-IV on the one hand and Book V on the other hand will follow in section 2.2 We now turn our attention to the contents and structure of Book V in particular.

2.2 Book V of the Psalter: Structure and contents

In this section of the chapter, the discussion will focus on Book V (Psalms 107-150) of the Psalter. Psalms 137-145 form part of Book V with Psalm 145 as the conclusion to the book. Book V of the Psalms has a hymn-like structure, possibly stemming from a cultic-liturgical origin (Zenger 1998:99). This is seen best in two smaller collections within Book V – Psalms 113-118 (the Egyptian Hallel) and Psalms 120-134 (the Songs of Ascents). Zenger (1998:99), however, also notes that these hymns were taken up into the post-cultic, postexilic *Sitz im Leben* of Book V.

When taken as a whole, Book V can be divided into various subsections and collections, besides Psalms 113-118 and 120-134. Wilson (1984:349) mentions that Book V uses הללו יה-psalms to delineate the different collections within the book. Whereas Books I-IV primarily use the classifications of genre and authorship, the psalms in Book V can be distinguished by the הדו in the introduction and the הללו יה in the conclusion. The insights of

Wilson (1984:349-352) and Zenger (1998:83,98) on the הדו and יה הללו demarcations can be interpreted as follows:

Wilson	Zenger
Psalms 107-117 (הדו, David, יה הללו) Psalm 118-135 (Wisdom frame – הדו ,Torah, ascents, יה הללו) Psalms 136-145 (הדו, David)	107, 108-110,111-112 David – messianic 113-118 Exodus 119 Torah 120-136,137 Zion 138-144,145 David – messianic

Table 1: Proposed subsections of Book V of the Psalms

Building upon the above, a more detailed, yet derived, outline of Book V is:

Psalm	Name/Type/Collection
107	Introduction/answer to Psalm 106
108-110	Davidic Psalms
111-112	Twin Psalms (Acrostics) – Function as bridge
113-118	Egyptian Hallel
119	Torah-psalm – Functions as bridge (Acrostic)
120-134	Songs of Ascents
135-136	Twin psalms – Function as bridge (Pseudo-acrostic)
137	Exile psalm
138-145	Davidic Psalms 145 (Acrostic)
146-150	Concluding Doxology

Table 2: Outline of Book V of the Psalms

From this table it is clear that the story of Book V takes place within the *inclusio* of Psalm 107, which acts as introduction, and Psalms 146-150, which act as a conclusion to the whole of the Psalter. For this reason, one can also separate Psalms 146-150 from Book V, since these five psalms act independently from the rest of the book. This implies that Book V technically ends with an acrostic psalm (145). Miller (1998:105-106) suggests a few reasons why Psalm 145 should be understood as the end to Book V. First, Psalm 145 concludes in the same way as Psalm 150 – by calling upon all living flesh to praise God. In

this sense, Psalm 145 is similar to the endings of the four doxologies of the first four books. Second, Miller (1998:107) argues that Psalm 145 rounds off Book V in the repetition of the word כל (all) which represents totality and universalization.

Furthermore, as can be seen from the different colours used to indicate the different collections, Book V has a kind of symmetric structure. Goulder (1998:14) indicates that the two Davidic collections (108-110 and 138-145) form a parallel, as well as the two sets of twin psalms (111-112 and 135-136). Throughout Book V, some psalms function as bridges that connect one collection to another. Psalms 111-112 and 135-136 (both pairs being twin psalms) as well as Psalm 119 act as bridging psalms which connect the different collections to each other. This scheme largely explains the structure of Book V.

However, it seems that Psalm 137 does not quite fit into the structure. Psalm 137 is squeezed in between the twin Psalms 135-136 and the last Davidic collection (Psalms 138-145). Scholars have tried to explain the difficulty with regard to the place of Psalm 137 in Book V in various ways. This is, however, a discussion for the next section in this chapter, 'The place of Psalms 137-145 in Book V'. At this point, it is only necessary to take note of this specific issue concerning the structure of Book V.

Central to understanding the structural issue, is gaining insight into the themes that Book V represents. Human (2010:527) thinks that Book V has a hymnic character because of its beginning and ending focusing on the praise to God. Together with this, one of the key concepts in book V rests upon the word חסד, which is especially prominent at the beginning of the book in Psalms 107-109 (Miller 1998:103-104). The heart of Book V places emphasis on David. In the psalms pertaining to King David (108-110 and 138-145), he is sketched as a persecuted servant of YHWH, who is the universal king. Human (2010:528) notes that this portrayal of David reflects a reinterpretation of the people of YHWH as obedient servants. Entrenched in the theology of Book V is an awareness of God's universal reign. Characteristically the motifs of Book V fall into the category of universal eschatology with a Davidic-messianic orientation (Zenger 1998:82). Tucker (2014:12, cf. Ballhorn 2004) identifies five themes that are present in Book V: the Torah, Israel and its relation to the nations, the reinterpretation of the temple, the Davidic king and the kingdom of God. Because of the presence of the 'kingdom of God' theme in Book V, the book reflects a theocratic perspective (cf. Tucker 2014:12). The universal kingship of YHWH as described throughout Book V confirms this theocratic perspective. In addition to this, there is also a strong anti-imperial constituent in Book V as well as a theology of the poor (Zenger 1998:82).

With regard to different theologies being present in specific groups of psalms, Zenger (1998:92) notes that Psalms 108-110 focus on royal theology and war, whilst Psalms 113-

118 are characterised by Exodus theology. Psalm 119 functions as a prayer for a Torah-oriented life that is a prerequisite for living in the presence of the God of Zion (Psalms 120-136). Psalms 137-145 once again introduce a royal theology, yet different from previous royal theologies. In this collection, the king and people of Israel are in service of the universal King, YHWH (Zenger 1998:98).

The wisdom motif is another theme to take note of in the editing and structure of Book V. The wisdom tradition has increasingly gained attention in recent scholarship. The structure of Book V leans toward the interpretation that a later stage of editing of the Psalter was done by a wisdom editor. This line of reasoning builds upon the observation that psalms with a wisdom influence are found at strategic points in Book V (Tucker 2014:8). Furthermore, the wisdom theme also links up with the Torah theme. Central to Book V is of course Psalm 119 with its emphasis on Torah obedience. Mensah (2016) discusses the link between the semantic field of תורה and the semantic field of wisdom in his book *"I turned back my feet to your decrees" (Psalm 119:59): Torah in the Fifth Book of the Psalter.* Burger (1991:27), in agreement with Mensah (2016) indicates that the semantic field in which the word תורה functions didactically is connected to the wisdom tradition of *teaching*. This interconnectedness is best illustrated in the language used in the psalms. Wisdom language includes words such as חכם (wise), חכמה (wisdom), and also תורה (law, teaching). Another characteristic marker of the wisdom tradition is acrostic poems, such as Psalms 111, 112, 119 and 145. The wisdom motif is, however, not limited to the vocabulary and characteristics mentioned here. Wisdom formulas and the contents of a poem should also be taken into consideration in classifying it as part of the wisdom tradition (Burger 1991:228). It is clear that the issue of classifying psalms and other texts as part of the wisdom tradition is much more complex than the scope of this study allows. This paragraph only wants to create awareness of the wisdom motif running through Book V of the Psalter. The so-called 'wisdom-Torah-editing' in the Fifth Book manifests itself in Psalms 107, 111-112, 119, 135-136 and Psalm 145. Note that the psalms mentioned here are also the ones functioning as transitions or seams in the larger structure of Book V. Of especial importance to this study, is of course Psalms 135-136 and Psalm 145. Psalm 145 is an acrostic, while Psalms 135-136 are considered to be pseudo-acrostics (Weber 2003:327,331). Weber (2003:327,331) notes the acrostic characteristics of Psalms 135-136. These psalms can, therefore, be regarded as part of the wisdom tradition. These insights are relevant to this study since the wisdom features in the Psalter as a whole and in these psalms as well reflect a move from the temple cult to a religion that is not based in the temple (Petrany 2014:99). It is part of a bigger process of redefining identity and rethinking religion spatially and mnemonically.

2.3 The place of Psalms 137-145 as a collection in Book V

This section forms the backbone of the study. The basic tenet underlying the study is that Psalms 137-145 function as a collection within Book V. In the discussion that follows, it will become clear why and on which premises these psalms are grouped together. The first part of the section examines the difficulty surrounding the place of Psalm 137 in relation to Book V as a whole, but also to the following psalms (138-145) in particular. The second part of the section studies the contents and basis of Psalms 137-145 as an independent small collection in Book V.

2.3.1 Psalm 137 in relation to Book V

In the previous section, it has been mentioned that Psalm 137 seems out of place in the current structure of Book V. There are diverging opinions on the reason why Psalm 137 was inserted between the twin psalms 135-136 and the last Davidic Psalter 138-145. According to Goulder (1998:14), Psalm 137 forms a parallel to Psalm 107, while Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:520) argue that it is a transitional psalm between Psalms 135-136 and Psalms 138-145. Tucker (2014:10) regards Psalm 137 as an introduction to Psalms 138-145. This psalm was used to introduce the last Davidic Psalter since it has to do with 'the threat posed by an enemy nation' (Tucker 2014:10). The threat from enemies as described in Psalm 137 is also significant for Leuenberger (2004:320) since he reads Psalms 138-145 against the background of the threat posed by other nations. This reading does make sense in light of the postexilic context of Israel when they continued to be dominated by foreign nations. It is in these psalms (amongst others) where, according to Tucker (2014:16), the constructing and deconstructing of the threat of enemies take place. From this, one can infer that Psalm 137 comments on the power dynamics within Israel by recalling the memory of the Babylonian exile. This in turn links to the following psalms that also describe the power dynamics in postexilic Israel within the context of the life of David.

Berlin (2005:65), however, offers another take on the issues surrounding the relation of Psalm 137 to Psalms 138-145. In her view, the main problem concerning the place of Psalm 137 can be described in terms of chronology. Though the dating of psalms is a challenging endeavour, it is widely accepted that especially Book IV and V are postexilic creations. Therefore, it does not seem to make sense that Psalm 137 takes the reader back to the rivers of Babylon – the heart of the exile – even if the psalm is described as a reflection upon the exile. Hence, Berlin (2005:65) argues that 'exile' in this instance should be understood as a 'religious state of mind' and not limited to a geographic place. According to her (Berlin, 2005:65), the people of Israel felt as if they were in 'exile' long after they returned from actual exile. The loss of their temple and their continually being ruled by foreign nations contributed to their exilic state of mind. This perspective not only

addresses the issue of Psalm 137 being chronologically out of place, but also opens up new possibilities from a spatial perspective. These possibilities will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Another important voice in the structural argument of the placing of Psalm 137 is that of DeClaissé-Walford (2019:673-674). She interprets Psalm 137 as a conclusion to the twin Psalms 135-136. In this sense, Psalm 137 forms part of the larger conclusion to the Songs of Ascent (Psalms 120-134). The link between Psalm 137 and the Songs of Ascent is found in the similar style – that of communal psalms – and length of Psalm 137 and Psalms 120-134 as well as in the emphasis on Jerusalem and Zion.

The important realisation brought about by the discussion thus far is that Psalm 137 is not nearly as out of place as it seems. Some scholars, such as DeClaissé-Walford (2019:673-674), see in Psalm 137 a connection to the preceding psalms, whilst others, such as Tucker (2014:10-13; 119-124) and Berlin (2005:65), see a connection between Psalm 137 and the following psalms (138-145). This study, however, argues for a closer connection between Psalms 137-145 than between Psalms 135-137. The most prominent theme linking Psalm 137 to the next psalm (138) is that of singing a song. Psalm 137 is characterised by the community's inability to sing a song for YHWH, while Psalm 138 starts with a song for YHWH. Psalm 138 is thus a direct answer to the dire situation in Psalm 137. Psalm 137 is thus intricately connected to the following psalms (138-145), so that they form a collection. Psalm 137 serves as an introduction to the last Davidic collection and it is thematically linked to the following psalms. Psalm 137 not only recalls the physical exile; it also alludes to the exile as an abstract space, so as to link it to the 'enemies' (foreign nations) mentioned in the rest of the psalms in the collection. In addition to this, Zakovitch (2014:216) discusses the close connection between Psalm 137 and Psalm 138. Psalm 138 is a confirmation that the enemies mentioned in Psalm 137 will not escape retribution. Another perspective to take note of is that of Van Grol (2010:332). In line with Berlin (2005:65), Van Grol (2010:332) is of the opinion that Psalm 137 addresses an issue within the postexilic community (thus exile is meant figuratively). The links between Psalms 137 and 138-145 also lie on the deeper levels of space and memory as the title of this study suggests. Regardless of differing interpretations on the function of Psalm 137, one must admit that this psalm is decisive for the way in which Psalms 138-145 are interpreted.

2.3.2 Psalms 137-145: A collection

From the discussion above, Psalms 138-145 can be interpreted as a reaction to the situation described in Psalm 137; a way of coping with the 'contemporary crisis', as Van Grol (2010:332) puts it. From this perspective, Psalms 138-145 play the role of providing

an answer to the religious and identity crisis that the postexilic community faced. There is also significant development in the collection: Psalm 137 speaks of the inability of singing a song for YHWH whilst in exile, while Psalm 145 attests to the singing of a song for YHWH that has now become a reality once again.

Zenger (1998:93-96) proposes a valuable structure for Psalms 138-145 in which he groups smaller collections of psalms together. According to his demarcation, Psalm 138 and 145 form a frame that calls upon all to praise the name of YHWH. Psalms 140-143 are prayers of supplication that share common semantic fields. These prayers are followed by a royal psalm – Psalm 144 – which serves as a conclusion to Psalms 140-143. Psalm 144 provides a vision of happiness after the distress described in Psalms 140-143. Seen from this perspective, Psalm 139 introduces the prayers of supplication with the keyword יד featuring again in Psalm 144.

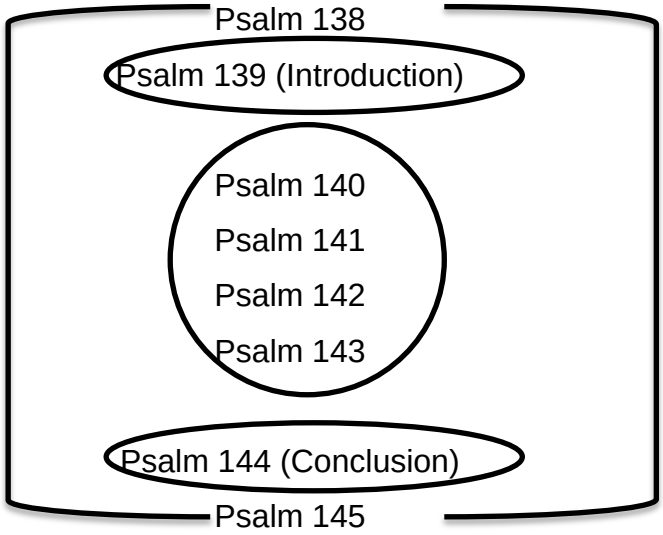

Figure 2: The symmetric structure of the cluster of Psalms 138-145

Yet, after all things are considered, the question stands: Why a Davidic collection as conclusion to Book V that reflects the background of postexilic Judaism? DeClaissé-Walford (2014b:374) answers this question in her essay, *The meta-narrative of the Psalter.* According to her, the answer lies in Psalm 145 where David – the great king of Israel – adds his voice to those of the community of faith in acknowledging God as the ultimate and true king. Van Grol (2010:319) also endorses this notion by describing this collection of psalms as the final switch from Davidic kingship to theocracy. This move fits well into the broader structure of the Psalter since Psalms 146-150, the final doxology, praises God and his eternal reign.

Building on the insights of Van Grol (2010:336), the following thematic relations play a role in the collection comprising Psalms 137-145: kingship of David, kingship of God, prayer,

being a servant, enemies and the faithful. A more detailed discussion of the links between these psalms will follow in the upcoming chapters. At this stage, it is only necessary to recognise the bigger narrative that ties these psalms together.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter briefly examined the broad structure of the Book of Psalms as well as the place of Psalms 137-145 within Book V. Zakovitch (2014:226) states that reading the psalms in a certain sequence as a collection prompts the exegete to grasp the meaning inferred by that order and collection. This case in point is clearly illustrated when reading Psalms 137-145 together. When the exilic crisis to which Psalm 137 refers, is read as an allusion to a crisis of the postexilic community, then it becomes clear that Psalms 138-145 are a reaction to that situation. This collection seeks to redefine the identity of the postexilic community by drawing on memories of the exile and the kingship of David. As such a new space, remembered space, is created. In this space, there is a dynamic development between Psalms 137-145. This development is seen in the shift from not singing songs to singing songs for YHWH and the understanding of YHWH's kingship as opposed to the ending of David's kingship. This collection reconstructs the political and religious life of postexilic Jews. The following chapter will shine a social-scientific light on the events behind the texts of Psalms 137-145 in order to further establish the premise for reading these psalms as a collection.

CHAPTER 3
SOCIAL-SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF PSALMS 137-145

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the structural matters surrounding the place of Psalms 137-145 in Book V of the Psalter. We now turn our attention to examining the context within which the psalms originated. This will help us to gain a broader perspective on the psalms under discussion. The aim of this chapter is thus to 'read' the socio-political and cultural world and context of Psalms 137-145. This is an essential part of the study since the texts of the Hebrew Bible speak from certain social worlds and are witnesses to the 'social dimensions of human experience' (Esler 1994:2). The necessity of a social-scientific approach to the psalms becomes even clearer in the following statement of Berquist (2007:195):

> The study of the book of Psalms often proceeds from literary assumptions rather than from the historical and sociological approaches that have become the hallmark of Persian-period studies. Yet Psalms has long been understood as the "songbook of the Second Temple…"

The following section therefore commences by giving a theoretical overview of the basic values and tenets of the social-scientific approach. Next, an historical overview will be given on the Persian period and its circumstances in which the psalms originated. The longest section of this chapter follows after that. That is the section that will study the social values of each individual psalm. Once that has been discussed, the chapter will conclude.

3.2 Social-scientific approach: Basic values and tenets

As mentioned in the section on methodology in Chapter 1, the social sciences have been applied in interpreting the Bible for several decades now. John Pilch and Bruce Malina (1993) have done groundbreaking work on biblical social values. The social-scientific approach takes the multifaceted interaction between people and their social, historical and political contexts into account. Biblical texts, such as those of the psalms, are a product of the 'complex interpenetration of society and faith', as Esler (1994:2) puts it.

In studying social values, one must also take the social institutions that legitimate these social values into consideration. That is exactly what Pilch and Malina (1993:xviii) do in the introduction to their *Handbook of Biblical social values.* The main social institutions that played a role in the biblical world are politics, economics, religion and kinship. Of these four, kinship functioned as the core social institution according to which all social values

were shaped. This meant that the identity of people was primarily defined in terms of being male or female, since that would determine their kinship role – husband/wife and son/daughter. All other identity markers were dependent on their kinship-status. In economic terms, people were defined as rich or poor, whilst in political terms a person would either be powerful or powerless and religiously speaking a person was either pious or impious (Pilch & Malina 1993:xviii). Civilisation functioned on a hierarchical and patriarchal level with the husband/father, the rich and the powerful being the authoritative figures in the community. The Ancient Near Eastern society was a group-oriented society, which consisted of an in-group and an out-group. Consequently, people were divided into those who belong – 'us' – and those who do not belong – 'them' (Pilch & Malina 1993:xx-xxi). In the book of Psalms, the righteous (צדיקים) were considered part of the in-group, while the wicked (רשׁעים) were part of the out-group (Botha 2019:27). In order to ensure that one stays part of the group, it was necessary that a person 'played by the rules' of the group. This meant that one had to put the group's priorities first and that one's personhood and personality were determined by the relationship to the group to which one belonged (Pilch & Malina 1993:xix-xx). This phenomenon is called dyadism.

Two of the key values in the social world of the biblical texts are honour and shame. Pilch and Malina (1993:95) describe honour as 'publicly acknowledged worth'. One was born with a certain level of honour based upon the honour inherited from ancestors. When a person lost his worth, he lost his honour and was thus shamed (Pilch & Malina 1993:97). These values regulated the social dynamics of the Ancient Near Eastern world. The honour of YHWH stood above all else. YHWH deserved honour and praise and the righteous (Israel) that lived near YHWH had honour due to their relationship with YHWH (Botha 2003:206). Closely related to the values of honour and shame is the value of power. Pilch and Malina (1993:140) describe this relation by stating that when the power of a superior was respected, that person was deemed to be honourable. Therefore, power and honour went hand in hand.

The last major social relationship to be discussed before moving on to the next section is the relationship of patron and client. In the hierarchal and patriarchal society of the Hebrew Bible, this relationship arranged political, economic and religious relations. The patron would see to it that their clients' needs were met and could be compared to a father providing for his children. In return, the client would repay the patron by honouring him in public and proclaiming his goodness (Pilch & Malina 1993:134-135). The clients had to be like loving children – loyal and grateful toward the patron for the favour he showed them. In terms of Israel's relationship with YHWH, Israel was the client and YHWH was the patron showering them with his good deeds and faithful love. In return, Israel had to be loyal to YHWH, honouring and praising his name (cf. Schäder 2010:256-257).

The exile proved to be a challenge to the social institutions of Israel since the central institutions of religion and politics came to a fall due to the exile (Bautch 2009:93). This necessitated a reinterpretation of the fundamental values of Israelite society in order to maintain the Israelite Yahwist identity. During the monarchy in Israel, organised religion was responsible for ensuring that circumcision, the Sabbath and other religious celebrations were upheld. In exile, however, the family became the vehicle for maintaining Israelite religion (Bautch 2009:93). In postexilic times, the social institutions and values had yet again to be reinterpreted and rebuilt in accordance with new circumstances.

3.3 The Persian period and Psalms 137-145

Since the psalms in Book V of the Psalter originated in the postexilic era, this section describes the social, political, economic and religious background of the Persian period. Berquist (2007:195) is of the opinion that an understanding of the psalms in the postexilic period should start with the context of the Persian Empire.

3.3.1 The rise of a new world order: Political ideology

The Persian Empire, led by Cyrus the Great, came to the rise and defeated the Neo-Babylonian Empire of king Nabonidus in 539 BCE (Briant 2002:40). In contrast to the Babylonian Empire, the Hebrew Bible shines a positive light on Cyrus and the Persian Empire. Cyrus is described as YHWH's anointed one – allowing the exiles in Babylon to return to Jerusalem and ordering the temple to be rebuilt (Briant 2002:46). This perception of Cyrus corresponds to historical evidence from Herodotus that portrayed Cyrus not as a tyrant, but as a liberator (Tucker 2014:23). It is important to note that the Persian Empire differed from those that came before it not only in the way that they ruled their vassal states, but also in the sheer size of the empire. According to Tucker (2014:19), the Achaemenid Empire was the largest of all empires up to that time. The area of Judah was known as Yehud within this empire. The size of the empire formed part of the imperial ideology. According to Tucker (2014:27), the notion of a worldwide empire/kingdom is one of three elements that were used to consolidate the Persian Empire. Religion, specifically Zoroastrianism, played a key role in the authorising of Persian world rule (Gerstenberger 2011:53). The creation narrative and creator god were the legitimising forces for the global rule of Persia (Tucker 2014:27). By this divine authorisation, the Persian Empire consolidated their universal rule. The second element that the Persians used to consolidate their rule was the claim that the empire guaranteed that the cosmic order was maintained (Tucker 2014:36). The empire protected the people from cosmic disorder and chaos.

The third way in which the Persians consolidated and established a new world order lies in their organisation and the treatment of their subjects. Given the scope of the empire, it must have been a difficult task to keep the multi-cultural, multi-lingual, diverse empire united. Yet the Persians succeeded in keeping the empire united, despite numerous civil wars and rebellions that erupted (Gerstenberger 2011:54). Gerstenberger (2011:55) attributes this to the fact that the rulers from Cyrus the Great to Darius III 'did not attempt to create a linguistic, cultural, juridical, or religious basis of unity'. As part of their political ideology, the Persian Empire permitted each vassal state to practice and promote their own religion, language and culture. Tucker (2014:31) calls this the '*joyous participation of subjects in the empire'*. Whereas the relationship between an empire and vassal state was always described in antagonistic terms, the relationship between the Persian Empire and its subjects is described as voluntary and cooperative (Tucker 2014:31). This is also reflected in Achaemenian iconography. Part of the Persian Empire's strategy to ensure the unity of the empire was to give local administrative regions independence. Politics, the military and trade were used as unifying factors in the empire (Gerstenberger 2011:55). This brings us to the socio-economic circumstances in Yehud.

3.3.2 Socio-economic circumstances of Yehud

Persia used their colonies, such as Yehud, to serve the needs of the empire economically and in military terms. The Persian Empire used their subjects for labour, as soldiers and as a source from which tax could be collected (Berquist 2007:195). The economy in Yehud – which was an agrarian society – mainly consisted of livestock and agriculture, while people in urban areas were reliant on the exchange of goods (Gerstenberger 2011:111). It was a limited goods system in which there was no surplus. Peasant farmers had to ensure that they had enough produce for themselves, as well as to pay taxes and to exchange for other goods that they couldn't produce themselves. However, if one were not able to make ends meet, one could make debt, but if the debt could not be repaid, one would lose one's property – leading to poverty and begging (Gerstenberger 2011:114). This was an ever-increasing reality in the lives of Judeans in the Persian period. From this sketch of the socio-economic circumstances in Yehud, it becomes clear that even though the Persian Empire was not as oppressive as, for example, the rule of the Babylonians, people still suffered from poverty. Though the Judeans had more independence under the Persians, Yehud was still a colony of the Persian Empire, resorting under their rule.

Holladay (1993:54) notes that the postexilic Jewish community in Jerusalem was a relatively small community. Yet this community was no stranger to various raids, revolts and wars. Although Yehud never revolted against the Persians, their criticism on the imperial ideology can be seen in their literature (Tucker 2014:53). In agreement with this, Berquist (2007:196) argues that literature, such as the biblical texts, are both a product of

empire and a resistance to empire. The Jews were dominated by the Persians, yet in their literature they deconstructed and reconstructed imperial ideas of power and in this way resisted the empire (Berquist 2007:196). Therefore, it is in the interaction between resistance and domination that one finds the social context of Yehud. In this sense, the Jews formed a subculture within the broader imperial culture of the Persian Empire. The subculture of Yehud was mainly centred on their faith in YHWH. This brings us to the religious circumstances in Yehud.

3.3.3 Religious circumstances in Yehud

Gerstenberger (2002:224) calls the theology of the postexilic community 'situation-conditioned'. The religion of postexilic Israel was shaped by the political changes, their experience of history and the new social structure. The monotheistic religion of Yahwism characterises Persian period Yehud (Gerstenberger 2011:118). After the return from the Babylonian exile, the postexilic community started rebuilding the temple and, with it, their faith. The Zion theology that marked the Israelite religion before the exile seemingly failed them and had to be rethought. In pre-exilic thought, Zion functioned as the impenetrable dwelling place of God (Hoppe 2000:37). In addition, YHWH's triumph over kings and other nations are a key motif in Zion theology (Ollenburger 1987:15). The exilic events ruined both these notions. The works of scholars such as Ollenburger (1987) and Hoppe (2000) make it clear that Zion theology, however, did not disappear in postexilic Israel. Rather, it was rethought and reinterpreted. The postexilic community did this by reversing the main notions of Zion theology through the use of memory. The pre-exilic memory of an inviolable Zion and God's kingship were used to create a postexilic Zion theology that stressed YHWH as universal king and regarded Zion on a second-, third- and fourthspace level. This brought hope to the community despite the despair they experienced during exile.

The rethinking of Zion theology had spatial implications for their image of YHWH. This aspect of Israel's postexilic religion will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Nevertheless, in postexilic Israel YHWH became the exclusive God of the whole world as well as the personal God of the postexilic community (Gerstenberger 2002:224). Gerstenberger (2011:118) further notes that all the members of the postexilic community were therefore expected to pledge themselves to the unconditional worship of YHWH. This is in itself remarkable, since before the exile, religion was in concurrence with membership of the family – one was automatically part of the religion due to the family group to which one belonged. After the exile, however, more emphasis was placed upon a personal decision to believe and a personal relationship with YHWH in which YHWH showed personal concern to an individual (Gerstenberger 2002:236).

Part of the unconditional worship of YHWH was certain identity markers such as circumcision, various religious festivals, Sabbath observance and a prohibition against intermarriage (Bautch 2009:2). The postexilic community was, however, divided into different factions competing over the identity of the 'true Israel' (Brettler 2017:284). Most of these factions were based on different priestly groups, which included the Levites as temple servants, the Aaronite priests and the Zadokite priests (Gillingham 2014:204). In the Second Temple period, the Zadokite priesthood gained increased status, whilst a schism occurred between the Aaronite priesthood and the Levites, leading to the Levites' decreasing priestly status (Gillingham 2014:204). Some factions supported priestly authorities, whilst others were against it (Holladay 1993:55).

It was mainly these groups that were responsible for the production of Israel's literature. An example of this is found in the references in many of the psalms of the Asaphites and Korahites. They were part of the Levitical temple servants (Gillingham 2014:204). In addition to these groups that played an editorial role in the Psalter, there is also the Davidising of the Psalter – especially in Book V with the insertion of Psalms 137-145. This is connected to the development of the Book of Psalms into a five-part 'Torah of David' (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:6). We know that most of the written literature of Israel developed in the postexilic period. The different groups produced different collections such as the Deuteronomistic tradition and the priestly tradition. Gerstenberger (2002:211) states that the main purpose for the production of Israelite literature was to stabilise the postexilic community and build a new identity under foreign rule.

It is in the midst of this search for a collective identity that the psalms of Book V originated. Berquist (2007:198-199) is of the opinion that the psalms reflect the struggle of the postexilic Jews to identify their group. Moreover, the psalms answer to the struggles and pains of settled life in Yehud after the exile (Berquist 2007:197).

According to Grabbe (2004:242), Second Temple Judaism redeveloped ideas with regard to the connection between YHWH and the temple in the light of the exile experience and the fall of the First Temple. First, there is the כבד-theology developed by the priestly tradition, and second, there is the שׁם-theology that was developed by the Deuteronomist tradition (Grabbe 2004:242). The name of YHWH was praised for being the most powerful God in the universe for saving his people from the Babylonians by letting Cyrus rise to power (Gerstenberger 2002:224). The other side of the power coin – impotence – also had to be grappled with by the postexilic community given all that happened during the exile. Gerstenberger (2002:248) argues that Israel interpreted their suffering and powerlessness in exile against the background of YHWH's impotence. God changed roles from powerful to powerless in order to be among the suffering. Yet what set the Yahwist religion apart was that their God was not overcome by suffering and impotence. Locked up in the

suffering was hope – a hope in God to make new life possible. Together with YHWH's power, his justice and peace also played an important role in the life of the postexilic community. YHWH's concern for the individual as well as the community plays out in his effectuating justice and peace. This is especially seen in the theology of the poor in the psalms in Book V. The justice of YHWH included protection from enemies and hostile nations that oppressed the people of YHWH. Therefore YHWH, as the just God, had to defend the community (Gerstenberger 2002:240).

The last interesting tendency to take note of in the postexilic religion of Israel is the way in which the Persian imperial ideology was deconstructed and applied to Yahwism. This is evident in especially the psalms. The ideology of the Persian Empire as the benevolent universal empire was reconstructed in terms of YHWH's universal reign. The image of the Persian king as liberator is also applied to YHWH – the king and liberator of his people (Gerstenberger 2002:224-225, 241).

3.4 Social-scientific reading of Psalms 137-145[1]

As was explained in the above discussion, the psalms in Book V, and more specific, Psalms 137-145, seem to have originated and were edited during the postexilic Persian period. It is against this complex socio-economic, historical and religious background that Psalms 137-145 should be interpreted. Gillingham (2014:201) states that the Psalter was organised in such a way that the collection demonstrates that the kingdom of God will become a reality and that the whole world will praise YHWH as the king despite the failed monarchy, the destruction of the temple and the Israelites' being under foreign domination. That description basically summarises the theological agenda of Psalms 137-145. This collection serves as the climax of the postexilic community's reinterpretation of space, memory and faith. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:584) regard the fifth Davidic Psalter as a critical reinterpretation of previous Davidic collections. They call it the 'self-referentiality of the Psalter':

> The Psalter exegetes itself, which here means that at its end a group of psalms make semantic and structural references back to the beginning of the whole book.

This not only explains the various intertextual links between psalms, but also the editorial intent of a collection such as Psalms 137-145. In order to prove how Psalms 137-145 reinterpret the life of the postexilic community, the remainder of the chapter investigates each psalm against the social background of Persian period Yehud by making use of the social values described in section 3.2. It should, however, be kept in mind that this study

[1] See Addendum A for the Hebrew text and translation of each of the psalms.

only gives a bird's-eye view on the psalms under discussion. It is not the intent of the study to give an in-depth discussion of each psalm. Each psalm is briefly discussed in order to paint the larger picture of the social-scientific features present in Psalms 137-145 as a collection.

3.4.1 Psalm 137

As discussed in Chapter 2, Psalm 137 is a controversial psalm for two reasons: first, the end of the psalm is disturbing, and second, the psalm does not seem to fit into Book V of the Psalter. Schaefer (2001:321) calls Psalm 137 a 'love song for Jerusalem'. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:514) describe the psalm as an expression of 'sorrowful homesickness' for the Jerusalem that was. According to Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:573), the trauma of the exile forms the sociohistorical context of the psalm. Psalm 137 demonstrates the failing of Zion theology which celebrated God's kingship and Zion being YHWH's elected dwelling place (Hoppe 2000:39).

Berlin (2017:341) lists Jerusalem, Zion, the temple and the Davidic rule as popular themes in postexilic literature. Psalm 137 reflects the themes of exile, Jerusalem and Zion. Psalm 137 is therefore associated with Zion theology and seen in the company of the Songs of Zion (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:573). This psalm testifies to the significance that Zion and Jerusalem had for the Israelites (Hoppe 2000:39). Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:512) emphasise that the psalm is shaped by the contrast between Babylon – the capital city of the oppressive empire – and Zion/Jerusalem. The 'rivers' to which are referred in verse 1 are therefore the Euphrates river that characterises the city of Babylon. This postexilic psalm evokes the memory of the loss of Jerusalem and the First Temple (Berlin 2017:341). Psalm 137, however, evokes the memory of the exile since it also applies to the situation of the postexilic community. Berlin (2005:65) argues that the postexilic community still felt that they were in exile long after they returned from Babylon. This is so since the exile is also a 'religious state of mind' that persisted as long as the temple and Israel's religion were not rebuilt (Berlin 2005:65). It is against this socio-political background that the psalm is to be read. In social-scientific terms one can say that the two main social institutions that come to play in Psalm 137 are politics and religion. Let us pay attention to the political issues first.

There is an obvious demarcation in the psalm of the in-group and the out-group that is politically determined. The lamenting (postexilic) community functions as the in-group remembering Zion and Jerusalem. They are denoted with 'we' and 'I' in the psalm. The city of Babylon, the oppressors/tormentors (הולל), referred to as 'them' in the psalm, form the out-group. Part of the out-group, together with the Babylonians, are the 'sons of Edom'. They were the allies of Babylon at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and the First

Temple (Schaefer 2001:321). The members of the 'out-group' (Babylonians and Edomites), however, also function on a symbolic level in the postexilic time. They symbolise all the hostile forces like foreign rule and factions within the postexilic community. Over against the out-group, the in-group consists of those that feel like powerless captives in a foreign land – a land they are not familiar with anymore after the exile.

In terms of religion, the singing of songs for YHWH and the musical instruments mentioned in the psalm, refer to the cultic setting (Berlin 2005:344-345). The expressions in verses 5-6, 'If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget (herself)' and 'May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you' also have links to singing and playing musical instruments. Schaefer (2001:321) explains that the right hand would most probably have been the one that would have plucked the harp, while the tongue is essential in singing songs for YHWH. In social-scientific terms, the mouth was part of the zone of speech, defending one's honour or shaming others while the hands were part of the zone of purposeful activity (Pilch & Malina 1993:92). More specifically, the right hand had to do with power. These references show the powerlessness of the postexilic community under imperial rule – not being able to act or speak (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:514). The speaker's wish to rather remain powerless – to forget his right hand or lose the use of his tongue – demonstrates the radical means to which the speaker will go in order to remember his identity. At a deeper religious level, it thus symbolises the search for identity since Jerusalem, Zion and the temple were the key elements that defined the Judean religious identity (Ollenburger 1987:15-19).

The main social values present in Psalm 137 have to do with power, honour and shame. Tucker (2014:121) argues that the theme of the psalm is not about Israel and its history, but rather about the wickedness of empires. In this sense, Psalm 137 can be read as a comment on imperial conduct. This is seen in the words used in the psalm. Words such as 'our captors' (שׁוביו) and 'our oppressors' (תוללינו) in verse 3 as well as the command to 'lay bare' (ערה) in verse 7 confirm this. These words fall in the semantic field of power. The word ערה can be translated as 'expose', sometimes meaning to 'uncover nudity'. It is used to describe what the Edomites did to Jerusalem. Pilch and Malina (1993:119) note that nudity was directly linked to shame. By using this word, the writer of the psalm conveys the atrocity of losing their honour and the greatness of the resultant shame that went along with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The upsetting beatitude with which the psalm ends must also be understood against the military imperial background of the rest of the psalm. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:519) indicate that this image was inspired by the cruel practices of war in those times in which children as well as pregnant women were killed to ensure that the enemy would not have a future. Furthermore, the death of children

was an element often used as a judgement by God – think of the death of the Egyptian firstborns in Exodus 11.

Psalm 137 is a vivid psalm filled with emotion. It demonstrates something of the trauma, anger and shame that Israel went through under imperial rule – even after the return from exile. Psalms such as this one proves to be a powerful pastoral instrument since it allows for catharsis. The most prominent social values present in Psalm 137 include the social institutions of politics and religion, in-group and out-group dynamics as well as power, honour and shame. We now turn to a social-scientific reading of Psalm 138.

3.4.2 Psalm 138

Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:528) typify Psalm 138 as a prayer of confession and thanksgiving. Psalm 138 calls on the community to remember the steadfast love of YHWH (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:578). The word חסד in verses 2 and 8 forms a thematic *inclusio*. Psalm 138 can be read as an answer to Psalm 137 (Tucker 2014:124). This is especially seen when comparing 137:4 'How can we sing the song of YHWH in a foreign land?' to 138:5 'And they will sing of the ways of YHWH because the glory of YHWH is great.' With Psalm 137 being a community lament attesting to the inability of the (post)exilic community to sing a song for YHWH, Psalm 138 thanks YHWH for his steadfast love that led the community from the dire circumstances of the exile to new circumstances in which the community is once again able to praise YHWH. Psalm 138:3 refers to the crisis from which the speaker prayed to God in Psalm 137 and thanks YHWH for the deliverance (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:577). Whereas the presence of YHWH felt far away in Psalm 137, the psalmist now bows down to the temple – the symbol of YHWH's presence (Schaefer 2001:324).

Structurally, Psalm 138 can be divided into three parts. Verses 1-3 form a call to praise YHWH by an individual, in verses 4-6, YHWH is praised by the kings of the earth, and verses 7-8 conclude the psalm with a confession of trust (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:528).

From a social-scientific perspective, verses 1-3 have to do with the social institution of religion and the Israelite cult with references to 'gods' and the temple. These references should, however, be understood in terms of the postexilic community – where the Israelite religion had to rediscover their identity in the midst of having been confronted with other religious influences (Babylonian as well as Persian) and the theological question of YHWH's presence. The religious realm is then expanded to the social institution of politics in verses 4-6. Worship of YHWH is universalised when the speaker states that 'all the kings of the earth' will praise YHWH because they heard the words of YHWH. This reference to the leaders of other nations singing YHWH's praise might refer to the leaders

of the Persian Empire (see Section 3.3.1). In this sense, Israel's thanksgiving is witnessed by the gods (verse 1) and the kings of the earth (verse 4). Psalm 138 attests to the postexilic community's Yahwistic reinterpretation of religion and politics within the broader Persian context.

Group orientation also comes to the fore in Psalm 138. In verse 6, the humble/lowly (שפל) functions as the in-group – the ones with whom YHWH is concerned. The out-group is also mentioned. They are the 'proud' (גבה) and the 'enemies' (איב). The speaker states that YHWH only knows the proud from a distance (more on this in Chapter 4). However, YHWH saves the humble with his right hand.

The patron-client relationship also features in Psalm 138. This relationship is between the postexilic community as client and YHWH as patron. Therefore, the psalm calls on the worshippers to praise and thank YHWH – as patron – for his steadfast love and trustworthiness.

Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:577) make an important observation with regard to the conclusion of the psalm in verse 8. The psalmist appeals to YHWH not to abandon the works of his hands. This suggests that the crisis is not only in the past (during the exile) but persists in the present (in the postexilic period). This is but one of the examples of the way in which the postexilic circumstances are locked up in the collection of Psalms 137-145.

3.4.3 Psalm 139

Hermann Gunkel (1998:46) places Psalm 139 in the genre of a hymn of an individual singer in the temple liturgy of Israel. This interpretation has unfortunately led to the diminishing of the psalm's conclusion, namely verses 19-22 (Goulder 1998:238). Gunkel's form-critical approach to the Book of Psalms has, however, been long disputed since scholars have started to read the psalms from a postexilic perspective that is not exclusively linked to the cultic context of Israel. Nonetheless, scholars do agree that the psalm is contemplative, a meditation of an individual's personal relationship with YHWH (cf. Gunkel 1998:46; Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:538). According to Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:537), 'Psalm 139 is one of the most intensely studied poems in the Psalter'.

With regard to the structure of the psalm, Holman (1971:301) divides the psalm into two sections: verses 1-18 and 19-24. Divine knowledge and YHWH's omnipresence characterise the first section. This section is contemplative. In essence, it is about the identity of the speaker (and postexilic community) in relation to YHWH. After the supposed estrangement between YHWH and his people in exile, the psalmist contemplates the

presence of YHWH and realises that YHWH is and always was omnipresent. In the second section of the psalm, the mood changes notably. It is more violent, using terms like slay/kill (קטל), hate (שׂנה) and loathe (קוּט). According to Holman (1971:302), verses 19-24 have to do with the speaker's moral behaviour.

Upon seeing the structure of Psalm 139, one may wonder how it fits into the collection spanning from Psalm 137 to Psalm 145. Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:582) argue that this psalm fits well into the postexilic context. As in Psalm 138, this psalm attests to YHWH's being trustworthy and present. Furthermore, verses 19-24 fit into the context since the in-group/out-group feature there once more. Tucker (2014:124) notes the functioning of power in these verses where the psalmist bewails the threat of the wicked and seeks rescue from the 'men of blood'. The out-group is once again those who opposed the community of faith (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:582). They are YHWH's adversaries and therefore also the speaker's adversaries because they threaten the speaker's relationship with YHWH. Psalm 139 has a number of intertextual links to psalms in other Davidic collections (Goulder 1998:242). The speaker's desire for YHWH to examine his heart recalls Psalm 26. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:544) note that the description 'men of blood' is an expression also found Psalm 5:7; 26:9; 55:24 and 59:3. This phrase is used to describe violent people, murderers and people with blood on their hands. Goulder (1998:246) indicates that verse 19 describes the corrupt society in which the speaker lived. The 'men of blood', the 'wicked' and the 'enemies' of YHWH are those who are supposedly YHWH-worshippers but who only worship YHWH in vain and in reality make evil plans against YHWH.

Verse 13 also offers an opportunity for social-scientific clarification. The verb קנה had the meaning 'to buy as a slave'. Together with כליה (kidneys) and בטן (womb), this verse demonstrates the complete possession and knowledge that YHWH has of a person. 'Kidneys' designated one's innermost being and 'womb' had the figurative meaning of compassion (Pilch & Malina 1993:28). Later קנה, however, also came to mean 'create' (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:541). This verse represents the social-scientific and theological subject of the first 18 verses as it indicates how YHWH is the creator and owner/patriarch/patron (in Ancient Near Eastern terms) of the faithful. It also attests to YHWH's presence and trustworthiness.

Psalm 139 is a vitally important psalm in the reconstruction of Jewish identity and theology in the postexilic period. It grapples with theological questions as to the presence of YHWH and the identity of the faith community in relation to YHWH's presence. It does all this while keeping in mind the realities of the day – the enemies, those who claim to worship YHWH but whose motives are not pure. The enemies are the out-group disguising

themselves as the in-group. Essentially, the psalm asks what the meaning of YHWH's presence is as the Creator-patron God in a corrupt society.

3.4.4 Psalm 140

Psalm 140 introduces the tightly knit mini collection of Psalms 140-143. These psalms all share a common theme of the psalmist being hunted down by enemies that conspire against him (Goulder 1998:248). In response, the speaker calls on YHWH to deliver him from his enemies. Psalm 139 ends with the topic of enemies, while Psalm 140 starts with it.

Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:585) interpret Psalm 140 as a lament in which the psalmist protests about false accusers. The psalm can be divided into four parallel units based on the contents: Verses 1-6 and 9-12 deal with the threat of enemies and formulate a plea to YHWH for deliverance, while verses 7-8 and 13-14 deal with the relationship between the speaker and YHWH (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:586). The rest of the discussion will be structured in a similar way around the enemies and the petitioner.

The classic in-group/ out-group designation can also be applied to this psalm. But who is the enemies or out-group that the psalmist is up against? Psalm 140 is characterised by war-language and metaphors to describe the enemies. The enemy is described as a 'man of violence', an 'evil man', 'the wicked', 'the proud' and 'the man of tongue'. Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:586) describe the enemies in Psalm 140 as violent, warlike people who oppress the speaker. Therefore, the psalmist petitions God to protect him from their power (see verse 5 'the hands of the wicked'). Goulder (1998:250) interprets the enemies from a religious-political perspective. According to him, the enemies referred to did not like the policies of the speaker and plotted together to resist him. From the use of words like 'lips' (שפה) and 'tongue' (לשון), one can gather that the enemies were plotting against the speaker and slandering him, since these acts were symbolically linked to speech and the mouth (Schaefer 2001:329). This is, in turn, connected to honour and shame. In effect, the enemy was shaming the speaker by taking away his honour through slandering him and going against him.

The poet uses conventional images in the subsequent description of the enemy – comparing their sharp tongues to those of serpents. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:552) see an implicit reference to the metaphor of 'the way' in the phrase 'push the feet' of someone (דחה פעם) in verse 5. From this, they infer that on a metaphorical level the enemy wants the petitioner to abandon the right way of life. The deeds of the wicked are also described in terms of hunting metaphors. The psalm refers to the method of catching an animal with a trap and a hidden net (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:586). This imagery is used to depict

the plots and accusations against the speaker. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:552) note that these metaphors also have a religious connotation that signifies falling away from YHWH. From the metaphors used in Psalm 140 pertaining to the enemies, it is clear that the wicked opponents want to keep the psalmist away from YHWH.

For this reason, the other two parts of the psalm deal with the relationship between YHWH and the speaker. The confession in verse 7, 'You are my God' (אלי אתה), recalls the covenant and the faith and trust of the psalmist (Schaefer 2001:329). It is once again the patron/client relationship that comes into play. In verses 13-14 it becomes apparent that the psalmist counts himself amongst the (in-)group of the righteous, poor, afflicted and upright. This brings us to the theology of the poor. The faithfulness of the poor played an important role in the postexilic period as reflected in the psalms. Tucker (2014:174) is of the opinion that this was the 'religious outsider groups' that resisted the dominant power and theology in the postexilic social and religious circles. On the other hand, it could also have referred to the imperial power of Persia (Tucker 2014:175). By using the language of the poor and YHWH's association with the poor, the postexilic community constructed meaning and identity for themselves (Tucker 2014:176). The psalmist states that YHWH will publicly bring justice to the group of the poor and pious (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:553). The words referring to 'judgement' (דין and משפט) have legal connotations, hence they connect to YHWH being the judge of the world bringing justice and honour to the needy (cf. Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:553; Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:587). YHWH brings order to the life of those in need by retributive justice. In this sense the poor are reconstructing power for themselves, since they are the ones who call to YHWH to listen to them and on whose side YHWH is (Tucker 2014:176).

3.4.5 Psalm 141

Like the preceding psalm, Psalm 141 is characterised by the distinction between the petitioner (in-group) and the wicked (out-group). The speaker appeals to YHWH to protect him, while he destroys the wicked. Similar hunting imagery is used in Psalm 141:9 as in Psalm 140 with a reference to the 'trapping net' (פח) that the workers of wickedness laid for the psalmist. The threat of the wicked is depicted in terms of entrapment rather than violence (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:590).

In verse 2, there are references to the sacrificial cult when the speaker requests that his 'prayer be established like incense' and the lifting of his hands is like the evening sacrifice:

Hebrew text	Translation
תִּכּוֹן תְּפִלָּתִי קְטֹרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ מַשְׂאַת כַּפַּי מִנְחַת־עָרֶב:	Let my prayer be established before you like incense

	and the lifting up of my hands/palms like the evening sacrifice.

By referring to these cultic practices, the speaker associates his prayer with the Jerusalem temple (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:558). In postexilic Israel, there were three occasions for prayer – morning, midday and evening – hence the reference to the lifting of his hands (prayer) like during the evening sacrifice (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:558).The incense ritual symbolically denotes prayers (Schaefer 2001:331). Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:589) are of the opinion that the setting of Psalm 141 was that of public sanctuary worship including sacrifice and incense. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:558), however, see in verse 2 the private worshiping of the psalmist. In terms of this study, it is likely that the references to cultic practices serve as remembered space rather than literal space. For this reason, it is more likely that the psalm does not describe worship in the temple as such. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

The urgency with which the psalmist prays to YHWH, is seen in verses 3-4. Two body parts are mentioned, and both are significant for interpreting the psalm. First, the speaker asks YHWH to watch over his mouth and lips. Second, the psalmist prays that YHWH would protect his heart from the evil deeds of the men of wickedness. Schaefer (2001:331) notes the implication of using 'mouth' (פה) and 'heart' (לב) together: Both are likely to be deceived. The mouth is the region of speech while the heart is the area of thought and emotion (Pilch & Malina 1993:64). The mouth and the heart are therefore the origin of human activity and planning (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:559). The mouth can, however, also denote the place where evil enters the body (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:590). With these explanations in mind, the meaning of what the psalmist is asking can be interpreted as follows: he requests that YHWH keep him from being deceived by the wicked and their planning wicked deeds. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:559) note that the unusual plural אישים together with the word 'delicacies' (מנעמים), which is a *hapax legomenon,* indicate that the men that do wickedness are part of the economic upper class.

Verses 5-7 are an interpretational challenge, as a result of text critical issues. The LXX and Peshitta differ from the Masoretic text concerning the word ראשׁ (see word highlighted in table below). Where the Masoretic text reads 'head' (ראשׁ), the Peshitta and LXX read 'wicked' (רשׁע).

Hebrew text	Translation
יֶהֱלְמֵנִי־צַדִּיק חֶסֶד וְיוֹכִיחֵנִי שֶׁמֶן רֹאשׁ אַל־יָנֵי רֹאשִׁי כִּי־עוֹד וּתְפִלָּתִי בְּרָעוֹתֵיהֶם׃	Let the righteous smite me in kindness and let him reprove me, (it is) oil on the head, do not let my head refuse it because still my prayer is against their evil.

In conjunction with Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:556), this study accepts the reading of the Masoretic text, since the Masoretic text holds a parallel to an ancient Syrian saying. The Syrian saying reads: '…allow a wise man to give you many blows with a rod…' (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:556). Consequently, the meaning of verses 5-7 is that the psalmist still prays against the wicked (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:590). The speaker does this by stating his wish to be rebuked by the righteous in order to be associated with the righteous rather than the workers of iniquity. The concluding verses (8-10) further stress the distinction between the righteous and wicked. The wicked continue to try and win over the psalmist to join in their wicked deeds; yet the psalmist again pleads with YHWH to keep him from being misled by them and to let them come to a fall (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:590).

The issue at hand in this psalm is the petitioner's integrity, or in other (social-scientific) words, his honour. He begs YHWH to protect him from being drawn into the group of the wicked (Goulder 1998:258). We now move on to Psalm 142.

3.4.6 Psalm 142

Psalm 142 continues in the same manner as Psalm 140-141. The situation has, however, worsened (Goulder 1998:262). The speaker is now in prison. Once again, a petitioner cries out to YHWH to save him from persecutors. Unique to this psalm's superscription is the historical reference to David's stay in the cave (מערה). This reference intertextually links Psalm 142 to 1 Samuel 24. In addition, Psalm 142 has lexical similarities to 1 Samuel 24 (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:565). Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:592) argue that this detail was not meant to say something about the poem's origin as such. It rather serves as a life setting in which to visualise the psalm. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:565) mention that this superscription might also have been chosen in order to link with the word 'dungeon' (מסגל) in verse 8.

Besides similar vocabulary referring to the preceding Psalms 140-141,[2] Psalm 142 quotes psalms from other Davidic collections as well. The introduction to this lament refers to Psalm 77:2-4 (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:565). In addition to this, the language of Psalm 142 also establishes connections with Psalm 143 such as the 'spirit faints' (עטף) and the 'pleading' and 'supplications' (תחנון/חנן) made to YHWH by the psalmist (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:592).

[2] The most prominent similarities are: The confession of trust in 142:6 recalls those of 140:14 and 141:10 and the word 'bird trap' (פח) that is used in all three psalms.

Although Psalm 142 shares its language with similar expressions in the surrounding psalms, it is also unique in that the persecutors – the out-group – remain anonymous (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:564). In Psalms 140-141 the enemies are identified as 'the wicked', a 'man of violence', an 'evil man' and 'the proud'. We can, however, gather that the psalmist speaks of the same enemies in Psalm 142 since they also set a 'trap' for him, thus the hunting imagery once again plays an important role. Goulder (1998:262) notes the interaction between power and powerlessness in verse 5 of the psalm. The psalmist states that there is no one on his right-hand side – the place where one would call upon a powerful friend in times of need. The fact that there is no one stresses the absolute powerlessness of the speaker. Hence, the psalmist's confession in verse 6 that YHWH is his refuge.

An ethical component is also present in this psalm. This is linked to the social-scientific values of honour and shame. It is seen in the psalmist's struggle to maintain his ethical stance – his honour – amid the threat from the enemies (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:566). Moreover, there are traces of wisdom theology in verse 4 with its metaphor of 'the way' (ארח):

Hebrew text	Translation
בְּהִתְעַטֵּף עָלַי רוּחִי	When my spirit was weak/faint on me
וְאַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ נְתִיבָתִי	and you knew my path.
בְּאֹרַח־זוּ אֲהַלֵּךְ טָמְנוּ פַּח לִי	In the way which I walked they hid a bird trap for me.

In verse 6, the psalmist confesses his trust in YHWH. The patron-client relationship comes into play here. The speaker uses the metaphor of YHWH being his 'portion' in the land of the living. The word 'portion' (חלק) also meant one's inheritance of land. It was used on a metaphorical level in relation to the Levites who regarded YHWH as their 'portion/inheritance' since they lived under the care and provision of God (Schaefer 2001:332).

In social-scientific terms, Psalm 142 is an illustration of the importance of community in the Ancient Near Eastern world. The psalm reflects the crisis of isolation (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:594). Yet, there is movement in the psalm from isolation to community, as the concluding verse clearly states that the righteous will surround the petitioner. Part of the psalmist's restoration is his restoration to the in-group, the community of the righteous.

3.4.7 Psalm 143

Psalm 143 is the last psalm in the collection of Psalms 140-143. The crisis of the petitioner reaches its height in this psalm (Goulder 1998:265). This is clear from the three petitions in

the first verse of the psalm. He pleads with YHWH to hear his calling to him, to give ear to his supplications (to pay attention to him) and to answer him because YHWH is righteous. According to Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:570), the pleas build up and intensify. Furthermore, the psalmist is still in prison, as is clear from verse 3:

Hebrew text	Translation
כִּי רָדַף אוֹיֵב נַפְשִׁי דִּכָּא לָאָרֶץ חַיָּתִי הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי בְמַחֲשַׁכִּים כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם:	Because the enemy has pursued my soul, he has crushed my life in the ground, he has made me dwell in the darkness like those who have been dead for long.

Goulder (1998:265) is, however, of the opinion that the dark places mentioned in verse 2 and 7 might be meant metaphorically. Regardless of whether one understands the dark places as literal or figurative, the mention of it again in this psalm establishes a link to the previous psalm. As mentioned in the discussion on Psalm 142, there are obvious links between Psalm 142 and Psalm 143. The most obvious link is the quoting of the phrase 'my spirit faints within me' (ותתעטף עלי רוחי). In this way, the psalm strengthens the gravity of the petitioner's cry to YHWH (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:595). Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:596) further note that the complaints of the psalmist have to do with a social situation of danger in which the speaker is threatened by enemies. The speaker lives among the out-group (enemies, persecutors) and that puts his life in danger.

Intertextually, verses 2-3 comprise allusions to various other texts. Goulder (1998:267) indicates that verse 2 refers to texts in the book of Job (cf. Job 9:32-33; 14:3 and 22:3). This is evident in the common theme of judgement that these verses share. In addition to this, 143:3 alludes to Psalm 7:6:

Psalm 7:6

Hebrew text	Translation
יִרַדֹּף אוֹיֵב נַפְשִׁי וְיַשֵּׂג וְיִרְמֹס לָאָרֶץ חַיָּי וּכְבוֹדִי לֶעָפָר יַשְׁכֵּן סֶלָה:	Let the enemy pursue my soul and let him overtake and trample my life in the ground and lay my glory in the dust. Selah

Psalm 143:3

Hebrew text	Translation
כִּי רָדַף אוֹיֵב נַפְשִׁי	Because the enemy has pursued my soul,

דִּכָּא לָאָרֶץ חַיָּתִי הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם׃	he has crushed my life in the ground, he has made me dwell in the darkness like those who have been dead for long.

The last intertextual link in Psalm 143:3 is found in the last phrase of verse 3 that quotes Lamentations 3:6. According to Goulder (1998:267), Lamentations 3:6 was quoted intentionally to recall the situation of Jeremiah.

Psalm 143:3

Hebrew text	Translation
כִּי רָדַף אוֹיֵב נַפְשִׁי דִּכָּא לָאָרֶץ חַיָּתִי הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם׃	Because the enemy has pursued my soul, he has crushed my life in the ground, he has made me dwell in the darkness like those who have been dead for long.

Lamentations 3:6

Hebrew text	Translation
בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים הוֹשִׁיבַנִי כִּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם׃	He has made me dwell in dark places like those who have been dead for long.

There are two prominent theological themes that feature in Psalm 143. The first is the relationship between YHWH's righteousness and judgement. The notion of YHWH's righteousness and judgement forms an *inclusio*, featuring in verse 1 and again in verse 12. The righteousness of YHWH toward the petitioner and the judgement of YHWH toward the petitioner's enemies prove to be the reason for the psalmist's trust in YHWH (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:596). It is the lack of human righteousness that drives the petitioner to find the ultimate true righteousness and judgement in YHWH. In verse 8, there is a reference to YHWH's lovingkindness in the morning. According to Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:575), the morning motif pictures YHWH in the position of the sun god that pronounces the morning judgement on the petitioner. The morning motif is also found in Psalm 139:9 with reference to the dawn. The second theological theme is wisdom theology with the metaphor of the road/way (דרך), which, like the morning motif, is also found in Psalm 139 – see verse 24 (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:575).

The speaker identifies himself as YHWH's servant who asks for YHWH's favour. The client-patron relationship in which the speaker stands with YHWH becomes clear in his confessions of trust in God throughout the psalm (verses 8, 9, 10 and 12). The patron-client relationship especially comes to the fore in the last verse of the psalm. There, the speaker once again confirms that he is YHWH's servant. He is in YHWH's service. This comforts him because he knows that YHWH, his patron, secures his future despite threats from outsiders (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:576).

3.4.8 Psalm 144

Psalm 144 features an array of themes and motifs connecting it to the other psalms in our collection. David is not only mentioned in the superscription but is also explicitly mentioned in this psalm as YHWH's servant. It can therefore be said that the speakers in Psalms 140-144 saw themselves as 'David-in-persecution' (Goulder 1998:273). Themes of enemies, violence and persecution dominate the collection of Psalms 137-145. In many psalms the enemies are unknown, yet one can still clearly discern that the enemies are the out-group that threatens the faithful psalmist. However, in Psalm 144, as in Psalm 138, the enemies are identified. Psalm 144 identifies the out-group as 'foreigners' (בן נכר). The word 'foreign' (נכר) is especially used in Third Isaiah where it is used in terms of the social institution of politics (Tucker 2014:128). This group will be discussed in more detail later.

First, I would like to highlight the other motifs present in Psalm 144 before returning to the foreign sons. Upon first reading the psalm, it becomes quite clear that Psalm 144 has been composed from different strands of tradition. Its primary source can be traced back to Psalm 18 (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:584). Psalm 144 acts as the thematic conclusion to Psalms 137-143, with Psalm 145 being the doxological ending. Psalm 144 consists of:

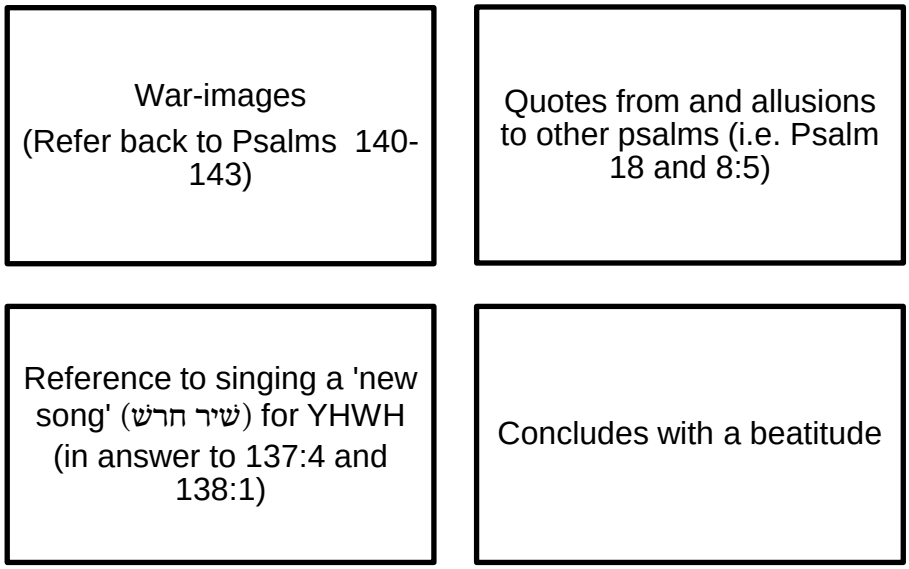

Figure 3: The contents of Psalm 144

The images of war and YHWH's subduing the speaker's people under him together with all the metaphors pertaining to YHWH's being the speaker's refuge, stronghold and shield in verses 1-2 attest to YHWH's being the one to bring military victory for the king and defeat the enemies of the king (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:599-600). From this, the psalmist moves on to meditate on the contrast between YHWH and אדם (humankind). Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:583-584) regard Psalm 144 as a postexilic royal psalm, although the image of 'king' has also undergone some transformation since the speaker never directly refers to himself as 'king'. The reference to King David is therefore meant on a metaphorical level – the psalmist is David's successor (Goulder 1998:274). According to Van Grol (2010:319), David functions here as a figure with which the postexilic community can identify. The community 'shares' in the kingship and struggle against the foreigners – David's life and character become a spirituality (Van Grol 2010:319). Lastly, there is also an agricultural motif present in Psalm 144:12-14. According to Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:587), the metaphors used in these verses aim to ask for YHWH's blessings in all spheres of life or social institutions: kinship and family life (sons and daughters), economics (granaries, sheep and cattle) and politics (peace in the streets).

There is a strong sense of a power struggle in Psalm 144. In verse 7, the psalmist pleads with YHWH to powerfully set him and his people free. The oncoming threat is defined in terms of waters of chaos that threaten to overwhelm him and in terms of a foreign force like an invading army. By comparing the foreign forces with the force of waters of chaos, the psalmist defines the crisis in cosmological terms (Tucker 2014:129). Both these forces threaten the stability of the land (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:600). Goulder (1998:274) interprets the psalm as a 'court case' where the speaker fears the arguments of the prosecution ('whose mouths speak vanity'). Although certainly an interesting interpretative framework, the setting of the psalm cannot be determined with such accuracy. The essential meaning of verses 7-8 has to do with a power conflict with foreign powers. The psalm, however, challenges these foreign powers by developing anti-imperial ideology. Tucker (2014:129-130) indicates that this is done through the anthological style of the psalm. The psalm alludes to and quotes from other psalms (as already mentioned above), though adapting the contents of the other psalms. Psalm 144 refocuses the attention on the power of YHWH – it is YHWH's outstretched hand that provides deliverance (Tucker 2014:131). Therefore, it becomes clear at the end of the psalm that it is the people of YHWH that will be blessed with prosperity and not the enemies. Psalm 144 demonstrates YHWH's imperial rule over the world (Tucker 2014:129). The theme of YHWH's imperial rule over the world brings us to Psalm 145 – the last psalm in the collection.

3.4.9 Psalm 145

Psalm 145 is the closing doxology to the collection beginning with Psalm 137. This psalm makes two main claims: YHWH is king (אלוהי המלך) and his reign is universal (Tucker 2014:157). YHWH is acknowledged as the ultimate patron deserving of praise by 'all flesh' (כל־בשׂר) because of his great deeds and lovingkindness. Together with YHWH's kingship, the theme of YHWH's kingdom (מלכות) plays a prominent role in Psalm 145. Tucker (2014:158) is of the opinion that the statements about YHWH's absolute rule and everlasting kingdom, is the epitome of anti-imperial power. Van Grol (2010:319) comments that this psalm embodies the final political-theological move from Davidic kingship to a theocracy.

There is only one reference to the out-group in verse 2 of the psalm (the wicked), but the righteous 'in-group' is central to Psalm 145. They are identified here as the oppressed (כפף) and the faithful (חסידים). It is hard to state with precision who the חסידים were. Although it is a given that they were Israelites, it is not certain whether it referred to a particular group within the postexilic community or the community as a whole (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:599). Van Grol (2010:323) comes to the conclusion that the needy/oppressed and faithful (חסידים) are the writer's own group. In this sense, Psalm 145 is first and foremost about what YHWH's kingship means for the in-group, the חסידים and only then about the meaning of YHWH's universal rule for the rest of the world. Read from this perspective, Psalm 145 plays an important role in creating postexilic identity.

Psalm 145 is the proverbial 'happy ending' to the postexilic story of Psalms 137-145. It calls upon all living things to praise YHWH. YHWH is described as transcendent in the first half of Psalm 145 – ruling universally as king. In the latter half of the psalm YHWH's immanence and nearness are described. The relationship between YHWH and the righteous that is highlighted throughout Psalms 137-145 stands in the centre of Psalm 145. The members of the in-group are the people who have chosen YHWH and they are the lowly, the poor and servants of YHWH with David as their role model (Van Grol 2010:326). Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:605) summarise the scope of Psalm 145 strikingly:

> Psalm 145 is a powerful expression of the praise of the divine king, especially when tied to the community that shaped Book V of the Psalter (Psalms 107-150), a community likely still struggling with the aftermath of exile. Their life is under threat, and yet the community explosively praises the divine creator and king.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter undertook a social-scientific study of the collection of Psalms 137-145. A theoretical overview was given on the basic values of the social-scientific approach. Since the historical circumstances need to be taken into consideration in such a study, section 3.3 discussed the political, socio-economic and religious circumstances in Persian period Yehud. Against this background, the nine psalms were analysed, identifying the social-scientific values present in each. From the discussion, it is clear that there is a sharp

distinction between the in-group (faithful and righteous) and out-group (wicked and foreign powers). YHWH as patron of Israel and universal king is of central importance in these psalms. Furthermore, these psalms handle questions of power, politics, religion and identity in the postexilic period.

We now move on to Chapter 4 – the heart of this study – which describes Psalms 137-145 in terms of critical spatiality and memory, thus, remembered space.

CHAPTER 4
REMEMBERED SPACE IN PSALMS 137-145

4.1 Introduction

Every memory produced by social interaction leaves a residue of remembrance attached to space.

The above quotation from Matthews' (2013:74) article on remembered space demonstrates the undisputable link between space and memory. Space and memory unite in this chapter under the term 'remembered space'. As mentioned in the conclusion to the previous chapter, this chapter is the essence of the study. In terms of the methodological umbrella of the study (see section 1.3), the current chapter deals with both the research method and the research focus. In Chapter 3, the *research approach* received attention in the social-scientific analysis of Psalms 137-145. Now attention is turned to the specific *method* employed within the framework of the social-scientific approach: critical spatiality. This chapter therefore discusses and applies the method of critical spatiality in studying the psalms. After reading the psalms from a spatial perspective, the chapter moves on to the *research focus* which is collective memory.

This chapter provides an answer to the portion of the research question (see section 1.2, p. 2) dealing with the relation between space and memory. As have become the pattern in previous chapters, the first part of the chapter consists of a theoretical discussion on critical spatiality and collective memory respectively, after which an analysis of remembered space in Psalms 137-145 is done.

Psalms 137-145 can, however, only be read from the perspective of remembered space in the light of the social-scientific analysis of the previous chapter. The results from the social-scientific analysis enable us to identify certain trends and values that have an influence on the spatial features of Psalms 137-145, as well as the way in which memory functions in these psalms. The formation of space is, after all, established by social customs (Geiger 2013:47). Take for instance the distinction between the in-group and out-group that plays out in spatial terms with regard to the in-group being those that are *at-centre* and close to YHWH, while the out-group is *off-centre* and in a negative space. In addition, the social scientific notion identified in Chapter 3 of YHWH acting as patron for his client, Israel, also has implications for remembered space, since it is the memory of YHWH's mighty acts that motivates his subjects to stay loyal and praise his name. In a similar manner, the social scientific themes of power, politics, religion and identity have spatial and mnemonic functions. The link between the social-scientific and spatial analysis is highlighted throughout the chapter. We now turn to a discussion on the theoretical principles of critical spatiality.

4.2 Critical spatiality: Theoretical reflections

In Chapter 1, a short theoretical overview was given on critical spatiality.[3] This section expands that overview and ultimately identifies several categories by which the spatial analysis of Psalms 137-145 is done.[4] At the outset of a discussion of this sort, one must keep in mind that the spatial perception of the Hebrew Bible cannot be separated from the Ancient Near Eastern worldview. This proves that space is influenced by a number of factors such as worldview, social values, political agendas and socio-economic circumstances. Space can therefore not be objective or neutral. This means that space is to be interpreted since the creators of that space (the writers of texts in the case of the psalms) attached a certain meaning to it (Berquist 2002:22).

Brinkman (1992:51), working on the perception of space in the Old Testament, notices some fundamental principles regarding the Hebrew understanding of space. First, space is not understood as lifeless or passive. Space is a living, dynamic entity that interacts with the temporal dimension (Brinkman 1992:52). Second, space is understood eschatologically – oriented toward the future, toward a new reality that YHWH establishes (Brinkman 1992:48). This does not, however, mean that the past is irrelevant in the Old Testament's perception of space. The past and memory play a vital role in the creation of spatial reality since YHWH's acts in history create deliverance and new life for his people. Brevard Childs (1962:92) wrote in his monograph titled *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* that the biblical writers were more concerned with the *quality* of space than with *literal* location – paving the way for a deeper and multi-dimensional understanding of space in the Hebrew Bible. Moreover, the contents and quality of space were decided by its relationship to YHWH (Childs 1962:92). This standard is used in categorising space as positive or negative. Positive space denotes closeness to YHWH, whilst negative space denotes distance from YHWH (cf. Prinsloo 2013:10). The categories of space will be discussed in more detail later. At this stage, it is important to take note of David Harvey's (2000:161) observation on the creation of socio-spatial alternatives. According to him, the human imagination has the ability to create a spatial alternative – a reinterpretation of space – when oppressed or confronted with crises. Harvey (2000:160) calls this 'spatial play'. Spatial play usually occurs in the face of conflict or obstructive forms of authority and power (Harvey 2000:163). The alternative spaces that are created are spaces of hope. With this in mind, Psalms 137-145 can be read as texts that use memory to create socio-spatial alternatives, spaces of hope, so to speak, as a result of oppressive power structures.

[3] Refer to section 1.3.3 on p. 5
[4] See Addendum C for an exposition of the spatial categories used in section 4.4 in the analysis of Psalms 137-145.

But how can one identify the spatial features in a text? Brinkman (1992:48) argues that there are mainly two ways to determine the presence of spatial features in a spatial analysis of Hebrew texts: contents and semantic field. Texts with spatial contents are determined in collaboration with the social-scientific approach. For example, the social-scientific concepts of certain people belonging in certain places – women in private spaces and men in public spaces – give texts a spatial dimension. Furthermore, a certain quality of space was connected to certain geographical places, such as Babylon or Jerusalem. Once again the spatial quality of a city such as Babylon or Jerusalem was associated with YHWH's presence (or lack thereof) in that particular space. These are but a few examples. When we come to the discussion of the various psalms, the spatial contents of each psalm will be pointed out.

Concerning the semantic field of space, there are several Hebrew words with spatial associations. Brinkman (1992:50-54) discusses a variety of these words. The most obvious word is רחב**,** with the meaning of 'widen', 'enlarge' or 'make room' as a verb, or 'broad' as a noun. This root is often used in Old Testament salvation language to compare the deliverance that YHWH brings with spaciousness. Other significant words within the semantic field of spatial language that Brinkman (1992:50, 52) discusses, include the word ארץ as 'territorial spatiality' with the (promised) land connotations attached to it. The directions of the horizon also function on a spatial level. The most important direction is that of קדם ('east' or 'front'). East also indicated the temporal dimension of the past, while its counterpart, אחורן ('west' or 'behind'), directs one to the future. Prinsloo (2013:9) states that in Ancient Near Eastern terms the future is unknown and therefore behind one, while the past is known and therefore in front of one. In addition to this, east also imply life and new beginning since the sun rises in the east, while west implies death and the end since that is where the sun sets (Prinsloo 2013:9).

Consequently, spatial orientation in the Hebrew Bible can be outlined on two axes. The horizontal axis consists of the four directions. East and west metaphorically refer to time – east being the past and west being the future (Wyatt 2001:35). North and south metaphorically refer to the moral dimension with south being what is morally right and north being what is morally wrong (Wyatt 2001:36). The vertical axis contains the movements of going up and down (Prinsloo 2013:9). The centre between the vertical and horizontal axes is crucial, since it is here where one is in balance. This is where the divine and human meet. Zion and the Jerusalem temple were seen to be at this meeting place where YHWH was present on earth. Although YHWH was located in the heavens, Zion was his earthly dwelling place and he was consequently known as the 'king of Zion' (Tucker 2014:141,161). The role of YHWH as the 'God of heaven' increased in importance in the exilic and postexilic times with the exile bringing about disillusionment with Zion theology (Tucker 2014:142). On the vertical axis, going up represents moving closer to the

positive, transcendent realm of YHWH, while going down represents moving closer to the negative realm of death, chaos and evil (Prinsloo 2013:10). This description aligns well with the Ancient Near Eastern three-dimensional worldview(s) with heaven 'above' being the territory of the gods, the earth as a flat disc being the territory of humans and with 'down' (under) as the chaos waters of the sea being the territory of evil. Prinsloo (2005:461) summarises these principles of spatial theory in the Hebrew Bible as follows:

> Concepts such as inside/outside, high/low, far/near, clean/unclean, holy/unholy contribute towards the psychological, ideological and moral perspective of the text. They define lived space as safe or unsafe; comfortable or uncomfortable; acceptable or unacceptable.
> All of this implies that space is not static but dynamic and relational, there is movement through space, e.g. from "concrete" space toward "abstract" space or from "negative" space towards "positive" space.

Besides these categories of space, there is also another spatial relationship that has to be considered. That is the relationship between space and the body. Numerous works on space include the subject of space and body (in this regard see Tuan 1977:34; Maier 2008:119; Geiger 2013:44). The Hebrew Bible functions within a psycho-somatic system derived from the link between life experience and observations of the body (Schroer & Staubli 2001:14). Lefebvre's (1991:170) study of space started from his observation that bodies produce space. Bodily gestures form lived space (Maier 2008:120). Throughout the centuries, the body with its different parts was used to create metaphors (Maier 2008:121). Also, in the Hebrew Bible, the different body parts (eyes, heart, feet and hands) have symbolic meanings connected to space. Therefore, it is also important to interpret the body metaphors in Psalms 137-145 from a spatial perspective.

Building upon these basic observations on how space was understood, we now turn to the categorising of different types of spaces. Mention has already been made in Chapter 1 about the different dimensions of space as branded by Henri Lefebvre ([1974]1991). The geographer Edward Soja (1996:86) further classified space into first-, second- and thirdspace. These three designations do not point to different spaces, but rather different levels of space. Space exists in all three dimensions at once (Berquist 2002:20). Firstspace represents geophysical space, secondspace represents abstract, imagined space and thirdspace represents lived space (Berquist 2002:20; Prinsloo 2005:460). Geiger (2013:49) makes an important social distinction between second- and thirdspace. According to her, secondspace is structured around the plans of the ruling class, while thirdspace represents the lives of the oppressed.

In addition to these categories, this study also focuses on fourthspace, or what Matthews (2013:62) coined as 'remembered space'. Remembered space refers to the spaces produced by collective memory over generations within a community. Remembered space is closely connected to experience of place and the creation of socio-spatial alternatives.

First, remembered space builds on the experience of a specific place. Second, remembered space will create a socio-spatial alternative in the text, depending on whether the experience of a specific space was positive or negative. A case in point is the negative experience of Babylon in exile. The meaning attached to the space of Babylon continued to live on in postexilic literature on the level of remembered space. One's perception of space is thus influenced by one's experiences in that space (Tuan 1977:136). This in turn influences the construction of remembered space, since people attach significance to space based on their experiences of that space. This significance is preserved in collective memory. As Bowman (2013:93) puts it, 'place and experience are the backbones of memory'. This brings us to the second leg of our theoretical discussion, namely collective memory.

4.3 Principles of collective memory

This section of the chapter deals with theoretical issues concerning collective memory. After the completion of this discussion, we turn to the notion of remembered space, applying it to Psalms 137-145. In section 1.3.4, a brief overview was given on collective memory, also outlining the discussion points for this section. Here we will be discussing two types of collective memory, as identified by Assman (1995:126,128), namely communicative memory and cultural memory. It is necessary to keep in mind that the primary function of memory is to make meaning – to shape and reshape the identity of communities.

Assman (1995:126-127) defines communicative memory as 'oral history based on everyday communications'. In section 1.3.4, it was mentioned that communicative memory has certain fixed points including identity formation and reinterpretation. Halbwachs ([1925]1992:49) makes an important comment on the reconstructing of the past under communicative memory. He reminds us that as the past is reinterpreted, that reinterpretation is influenced by the community's present social circumstances. It is in this process of reinterpretation of past events based on present situations that identity is also (re)shaped. With regard to Psalms 137-145, it means that this collection of psalms reinterpreted the past and their identity in the light of their present Persian period circumstances. However, it is at this point that the distinction between communicative memory and cultural memory becomes blurry and the two start to overlap. This is because past and present unite at some point in memory. Therefore, communicative and cultural memory are two sides of one coin rather than two different coins.

Cultural memory is created in cultures that are fixed in specific historical situations (Ben Zvi 2010a:155). Cultural memory is thus a product of the socio-historical circumstances of a community. Characteristic of cultural memory is its distance (in time and space) from the

fateful events that it preserves (cf. Assman 1995:19). In the case of Psalms 137-145, the postexilic community's memory was largely created by the experience of the exile. Cultural memory includes what Whitehead (2009:132) calls 'habit memory'. Habit memory consists of texts that contain stories about the past as well as rituals (Assman 1995:129). Pioske (2015:6) emphasises the function of cultural memory as strengthening social cohesion. Ben Zvi (2010b:172) writes that the scribes who created the literature in the postexilic community reinterpreted the past in the present by reshaping old cultural memories, thereby connecting the community to their past, but also forming their identity in the present. Cultural memory is flexible, similar to space that can be reproduced and transformed (Matthews 2013:71).

From the discussion above, it becomes clear that studies into cultural memory have the important task to discern how memories were maintained and transformed. But it is also necessary to take note of how some of these memories were forgotten (Pioske 2015:6). At the end of her book, Whitehead (2009:153) discusses the art of forgetting. In her discussion, Whitehead (2009:154-155) takes a look at the notion of forgiving as forgetting. Whitehead (2009:156-157) concludes by saying that forgetting should receive serious consideration in memory studies since it is intricately connected to the notion of remembering. In the preserving, reinterpreting and reshaping of memories, one chooses to forget certain things. Newsom (2014:46-48) distinguishes between selective recall and ghost memories. Selective recall refers to those parts of the master narrative of cultural memory that people choose to remember, while ghost memories refer to those people and parts of cultural memory that are forgotten, that are never mentioned explicitly. However, forgetting is also a necessary part of healing and building a healthy community in the present and future. Therefore, a specific method of forgetting, which stores the past, can be beneficial for remembering (Whitehead 2009:157).

Whitehead (2009:124-125) stresses the important link between memory and place. The ground-breaking 1966 work of Frances Yates in *The Art of Memory* identifies memory places as one of the classical rules for forming memory (Yates 1966:396). 'Memory places' refer to a mnemonic technique in which certain places were linked to certain concepts that had to be remembered (Whitehead 2009:124). Although this was a mnemonic technique more closely connected to the practice of memory in rhetoric, it is nevertheless relevant to the present study in the sense that memory places played an important role in collective memory. The places used for this technique will necessarily depend on the socio-cultural setting of the community and on the significance that those places had for that community. Memory of a specific place can be powerful in transforming collective identity. In Psalms 137-145, the 'place-memory' of Babylon and Jerusalem functions in this way (cf. Bowman 2013:94). This brings us to the next, and crucial, section of the chapter, namely remembered space.

4.4 Remembered space: Convergence of space and memory

The previous section concluded by stressing the link between memory and place. This section forms the backbone to the whole study, discussing the convergence of space and memory, namely remembered space in Psalms 137-145. Remembered space as a 'fourthspace' was discussed in section 4.2. In what follows, it will become clear how memory of the past was used in Psalms 137-145 to reconstruct space. As in Chapter 3, each psalm in the collection is examined separately according to the identified spatial categories.[5] The discussion of each psalm will refer to the social-scientific analysis in an attempt to properly position ourselves to the themes of each psalm. Traces of collective memory are also identified and form part of the discussion. Thereafter, I will dedicate a section to providing an overview of remembered space in the collection as a whole – stating the role that remembered space plays in the narrative of Psalms 137-145.

4.4.1 Psalm 137

At first sight, Psalm 137 shows signs of both space and memory. Psalm 137 not only contains numerous spatial references, but also the most explicit references to memory in the entire collection of Psalms 137-145. In the social-scientific analysis of Psalm 137 in the previous chapter, mention was already made of the reference to different locations such as Babylon, Jerusalem and Zion. The preposition עַל in verses 1, 2 and 4 strengthens these spatial references since it functions to indicate place (Bellinger 2005:9). The task at hand in this chapter is, however, to interpret the *significance* of the spaces mentioned. These places are not mere locations on a map, but have social, historical and religious significance for the postexilic community. On a firstspace level, Psalm 137 thus features the rivers and willows of Babylon as well as Jerusalem and Zion. Babylon/Babel and Jerusalem/Zion form two sides of a spectrum – Babylon/Babel being on the negative side and Jerusalem/Zion on the positive side. The psalm points to Babylon as 'there' (שָׁם) and a 'land of foreigners' (אדמת נכר) immediately depicting Babylon as a negative space. In the exilic situation, Babylon was considered to be far from YHWH, since it was far from Jerusalem, which was thought to be at the centre of the universe. But the significance of Jerusalem goes further than Jerusalem being somewhere between north and south. In addition, Jerusalem was also an elevated city, a high city. This is attested to in 137:6 in the phrase 'if I do not bring Jerusalem up above the head of my joy' (אִם־לֹ֣א אַעֲלֶ֣ה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַ֗͏ִם עַ֣ל רֹ֣אשׁ שִׂמְחָתִֽי). Berquist (2008:43) notes that elevation is a symbol of power and authority on a secondspace level.

[5] See Addendum C.

Thus, Jerusalem also functions on a second or imagined space level. Berquist (2008:46) writes that Jerusalem had three main functions during the postexilic period. First, it was 'different' since it represented a non-agricultural life amid an agrarian society. Second, Jerusalem was a centre of power and politics. Third, Jerusalem was of course the most important place of worship – also in the postexilic Persian period. In addition, Berquist (2008:50) argues that Jerusalem was also a thirdspace in the sense that the city shaped and reshaped identity. Growing out of the third, lived space, experience, Jerusalem functioned on a fourth, remembered space, level, since the city itself with its religious and political connotations construct national memory (Berquist 2008:49). Berquist (2008:50) goes on to explain that being in a space like Jerusalem 'reminds one of previous events that have taken place there, and build a corporate identity out of a memory that is created by presence', and:

> More than just the space (that is, the Firstspace), the event in Thirdspace shapes the memory and identity[6] through the performances of the metaphors and symbols that provide Secondspace meaning.

In effect, this means that firstspace Jerusalem witnessed certain events (the fall of Jerusalem and deportation of people with the exile and the return of the exiles) in thirdspace. These events became memories that shaped the identity of the postexilic community in fourthspace. These memories are 'acted out' through religious rituals and festivals that commemorate the saving acts of YHWH in secondspace.

It is, however, not only the space of Jerusalem that was reinterpreted and that reshaped identity through memory. In the biblical literature, Babylon was seen as the place of punishment for the sins of the people of YHWH. Yet it is interesting to note how verses 8-9 interpret Babel/Babylon as a place of future vengeance for the enemy (Babylonians) and in that sense also future hope for YHWH's people. Bowman (2013:109) also identifies this in Jeremiah, where Babylon is reinterpreted from being a place of pain to also becoming a place of hopeful expectation. In the postexilic setting in which Psalm 137 is read, Babylon represents imperial power and oppression (Tucker 2014:121). Although Babylon largely functions as negative remembered space, Psalm 137:7-9 also include the option for a hopeful turn – a deconstructing of power in favour of the 'we' in the psalm. Bellinger (2005:12) observes that this deconstruction is a bold statement that the Babylonians will not take away the memory of Zion. They may have taken the land, but the memory of YHWH and the land will stay with them. In the face of trauma, hope lies in memory.

As stated at the beginning of the discussion on Psalm 137, this psalm contains the most explicit references to memory. The start of each section of Psalm 137 contains the word

[6] That is fourth space.

‘remember’ (זכר) or ‘forget’ (שׁכח). In verses 1-4 the exiles are addressed by the oppressors. In this section, the exiles are brought to remember (זכר) Zion. In verses 5-6, the exiles address Jerusalem. In this section, their wish is to never forget (שׁכח) Jerusalem. In verses 7-9, the exiles plead with YHWH to remember (זכר) their enemies. Seen from this perspective, it becomes clear that remembered space is reverberated throughout Psalm 137. The alternation of remembering and forgetting serves to demonstrate the disorienting experience that the trauma of exile and imperial domination had on the people. The postexilic community grappled with the concept of memory.

In addition to the different levels of space in Psalm 137, one also finds gendered space that is employed to describe the exiles’ enemies in verses 6-7. Maier (2008:119) reminds us of the important link between space and body. A merism is employed to indicate the entirety of the exiles’ enemies. In verse 6, there is a reference to לבני אדום (the sons of Edom), while in verse 7 there is a reference to בת־בבל (the daughter of Babylon). Both these groups are part of the out-group, the enemies. Once again, remembered space is used to recount the cruelty of these groups towards YHWH’s people and to simultaneously create hope for the future in the possibility of retribution (cf. Bellinger 2005:14).

In the social-scientific analysis, the values of power, honour, shame and identity were recognised in Psalm 137. It is striking how these values also play out in memory and space in the psalm. Read from a postexilic perspective, Psalm 137 deconstructs the postexilic community’s shame and powerlessness in the face of imperial power. It does this through remembered space and in doing so reconstructs a new identity, returning honour to the community. There is spatial movement in Psalm 137. It is essential to notice this. Too many readers read Psalm 137 as a negative-space psalm. However, when one pays closer attention to the psalm, it is seen that there is movement between negative remembered space and positive remembered space. On the one hand, the psalm recalls the experience of powerlessness, but on the other, the psalm is adamant to keep positive memories of Jerusalem, Zion and ultimately the praise of YHWH, alive. Because, where there is memory, there is hope. Remembered space creates hope.

4.4.2 Psalm 138

Psalm 138 is in large part an answer to Psalm 137, as mentioned in section 3.4.2. This discussion of remembered space in Psalm 138 once again builds on the social-scientific analysis of the psalm in Chapter 3. There it was gathered that the main social scientific tenets present in Psalm 138 are the patron-client relationship between YHWH and his people as well as group dynamics and a reinterpretation of the religious and political sphere in Persian period Yehud. These aspects will receive attention in the spatial analysis.

With regard to group dynamics in Psalm 138, verse 6 sketches the contrast between the in-group and the out-group. This has important spatial significance. In the first place, the 'height' (רם) of YHWH is stated – in line with the three-story universe. Tucker (2014:142) stresses that YHWH was thought to be 'high' in a spatial sense in postexilic times as a reaction to the loss of temple and Zion theology. However, the memory of the temple and Zion continued to live on spatially; hence the reference to Zion in Psalm 137 and to the temple in Psalm 138. After the exile these things might have ceased to exist on a firstspace level, but that did not prevent them from living on in second, third and fourth space. What did happen, though, was that postexilic theology expanded its understanding of God, as a result of the trauma of exile and postexilic imperial rule. Therefore, a spatial metaphor such as YHWH being 'high' rather seeks to emphasise YHWH's transcendence over the human sphere (Tucker 2014:142). Although YHWH is 'high', he sees the lowly and humble. Throughout Book V of the Psalter, this is one characteristic that sets YHWH apart from other powers, whether it be world powers or religious powers. The lowly and humble are therefore automatically part of YHWH's group. On the opposite side of the lowly and humble are the proud. About them, the psalmist states that YHWH only knows them from a distance (מרחק). Prinsloo (2013:9) states that in spatial theory distance between a person and YHWH or distance from the self means to progressively approach the end of existence where 'reality breaks down'. This is what Psalm 138 has in mind when it speaks about the distance between YHWH and the proud.

Psalm 138 is the first Davidic psalm in the last Davidic collection of the Psalter. The appeal of the psalm can be phrased as 'remembering the steadfast love (חסד) of YHWH'. This introduces the theme of remembered space to this particular psalm. However, it is not only fourthspace that plays a role in the psalm. As is the case with space, Psalm 138 functions on all four levels of space. The overall spatial orientation of this psalm is positive. There are several words that can be interpreted from a spatial perspective. First, there is a reference to the temple (היכל) – a firstspace place with secondspace meaning. Symbolically, the temple represents the presence of YHWH. When one is near the temple, one is near to YHWH (Prinsloo 2013:9). In comparison with Psalm 137, where the presence of YHWH was far and the community was off-centre, Psalm 138 is the opposite. In this psalm, the community is near the presence of YHWH and is therefore at-centre. Psalm 137 speaks of the hope of once again singing a song of Zion. In Psalm 138, this hope has become a reality – in 138:5 the kings of the earth sing of the ways of YHWH:

Hebrew text	Translation
וְיָשִׁירוּ בִּדַרְכֵי יְהוָה כִּי גָדוֹל כְּבוֹד יְהוָה׃	And they will sing of the ways of YHWH because the glory of YHWH is great.

Yet it is interesting to note that remembered space still functions in this psalm, even after the hope of Psalm 137 became a reality. This goes to show that remembered space does not become irrelevant in the face of reality. The psalmist of Psalm 138 particularly bases his confession and certainties on remembered space.

Although the presence of YHWH is now a reality, the speaker is still in distress. The third, lived space of the psalmist is described in verses 6-8. From these verses one can infer that the speaker's lived space is unsafe, threatened by enemies. Tucker (2014:125) observes, however, that Psalm 138 undermines imperial authority on both political and religious level (secondspace) when it assigns to the kings of the earth the bringing of praise to YHWH (verse 4) and the desire to sing praise to YHWH in the presence of the gods (verse 1). As mentioned in the social-scientific analysis, Psalm 138 is a Yahwistic reinterpretation of Persian religion and politics. The psalmist is in effect creating a socio-spatial alternative by using spatial play (cf. Harvey 2000:161,163). The driving force behind the deconstructing of the dominant political and religious discourse in Psalm 138 is remembered space. The main notions of memory in Psalm 138 are found in the attributes of YHWH in verse 2. Verse 2 states:

Hebrew text	Translation
אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל־הֵיכַל קָדְשְׁךָ וְאוֹדֶה אֶת־ שְׁמֶךָ עַל־חַסְדְּךָ וְעַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ כִּי־הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל־כָּל־שִׁמְךָ אִמְרָתֶךָ׃	I will bow down to the temple of your holiness and let me praise your name for your lovingkindness and for your faithfulness because you have magnified your name, your word, above all.

The חסד and אמת of YHWH evoke the graciousness formula from Exodus 34 (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:529). Throughout the Hebrew Bible, the חסד and אמת of YHWH are used to refer to YHWH's love and faithfulness toward his people as seen in YHWH's saving acts in the past (thus memory). In this sense, the memory of YHWH's lovingkindness is used to re-centre the dominant political and religious discourses by placing it within a positive second- and fourthspace. This fits neatly into the definition of remembered space given on page 1 of this study: Remembered space is a space in which collective memories of a people's shared history are employed to transform their identity in light of changing circumstances.

It is striking how Psalm 138 embeds the patron-client relationship within remembered space. The certainty of the psalmist that YHWH as patron will save him (the client), comes from the memory of YHWH's love, kindness and the work of YHWH's hands (מעשׂי ידיך) throughout the psalmist's circumstances. Even though memory is not mentioned explicitly

in the psalm, Psalm 138 is a prime example of how cultural memory of the temple and YHWH's saving acts are used on a spatial level to reconfigure religious and political notions. In the religious domain, the psalm challenges the gods of other nations and on a political level the psalm reconstructs the role of 'kings of the earth' (Tucker 2014:128). The reinterpretation of these domains ensures that the postexilic community is at-centre and near YHWH despite their lived space still being unsafe and uncomfortable under Persian rule. In this way, the postexilic community created a socio-spatial alternative and a new identity based on the everlasting kindness (חסד) of YHWH.

4.4.3 Psalm 139

In Psalm 139, the focus shifts to YHWH's relationship with the individual. The 'I' in the relationship can, however, also be applied to the community as a whole. The social-scientific analysis of Psalm 139 highlighted the most important themes in the psalm. These themes include the knowledge of God, the presence of YHWH and the identity of the worshippers. This discussion will build on the insights of Chapter 3. The whole of Psalm 139 attests to the presence of YHWH in the believer's life. It does this in spatial terms. Ultimately, it is a psalm about the close relationship between YHWH and the believer, a relationship in which the petitioner finds his/her identity. In this sense, Psalm 139 is crucial in the rebuilding of Jewish identity and theology in the postexilic times. Finally, the psalm also struggles with the question of the 'supposed' YHWH worshippers who seem to be part of the in-group, while they are in actual fact part of the out-group since they are not sincere.

The theme of YHWH's knowledge of the psalmist is central to Psalm 139. The theme creates an *inclusio* with verses 1-6 being about YHWH's intimately knowing the petitioner and verses 23-24 about the psalmist's request that YHWH examine and know him. Pressler (2003:99) indicates that there is an underlying complaint in the first part (verses 1-6) regarding YHWH's all-encompassing knowledge about the petitioner, almost as if the petitioner feels threatened by it. The psalm, however, concludes in verses 23-24 with the petitioner having had a change of heart, and now exclaiming that YHWH should know his heart and examine his thoughts. In the Hebrew Bible, the seat of knowledge, understanding and thought was seen to be in the heart (Schroer & Staubli 2001:42-43). The heart was thus a symbol for the inner person. Psalm 139 states that YHWH knows the heart, thoughts and inner person of the believer. From this one can gather that the knowledge of YHWH functions on an abstract spatial level – a secondspace level in Psalm 139. This brings us to the analysis of the different dimensions of space in the psalm. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:535) notice that the verbs used in connection with YHWH in verses 1-5 are all in the Qal Perfect stem formation that speak of past actions. Therefore, Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:535) determine that the psalmist speaks of past experiences in

the present time. This establishes a fourth, remembered space background against which Psalm 139 operates. There will be an expansion on the function of fourthspace in Psalm 139 in the discussion that follows.

There is much to be said about the psalm's spatial contours. The psalm as a whole describes a series of divine actions spanning time and space from the past to the present (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:538). In the first section, verses 1-18, the psalmist uses a number of spatial terms. In the previous paragraph, the semantic field of 'knowing' in relation to space was dealt with. From verse 5 onwards, words such as enclose (צור), front (קדם) and behind (אחור) as well as heaven (שׁמים), Sheol (שׁאול) and sea (ים) are employed. The poet uses the poetic technique of merismus in combination with these spatial terms in order to emphasise the totality of the knowledge and presence of YHWH (Pressler 2003:92). From verse 5 to verse 12, the psalm treats the theme of YHWH's nearness in firstspace. The closeness of YHWH is described as enclosing the psalmist from behind (אחור) and from the front (קדם). Recalling the theoretical discussion on space,[7] these two terms have spatial significance. 'Behind' is also associated with the future, while 'front' (which can also be translated as 'east') directs one to the past, remembering and new beginning. If YHWH encloses the petitioner from behind and in front, then it means that YHWH encompasses the psalmist's past and future – his remembering and his new beginning. In addition to YHWH's being present on the temporal axis, YHWH's palm (or hand) is also laid over the petitioner. Through this action, YHWH blessed, created and sustained life on earth (Schroer & Staubli 2001:175-176). According to Schroer and Staubli (2001:176), the idea of God's hand developed even further in postbiblical Judaism where it was seen that the presence of divine power rests on YHWH's palm. In this sense, the reference to 'palm' can also denote presence of power. This connects to verse 10 that states that YHWH's hand leads the psalmist and YHWH's right-hand lays hold of the psalmist.

Other spatial terms and phrases include 'ascend to heaven' (סלק שׁמים) and 'spread out in Sheol' (יצע שׁאול). The three-storey worldview is present in these phrases. These phrases are a description of the places that the psalmist flees to in order to escape from the presence of YHWH (see verse 8). The poet states that when he ascends to heaven, the realm of YHWH, he finds God there – something that was expected in that world. However, to his great surprise, when he descends to Sheol – the realm of death – he also finds YHWH there. With this merism, the psalmist creates an implicit contrast between places of life and death, of light and darkness – stressing that YHWH is present in all these places (Pressler 2003:93). This is an important turn in Israel's theology since YHWH's presence was only expected in places of light and life, in heaven and in a holy place on

[7] See section 4.2 and Addendum C.

earth. However, the postexilic community could attest to YHWH's presence also in dark places and dark times. They could do this based on their previous experiences, including, and especially, the exile experience. It is this collective memory of YHWH's faithful presence that Psalm 139 invokes. Psalm 139:9 continues the merism from verse 8, this time turning the attention from the vertical plane to the horizontal plane, the earth. Pressler (2003:93) is of the opinion that the expression 'wings of the dawn' and 'end of the sea' refer to the path of the sun rising and setting. In accordance with her, Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:541) note that the 'wings of the dawn' describe the borders of the east in contrast to 'the end of the sea' that describes the boundaries of the Mediterranean Sea. The first 12 verses of Psalm 139 describe the presence of YHWH across all four dimensions of space.

The knowledge of YHWH of the petitioner's inner being relies on intimate fourth, remembered, space. In verses 13-16, we find the 'point of intimate memory' as Pressler (2003:99) describes it. These verses discuss how YHWH's knowledge of the petitioner goes back to when the psalmist was formed in his mother's womb. The womb is another important spatial element to take note of. The firstspace womb was the secondspace seat of sympathy and compassion (Schroer & Staubli 2001:80) – a space where life was given and therefore a space where YHWH worked. The human's connection to the earth is stressed in verse 15, where it is mentioned that the psalmist was woven in the depths of the earth. Keel (1997:203) notes that the earth was seen as the bearer of humankind and all living beings. It is striking that the psalm attests to YHWH's presence also there, in that intimate space, unknown to humans. Whereas YHWH's work in history is always remembered and praised, here it is YHWH's work in creation that is praised and remembered. It is in this created space, sustained by the memory of YHWH's intimate involvement, that the petitioner lives.

Verses 19-24 fulfil an essential spatial function within the psalm. This last section of the psalm represents thirdspace, which is lived space and covers the confrontation between various social groups (Prinsloo 2013:8). It is also lived space that can be effectively transformed to ultimately transform society as a whole (cf. Soja 1996:68). Therefore, the petitioner pleads with YHWH to slay the wicked since they are the enemies of YHWH and as a result also of the psalmist. If YHWH removes the enemies, the people pretending to worship him, then the lived space of the author will be transformed to a safe and comfortable space. This will ensure that the psalmist will stay at-centre and close to YHWH in a positive space in all its dimensions.

In the end, the spatial dimensions of Psalm 139 can be summarised as follows: the psalm recalls the presence of YHWH in all dimensions of space. YHWH's presence can be seen in firstspace in the three-storey worldview (heaven, earth, Sheol). In secondspace, YHWH is present through his knowledge of the inner person of the psalmist. In thirdspace,

YHWH's presence has the power to reconstruct the lived space of the petitioner by removing the false worshippers. Embracing all three dimensions of space in Psalm 139 is fourthspace. It is only through recalling (remembering) YHWH's work in creating, knowing and being present that the psalmist can reconstruct the Jewish identity and theology. It is within the realm of remembered space that the psalmist ultimately finds the דרך עולם.

4.4.4 Psalm 140

Upon first reading Psalm 140, it becomes clear that the psalm has an overall negative spatial atmosphere. The negative space especially comes to the fore in verses 1-6 and 9-12, which discuss the out-group that threaten the life of the psalmist. In the middle and end of the psalm, however, the atmosphere changes to positive space. It is here where the psalmist talks to YHWH and the relationship of the individual to YHWH is the focal point. In the social-scientific analysis of Psalm 140, the out-group was identified as violent oppressors – possibly the dominant powers of Persia or the false worshippers exploiting others within the postexilic community itself. It is not possible to determine beyond reasonable doubt exactly who the 'proud', the 'man of violence' and the 'evil man' were, apart from knowing that he/they were in powerful positions.

It was also established that the out-group against which the psalmist speaks in this psalm, wanted the petitioner to abandon the right way of life (cf. the phrase in verse 5 'devised to push my feet'). They are tempting the psalmist to turn away from YHWH. As also mentioned in section 3.4.4, the hunting metaphors used in verse 6 carry the religious and symbolic meaning of 'falling away from YHWH' (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:552). In terms of space, this means that the people opposing the psalmist want him to be off-centre and far from YHWH. Therefore, the overwhelming space in the parts about the out-group is negative.

When identifying the role of the different dimensions of space in Psalm 140, it seems that secondspace and thirdspace dominate the sections about the wicked and proud. The conceived secondspace in this psalm has to do with power dynamics. It concerns spaces of domination – those with power dominating at the expense of others.

The thirdspace in Psalm 140 is closely connected to social space with its distinction between rich and poor. The term used to describe the members of the out-group, 'proud/arrogant' (גאה) are usually employed to denote the difference between rich and poor (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:552). Consequently, this psalm deals with socio-economic issues in the lived space of the postexilic community. Section 3.4.4 mentioned the theology of the poor present in Psalm 140. This theological current became one of the most important theological themes in Book V of the Psalms. According to Tucker

(2014:174-175), it was a lack of power by those who prayed the psalms that led to the development of a theology for the 'underside' or poor (אבינים). Since this group (the poor) were forgotten by those with power in society, this theology attempted to deconstruct the power of the day (thus, secondspace as well as thirdspace) by proclaiming that YHWH will save the poor from their oppressors. Tucker (2014:176) states that this deconstructing of power is directly related to a reconstructing of the identity of the psalmist and community as a whole. The poor-group in the postexilic community is now no longer the group without power, they are the ones to whom YHWH responds and with whom YHWH is concerned. The theology of the poor in Book V, but especially in Psalm 140, creates a socio-spatial alternative for suffering and oppressed people.

In this regard, it is noteworthy to mention the spatial contrast between verse 8 and verse 10. Verse 8 is part of the section of the psalm in which the psalmist confesses his faith in YHWH's ability to save and protect him. Verse 10, on the other hand, is part of the section on the wicked people's actions. The Hebrew text of verse 8 says the following:

Hebrew text	Translation
יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי עֹז יְשׁוּעָתִי סַכֹּתָה לְרֹאשִׁי בְּיוֹם נָשֶׁק׃	YHWH, Lord, the strength of my salvation, you have covered my head in the day of battle.

The verb סכך meaning 'cover' is used here to denote the presence and protection of God. YHWH covers the head of the petitioner – thus protecting the psalmist's whole being (Schroer & Staubli 2001:84). Note that the verb סכך is in the Qal Perfect – translated as the past tense. The significance of this for fourthspace is discussed below. Back to the contrast, verse 10 uses the word 'surround' in connection with the wicked:

Hebrew text	Translation
רֹאשׁ מְסִבָּי עֲמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ יְכַסֵּמוֹ׃	The head of those that surround me, may the evil of their lips cover them.

Literally translated, the above phrase means 'the head of those that surround me' with the rest of the verse reading 'may the evil of their lips cover them'. What we have here in verses 8 and 10 is a spatial contrast between positive space where YHWH is near and negative space where the wicked is closer to the psalmist. However, the psalm ends with the hope of positive space returning and YHWH having the last say over the wicked and proud.

It is interesting that remembered space is present in each section where the speaker confesses his faith and trust in YHWH. The fourth dimension of space – remembered

space – is here once again identified with the work of YHWH. Whereas Psalm 139 identified it with the work of YHWH in creation, Psalm 140 identifies the work of YHWH in memory with the saving acts (ישועה) of YHWH in the day of battle (ביום נשק). The certainty with which the psalmist confesses in verse 13 that YHWH will show special concern with the poor, grows out of the remembered space of YHWH staying loyal to those in need.

Psalm 140 focuses on the threats from outside to the psalmist's relationship with YHWH. As in Psalm 139, it is once again YHWH's presence in all spatial dimensions that gives the psalmist hope against all odds. Psalm 140 seeks to reform the thirdspace of the postexilic community of the poor and powerless. Even though the circumstances of the exiles supposedly improved after the return from Babylon and the Persian rulers are cast in a positive light in the texts of the Hebrew Bible, the postexilic community was still under imperial rule and iniquities and inequalities remained. Yet the hope was reignited that YHWH is on the side of the poor and righteous. Solidly grounded in remembered space, they believed that they were truly the ones at-centre – despite the dominant discourse in society at that time that tried to convince them otherwise.

4.4.5 Psalm 141

Psalm 141 continues the main themes of Psalm 140. As in the case of Psalm 140, there is a threat from the wicked who want to take the speaker away from YHWH. Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:589) are of the opinion that this psalm represents the struggles of the postexilic community in the aftermath of the exile. However, the threat of the wicked is now better defined in terms of entrapment rather than violence. Yet, the call of the psalmist has become more urgent. The lived space of the psalmist is threatened and with it also his religious obedience to YHWH (secondspace). The social-scientific analysis of this psalm recognised a reference to cultic practices at the beginning of Psalm 141. The following verse establishes a clear connection to the cult as practised in the Jerusalem temple:

Hebrew text	Translation
תִּכֹּון תְּפִלָּתִי קְטֹרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ מַשְׂאַת כַּפַּי מִנְחַת־עָרֶב:	Let my prayer be established before you like incense and the lifting up of my hands/palms like the evening sacrifice.

In turn, this reference places the psalm in the public space of communal worship. However, it was also stated in section 3.4.5 that considering the time frame in which these psalms were composed, this reference most probably did not refer to the literal temple, but rather recalled the cultic practices in the temple from an earlier era – thus placing this psalm within the realm of remembered space.

There is only one explicit firstspace reference in the psalm: the one which we find in verse 7. This is one of the verses that translators struggle with. The verse states that ‘our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol.’ Furthermore, this is the only verse in the psalm where the first-person plural suffix is used. Throughout the rest of the poem, the author uses the first person singular. In this verse, the petitioner sketches the situation of the group he belongs to. The actions of the ‘men that do wickedness’ have driven this group to the lowest spatial point possible – Sheol – the territory of death and forsakenness by YHWH.

Secondspace power dynamics also play a part in Psalm 141 as in the previous psalm. It seems that the ‘men of wickedness’ were the people with power and authority in the postexilic community (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:559). This secondspace power dynamics influenced thirdspace confrontation between the in-group and out-group. In Psalm 141, the psalmist finds himself in an uncomfortable social space somewhere between the powerful and powerless. The powerful in society tempts the psalmist to forsake the path of the righteous in order to become one of them (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:590). Therefore, it became all the more important to distinguish between true worship of YHWH by the righteous and false worship of YHWH by the wicked. Psalm 141 faces this challenge through a process of discernment. This process included identifying the wicked and their deeds and pleading with YHWH to keep the righteous from falling into the traps of the wicked. The psalmist realised that this can only be done through spatial reform.

As in the previous psalms, the psalmist also finds it possible to confess his trust in YHWH in verse 8. There he states: But my eyes are on you, YHWH, Lord, in you I seek refuge, do not lay bare my soul:

Hebrew text	Translation
כִּי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֵינָי בְּךָ חָסִיתִי אַל־תְּעַר נַפְשִׁי׃	But my eyes are on you, YHWH, Lord, in you I seek refuge, do not lay bare my soul.

The preposition כי here does not only announce a new section, but also a spatial turning point in the psalm. Schroer and Staubli (2001:110) notice the importance of ‘seeing’ in the Ancient Near East. In Israelite religion a phrase such as the one in verse 8 that states that the psalmist’s eyes are on YHWH represented the epitome of faith. Faith came from seeing. To put one’s eyes on YHWH meant to delight in the fullness of life that the deity provided (Schroer & Staubli 2001:111). It symbolises a point of intimate connection between the worshipper and his god.

The psalmist's statement that his eyes are on YHWH is in effect a spatial statement of being at-centre, recognising YHWH as the secondspace power and authority that he answers to. Furthermore, the psalmist trusts that YHWH will transform the lived space of the postexilic community by letting the wicked fall into their own traps. It is interesting to note that the psalmist regards YHWH as the only one able to reinvent thirdspace. When YHWH transforms the lived space of the community, the integrity and honour of the postexilic community is also restored and ensured. In summary, one can say that the psalmist in Psalm 141 moves between the poles of positive and negative space, of being off-centre, far from YHWH and at-centre, close to YHWH. The psalmist uses remembered space as the space of the righteous' prayer (cf. verse 2) to call upon YHWH to transform the community's thirdspace.

4.4.6 Psalm 142

Psalm 142 is the shortest psalm in the collection, yet there is much to be said about the contents of the psalm. Psalm 142 has significant links to the surrounding psalms, including Psalms 140, 141 and 143. The main verbal and thematic links were discussed in section 3.4.6, therefore it will not be repeated here. It is, however, necessary to notice that the psalmist once again finds himself between the in-group (righteous) and out-group (persecutors). The heading provides a firstspace setting in which the psalm should be read. Psalm 142 is described as 'a prayer when he (David) was in the cave.' This is an intertextual reference to 1 Samuel 24. By recalling this detail of King David's life, the psalm leans itself to being interpreted within the framework of remembered space.

Similar to the previous psalms that have been discussed, Psalm 142 functions within all four dimensions of space. In addition to the firstspace reference to 'cave', the word 'dungeon' (מסגר) is also used to describe a firstspace similar to a prison. This term is used in combination with the word for 'soul' (נפשׁ) and thus functions on a symbolic level in the psalm to indicate a deeper meaning attached to this firstspace. The dungeon represents the lowest spatial point in which the psalmist can be. The persecutors have driven the psalmist to the realm of death. The negative space that the dungeon signifies is present throughout the psalm. There is tension between negative and positive space as the petitioner struggles to stay at-centre. However, this tension brings about spatial movement in the psalm.

In order to identify the different dimensions of space in Psalm 142, one must grasp the overall theme of the psalm. In the social-scientific analysis, I determined that the psalm stresses the importance of community. This emphasis is born out of the circumstances of the psalmist. The petitioner experiences isolation from the righteous while being persecuted by the out-group. Negative space and isolation are associated with the

persecutors, while positive space and community characterises the righteous. It is curious that the persecutors remain anonymous in Psalm 142. However, based on the verbal and thematic links to the two previous psalms, one can deduce that the persecutors here are the same as the out-group in the other psalms. This in turn means that the persecutors are tempting the psalmist to join them and leave the path of the righteous. They do this by pursuing him up to the point of exhaustion and isolation (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:592).

The above scenario touches upon both second- and thirdspace. The persecutors threaten the faith of the petitioner. This has an effect on secondspace. In the light of the actions of the persecutors, abstract religious space is no longer an at-centre close-to-YHWH experience, but rather an off-centre experience. Consequently, third or lived space looked different for the petitioner since religion and the everyday life was closely connected in the Ancient Near East. Due to the secondspace situation of the petitioner (being persecuted on a religious, maybe even political level), his lived space was one of isolation, of not being part of the group of the faithful. It is in the depth of his despair, with seemingly no chance of his situation improving, that the petitioner radically transforms his view on space in all of its dimensions. He does this by transforming his understanding of God.

This is seen in verse 6:

Hebrew text	Translation
זָעַקְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אָמַרְתִּי אַתָּה מַחְסִי חֶלְקִי בְּאֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים׃	I call out to you, YHWH, I said: you are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

Verse 6 represents hope and positive space in Psalm 142. The phrase יהוה חלקי is used numerous times in the book of Psalms in the context of a confession of trust. The term חלק literally means ‘portion’ or ‘land’. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:566) indicate that this term is mainly used in its metaphorical meaning in the book of Psalms. The meaning of חלק is always applied to the faithful individual/community’s relationship with YHWH and the motif of seeking refuge and protection (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:566). In this sense, YHWH becomes a חלק, a portion/land/place. YHWH is a safe space for the petitioner in crisis. This understanding of YHWH as space has consequences for the understanding of YHWH’s presence. Whereas in Psalms 139-140 YHWH’s presence encompasses all spatial dimensions, here YHWH is seen to be the creator and inhabitant of space as such.

A last, explicit, spatial reference to take note of in Psalm 142 is that of the right hand. In verse 5 the petitioner looks to his right but sees no one there. Not only did the right hand signify power and safety, right is also associated with the direction of south, which in

spatial terms points to vitality and goodness (Prinsloo 2013:9-10). However, the petitioner states that there is no one at his right hand – further emphasising his isolation. Verse 5 forms a spatial contrast with verse 6. In verse 5 the petitioner looks to the right – the place of refuge – but finds only empty space there. In verse 6 the petitioner comes to the realisation that the space was not empty, because YHWH *is* his space of refuge.

This brings us to the remembered space in Psalm 142. Fourthspace is partly found in quotes and allusions to other Davidic Psalters. The broad idea and some phrases from verse 6, for example, are taken from other psalms (16:5-6; 73:26). The metaphor of YHWH as space thus largely functions in the dimension of remembered space. What is more, is that remembered space is again employed with regard to the individual's relationship with YHWH. One of the primary markers indicating this is the phrase 'you knew my path' (ואתה ידעת נתיבתי). Similar to Psalm 139, the knowledge of YHWH also functions here as fourthspace. Since Psalm 142 is of special significance for the understanding of the importance of identity and community, it is crucial that it builds on memories of YHWH's deeds as well as other texts available to the postexilic community.

Psalm 142 pictures a life off-centre, far from YHWH and the religious community as a life of isolation. Probably the most important spatial conclusion to be drawn from Psalm 142 is that YHWH himself is regarded from a spatial viewpoint. The psalmist states in verse 6 'you are my refuge (מחסה), my portion (חלק) in the land of the living.' As discussed earlier on, this verse forms the idea of YHWH being a space of refuge. Taking into account the tension between isolation and community, Psalm 142 redefines the notion of community. The psalmist finds community with YHWH when he realises that YHWH is his space of refuge. As a result of finding communion with YHWH, the petitioner also finds community with the righteous. This happens through YHWH's saving acts (verse 8): 'the righteous will surround me because you will deal with me.'

4.4.7 Psalm 143

Psalm 143 forms the conclusion to the mini-collection of Psalms 140-143. These few psalms share similar themes and depict a distressed petitioner whose life is threatened by enemies/persecutors. The righteous petitioner here identifies himself as a slave/servant (עבד). A self-description such as this one links this psalm to the theme of the poor in the psalms (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:573). Furthermore, Ulrich Berges (2000:15) is of the opinion that the 'servants' played a crucial role in the editing of Book V of the psalter. More will be said about this and the identity of the servants in Chapter 5. In Psalm 143, the description of the righteous as servants is connected to the main theme of the psalm, namely YHWH's righteousness. By describing himself as a servant, the petitioner stresses

his dependence on YHWH for it is only YHWH, and not humans, that can be truly righteous (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:573).

Psalm 143 functions as the climactic end to Psalms 140-143. Therefore, the psalmist's distress reaches its climax in this psalm. The overall spatial atmosphere in the psalm is thus negative. The individual petitioner, to whom the psalm refers, seems to be off-centre due to the actions of the enemy. Supporting this observation, the various references to space speaks about going *down* 'to the pit', being *low* (crushed in the ground) and dwelling in *darkness*. All three of these designations point to being far from YHWH in the realm of death and chaos. Tucker (2014:178) indicates that these spatial terms are closely connected to the theology of the poor and powerless. When the petitioners in Psalms 140-143 speak about being 'low' it refers to literally being powerless in the face of oppression.

The collection of Psalms 137-145 reaches an ultimate low point in Psalm 143. Despite this, there is some spatial play present in the psalm, demonstrating the psalmist's attempt at creating a socio-spatial alternative. The spatial play is found in the theme of life and death and in the theme of up and down. In verse 3, the psalmist states that the enemy has *crushed* his *life* and that he now lives in darkness 'like those who have been *dead* for long.' Crushing his life and being like those who have been dead for long (כמתי עולם) are dramatic expressions indicating the threat and anguish that the psalmist experiences. In contrast to this verse, stands verse 11 where the psalmist asks YHWH to *revive* him and bring his soul out of distress. When compared, it becomes clear that the two verses form a spatial contrast of death versus life:

Verse 3:

Hebrew text	Translation
כִּי רָדַף אוֹיֵב נַפְשִׁי דִּכָּא לָאָרֶץ חַיָּתִי הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי בְמַחֲשַׁכִּים כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם׃	Because the enemy has pursued my soul, he has crushed my life in the ground, he has made me dwell in the darkness like those who have been dead for long.

Verse 11:

Hebrew text	Translation
לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה תְּחַיֵּנִי בְּצִדְקָתְךָ תוֹצִיא מִצָּרָה נַפְשִׁי׃	For the sake of your name, YHWH, revive me, bring my soul out of distress in your righteousness.

The other instance of contrasting spatial play occurs between verses 7-8. In verse 7, the psalmist speaks about his fear of ‘going down to the pit’ – descending being a negative spatial action. In verse 8, the petitioner confesses that YHWH is the one who lifts up his soul. Lifting up would mean ascending, going higher and thus closer to YHWH.

Psalm 143:7

Hebrew text	Translation
מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה כָּלְתָה רוּחִי אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם־יֹרְדֵי בוֹר׃	Answer me quickly, YHWH, my spirit is spent, do not hide your spirit from me lest I become like (those) who go down to the pit.

Psalm 143:8

Hebrew text	Translation
הַשְׁמִיעֵנִי בַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ כִּי־בְךָ בָּטָחְתִּי הוֹדִיעֵנִי דֶּרֶךְ־זוּ אֵלֵךְ כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי נַפְשִׁי׃	Let me hear your lovingkindness in the morning because in you I trust, let me know the way which I should walk because to you I lift up my soul.

Once again, it is clear from the spatial contrast between verses 7-8 that YHWH transforms space and that it is only through YHWH’s deeds that one can be at-centre and close to the deity.

The speaker’s secondspace relationship with YHWH takes centre stage in Psalm 143. In the social-scientific analysis, it was shown that the patron-client relationship stands in the foreground in Psalm 143. This relationship is identified when the speaker refers to himself as a servant of YHWH. As in Psalm 142, the speaker takes cover in YHWH (verse 9), finding that in the midst of a struggle for his life, YHWH is a safe space. YHWH therefore not only transforms space but becomes a space in which the righteous in-group live.

Remembered space plays an important role in Psalm 143. This is the first psalm since Psalm 137 in which the word ‘remember’ (זכר) is mentioned explicitly. It is interesting to note that the term זכר appears in Psalm 137 and in Psalm 143 – two psalms that are overwhelmingly negative spatially. This observation would seem to suggest that remembered space plays an even bigger role in times of crisis and oppression. In the

crisis, the petitioner reflects on YHWH's deeds in the history of Israel. It is striking that the psalmist mentions explicitly that he remembers the past. He then elaborates on the contents of his memory: YHWH's deeds and the work of YHWH's hands. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:574) distinguish between the 'deeds' of YHWH and the work of YHWH's hands. The deeds of YHWH are YHWH's deeds in history – that is, his work with the exodus. The work of YHWH's hands refers to the creative actions of YHWH. The psalmist in Psalm 143 remembers both the deeds of YHWH and the work of YHWH's hands in his distress. Remembering, according to Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:574), happens especially in reflective situations, such as the one in Psalm 143 where the psalmist reflects upon his situation and his relationship with YHWH.

In answer to his remembering the past, the psalmist turns to YHWH in verse 6 both inwardly and outwardly. Outwardly, he spreads his hand out to YHWH, while inwardly he spreads his soul out to YHWH. This is a prime example of the spatial consequences that remembering/memory has. Remembering caused the psalmist to recommit himself to YHWH. This happens in a particular space – mostly secondspace with its religious dimensions – but also thirdspace where the psalmist lives surrounded by the enemy.

The petitioner uses a land metaphor in verse 6 that links with the land metaphor in 142:6. Whereas YHWH was made out to be the psalmist's 'portion in the land' in Psalm 142:6, in Psalm 143:6 it is the direct opposite. Here it is the soul of the psalmist himself that is like a 'weary land' (כארץ עיפה). The inversion of the land metaphor in Psalm 143 to apply it here to the psalmist himself, further stresses the urgency of the psalmist's distressful situation.

In conclusion, this psalm is about YHWH's ability to intervene and bring about change in order to sustain the person in need (Brueggemann & Bellinger 2014:596). Spatially speaking, it is once again only YHWH that is able to truly reform the lived space of the postexilic group of servants. The psalmist expects YHWH to reconstruct the community's lived space by getting rid of the enemies. The petitioner bases his assumptions of YHWH on remembered space. Psalms 140-143 show that it is the memory of YHWH's works that creates spaces for hope and a new beginning. Spatially speaking, the past was in front of a person in the Ancient Near Eastern world (Prinsloo 2013:9). Remembering and looking forward were thus the same action. Psalms 140-143 prove this. It is through looking at the past that the powerless in the postexilic community could simultaneously look forward to YHWH's transforming of their thirdspace.

4.4.8 Psalm 144

Psalm 144 is the penultimate psalm in the collection of Psalms 137-145. This psalm forms the thematic conclusion to Psalm 137-143 with Psalm 145 being the doxological ending to

the collection. Since Psalm 144 is the thematic conclusion to the collection, the psalm contains various connections to the previous psalms including the war metaphors and allusions to other psalms from Book I of the Psalter. These links were discussed in the social-scientific analysis of Psalm 144. It is, however, important to realise that the psalmist still experiences oppression from the out-group and pleads with YHWH to set him free. In contrast to Psalms 140-143, though, the overall spatial orientation in the psalm is positive. The psalm starts and ends with the word ברוך, setting the scene for a psalm of praise. Furthermore, the psalm is told from the perspective of King David as is clear from verse 2 and verse 10. In verse 2, the speaker-king states that YHWH subdues his people under him. In verse 10, David is mentioned explicitly and is typified as YHWH's servant. As in Psalm 143, the servant-group plays a role here. In the social-scientific analysis it was also determined that the reference to King David should be understood in fourthspace terms. In the postexilic community's memory, David became an exemplary figure as servant of YHWH. The 'David' and 'servants' referred to here are in actual fact the successors of David, namely the postexilic community (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:587). David's life and character served as a 'spirituality' to strive towards.

In opposition to the servant of YHWH, stands the out-group identified as the 'sons of foreigners' (בני־נכר). These foreigners are the enemies of the king due to their false oaths and false speech (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:589). Tucker (2014:129) interprets the 'foreign sons' to be foreign powers, such as the Persian government in the postexilic times. The psalmist seeks YHWH's help in transforming the negative social space associated with the foreigners. By doing this, the speaker confesses that his deliverance only comes from YHWH's hand. In accordance with the psalm's understanding of God, is the psalm's understanding of a human being. Psalm 144:3-4 quote from Psalm 8 but come to a different conclusion. It is not about humanity's place as king and ruler, but rather about humanity's weakness and vulnerability in light of YHWH's rule (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:589).

In this sense, Psalm 144 continues with the tradition of Psalms 137-143 in the conviction that it is only YHWH, as universal ruler, that can transform space and give blessing. This is demonstrated in verse 2 where YHWH is again made out as the psalmist's safe space:

Hebrew text	Translation
חַסְדִּי וּמְצוּדָתִי מִשְׂגַּבִּי וּמְפַלְטִי לִי מָגִנִּי וּבוֹ חָסִיתִי הָרוֹדֵד עַמִּי תַּחְתָּי׃	My goodness and my stronghold, my refuge and my deliverer, my shield and he in whom I take refuge, who subdue my people under me.

This theological development has consequences for the ideology about kingship that existed in Israel. Since YHWH was considered to be the universal king, the earthly king was no longer seen as the mediator between God and the faithful (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:589). Therefore, this particular psalm deconstructs the ideology of kingship. An anti-imperial ideology arises which deconstructs worldly power and stresses the power of YHWH. This deconstruction has spatial implications.

Psalm 144 is ripe with spatial allusions. The psalm encompasses all spatial dimensions. The crisis of the speaker is set in cosmological terms. The Ancient Near Eastern worldview is prominent in verses 5-7. The psalmist asks YHWH to perform a variety of actions: stretch out the heavens, come down, touch the mountains, flash lightning and scatter the foreigners. The three-storey universe is visible in these demands. The dwelling place of YHWH was in the heavens (Tucker 2014:143). In addition, the word translated as 'refuge' (משגב) in verse 2 can also mean a 'high spot'. This is indicative of the understanding of YHWH as being 'high'.

This, however, did not mean that YHWH was far and uninvolved. In fact, writes Tucker (2014:143), the presence of God in the heavens reinforced the hope of YHWH delivering his people from foreign powers. That is why the psalmist calls on YHWH to come down from the heavens to the earth – the dwelling place of the humans – to deliver them. YHWH's deliverance is here described in terms of touching the mountains and letting the lightning flash as well as delivering the speaker 'out of the waters'. These waters refer to the chaos waters that are part of the realm of death and being off-centre.

By alluding to his firstspace understanding of the world, the psalmist puts his hope in his secondspace relationship with YHWH, trusting that by doing this YHWH will change his thirdspace circumstances.

Further spatial material is found in verses 12-14. Commentators agree that the language of these verses do not fit that of the rest of the psalm (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:587). However, in terms of contents these verses further strengthen the spatial character of the psalm and the theme of challenging foreign kings (Tucker 2014:133). Verses 12-14 describe the blessings that the postexilic community wishes to experience under the rule of YHWH. They wish for their descendants, sons and daughters, to grow strong and successful. This can be seen as gendered space as symbol of the successful continuation of the community. Second, the community wishes for food, to be nourished. Third, they wish for fertility among their flocks and, lastly, for peace in their public and social spaces.

The three wishes described above embrace all dimensions of space. It concerns all the firstspace places in which one lives one's life. But more than that, it asks of YHWH to care

and provide for people on a secondspace spiritual level. When YHWH grants the community their wishes, it will transform their daily lived space since foreign powers will no longer threaten their existence.

All the themes in Psalm 144 are tied together with remembered space. Not only does the psalm recall other psalms such as Psalm 18 and Psalm 8, but the figure of David featured in the psalm also reminds the postexilic community of YHWH's saving acts in the past (Tucker 2014:132). It is based on the memory of YHWH's intervention that the psalmist declares that he can now sing a new song to YHWH. The motif of singing a song to YHWH goes back to the beginning of the collection in Psalm 137. In Psalm 137, the speakers declare their inability to sing a song for YHWH in a foreign land. Throughout the collection, the postexilic community's understanding of YHWH, their situation and space have grown to such an extent that they are able to declare in Psalm 144:9 that they will sing a new song to YHWH despite the presence of foreign powers. It was only possible for the community to come to this conclusion because of their collective memory of YHWH's goodness and saving acts. Once they recognised that only YHWH could transform their negative, off-centre spaces into positive, at-centre spaces, they were able to sing a *new* song for YHWH. The theology developed throughout the collection, from Psalm 137 to Psalm 143, coalesces in Psalm 144. The concluding psalm, and doxological climax to the collection, affirms this theology.

4.4.9 Psalm 145

We have come to the last psalm in the collection of Psalms 137-145. As mentioned in the previous section, Psalm 145 is the doxological conclusion to the collection. Consequently, the psalm is characterised by positive space – space of praise. The praise in Psalm 145 once again encompasses and includes all four dimensions of space. The main themes with regard to YHWH and the faithful that have been developed throughout the collection all come together in Psalm 145. The most prominent idea concerning YHWH that is reflected in the psalm is that of YHWH being the universal king. As we will see below, this is in large part an answer to Psalm 144. In line with the thoughts on YHWH being king, Psalm 145 develops the idea of the kingdom of YHWH. This represents a move to theocracy in postexilic theology.

One of the prominent themes throughout the collection was the presence of YHWH. In Psalm 145 the presence of YHWH is described as both transcendent and immanent. According to Tucker (2014:161), Psalm 145 acknowledges the spatial tension in Book V of the Psalter by stressing that YHWH is the cosmic, universal king, yet still committed to be near the faithful.

The transcendent nature of YHWH is discussed in the first 11 verses. It is done by listing YHWH's characteristics such as God's graciousness, works, greatness and righteousness. The greatness of YHWH is 'unsearchable' (אין חקר), states verse 3. The transcendence of YHWH in terms of his words, goodness and righteousness is described in remembered space. Three verbs that are used denote remembered space: 'meditate/muse' (שׂיח), 'recount' (ספר) and 'remembrance' (זכר). The psalmist states that he will meditate on YHWH's words, recount YHWH's greatness and remember YHWH's goodness. The remembered space in Psalm 145 is taken a step further with verse 8 which recalls the graciousness formula from Exodus 34. Verse 9 interprets verse 8 and serves as a kind of 'midrash' on the graciousness formula within the context of Psalm 145. The whole of 145:1-11 takes place in the dimension of remembered space. Numerous characteristics of YHWH are praised, based on God's works in creation and history. It is important to note that the mention of זכר here in the last psalm of the collection carries deeper significance. It recalls the mention of זכר in Psalm 137:1. Whereas Psalm 137 remembered Zion and the land with nostalgia from the depths of exile, Psalm 145 remembers YHWH's goodness and righteousness based on God's saving the community from dire circumstances such as the exile. Seen from this perspective, the contents of remembered space have also undergone growth and deconstruction in the collection.

Remembered space, or the memory of how YHWH transformed space for the faithful, thus sets the scene for the next section of the psalm. From verse 12 onwards the psalm focuses on YHWH's kingdom and thus YHWH's relationship to the faithful. The faithful is identified as the חסדים. Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:599) note that the petitioner as well as the generations (דור) mentioned in verses 4 and 13 are part of this group. The faithful are those who know the deeds of YHWH in history and creation, as well as the memories that formed in the meantime since the exile (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:599). In addition, we can gather from the analyses of the previous psalms that the חסדים and in-group were the lowly, poor servants of YHWH who regarded the figure of David as YHWH's servant as their role model. YHWH's presence and care for the חסדים are the deciding factor for the shaping of their identity. The identity of the in-group is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Psalm 145 describes YHWH's efforts with the חסדים in spatial dimensions. In firstspace, YHWH's kingship over the whole cosmos (three storeys of the world) is stressed. That YHWH is present in heaven, Sheol and on earth was demonstrated throughout the collection, especially in a psalm such as Psalm 139. In thirdspace, YHWH is portrayed as the one who sustains the faithful. God cares for the lived space of all living things by providing in their every desire (verse 16). The psalm portrays God in this way by using the image of the hand of YHWH to signify the nearness of God (Tucker 2014:161). Furthermore, Psalm 145 states that YHWH raises those that are oppressed and those that

fall. This is also an important spatial observation – when one descends to the realm of chaos and is threatened to go off-centre, YHWH is there to raise one up and take one closer to him to become at-centre again.

The kingdom of YHWH is described as an 'everlasting' kingdom. In this kingdom YHWH guards the חסדים and eliminates the wicked. Spatially speaking, YHWH's kingdom spans all dimensions of space. In fact, it reconstructs space as the postexilic community knows it. This renewed understanding of God's kingship and kingdom enables the community to create a socio-spatial alternative. This fits the definition of thirdspace as a counterspace: a space of resistance to the dominant system rising from a marginalised, oppressed position (Prinsloo & Prinsloo 2013:163). YHWH's universal rule as king is in effect a counterspace to the dominant political and ideological discourse in postexilic Yehud.

The fact that YHWH is the universal king, while simultaneously being close to those who love him, transformed the social space of the postexilic community. Throughout the collection, the community's secondspace understanding of YHWH deepened until it grew to this point where the faithful confirms YHWH as the only king. This notion forms the 'conceptual basis' of Book V (Tucker 2014:158). It should be kept in mind that the postexilic community made these claims in a world where imperial power still ruled. By making this claim, they were deconstructing the oppressive powers of their day. This made it possible for the community to keep hope alive and to discern between false power (of humans) and true power (of YHWH).

Although the postexilic community's life is under threat, the community praises the divine creator and king. They do this based on collective memory. The memory of YHWH's actions enables the community to pronounce the praise of YHWH despite their circumstances. Psalm 145 attests to the spatial transformation that YHWH established throughout the collection.

Psalm 145 ends the collection on a positive spatial note. The faithful are assured of YHWH's presence that will ensure that they live near YHWH, at-centre. The psalm ends with a universalising statement: 'My mouth will speak the praise of YHWH; all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.' The mention of 'mouth' (פה) refers to Psalm 137:6: 'May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you.' At the end of this spatial journey, the community can at long last declare that they did not forget YHWH, therefore their mouths can now pronounce the praise of YHWH. In Psalm 137, the trauma of exilic and postexilic imperial domination rendered the psalmist speechless. This meant that the community did not have an influence and continued to stay in their oppressed situation (Schroer & Staubli 2001:141). However, when we come to the end of the collection, we find that the faithful have found their voice – God has opened their lips and

enabled them to sing his praise despite their circumstances (Schroer & Staubli 2001:146). Brueggemann and Bellinger (2014:604) note that this last verse also sets the stage for the final doxology with which the Psalter ends (Psalms 146-150).

4.5 Psalms 137-145: A spatial narrative based on memory

From the spatial analysis in this chapter, it has become clear that Psalms 137-145 forms a closely-knit spatial narrative grounded in memory.

The narrative starts by remembering the negative experience in exile reflected in Psalm 137. When the psalm is read from a postexilic perspective, it however, becomes clear that Psalm 137 deconstructs the powerlessness and shame under imperial domination and creates a space of hope by holding on to collective memory. Psalm 138 answers to Psalm 137 by stressing YHWH's steadfastness and kindness, also based on collective memory of YHWH's works. Remembered space serves to create a socio-spatial alternative. Psalm 139 continues the positive spatial dimensions of Psalm 138, this time intensely focusing on the relationship with YHWH. The presence of YHWH, a theme present in all these psalms, is described as covering all dimensions of space. From Psalm 140 to Psalm 143 the space returns to negative again as the petitioners in each psalm find themselves in a situation of distress. In these psalms the community is off-centre. However, it is once again remembered space that helps the petitioners to find meaning in their suffering, to create a space of hope and to return to a position at-centre. Even in the dire circumstances of Psalms 140-143, the psalmists can confess their faith in YHWH. Throughout these psalms, the out-group can be identified as a religious and political group. The religious out-group consists of those who are false YHWH-worshippers, while the political out-group represents the authorities of the Persian Empire. Consequently, power dynamics play an essential role in these psalms. The faithful try their best to uphold their honour and integrity through not giving in to the powerful in society. They realise that true power is situated in YHWH as universal king. In this way the postexilic community develops a universalised theology. The universalised theology is demonstrated best in the last two psalms in the collection, namely Psalm 144 and Psalm 145. The space in these psalms becomes positive again, ensuring that the collection ends on the proverbial high note. The community praises YHWH despite their difficult circumstances. They can do this based on their renewed understanding of YHWH *as* space.

In Psalms 137-145 YHWH is pictured as being on the side of the poor, oppressed and faithful, thus the in-group. It is therefore also only YHWH that can transform the spaces of the postexilic community. Furthermore, the experiences of the postexilic community as reflected in the collection led to the creation of a spatial understanding of YHWH in Psalms 137-145. Since YHWH's presence transcends space in all its dimensions, the faithful

came to the understanding that YHWH is present in positive as well as negative spaces. YHWH is always near them – hence YHWH himself is a safe space, a refuge for them. The community could only come to this conclusion by reflecting on past experiences of God's grace, righteousness and love – otherwise known as remembered space.

The diagram below summarises the spatial fluctuation in Psalms 137-145. This is an oversimplified depiction of the flow between positive and negative space. However, it does give one an idea of the spatial movement that takes place in the collection:

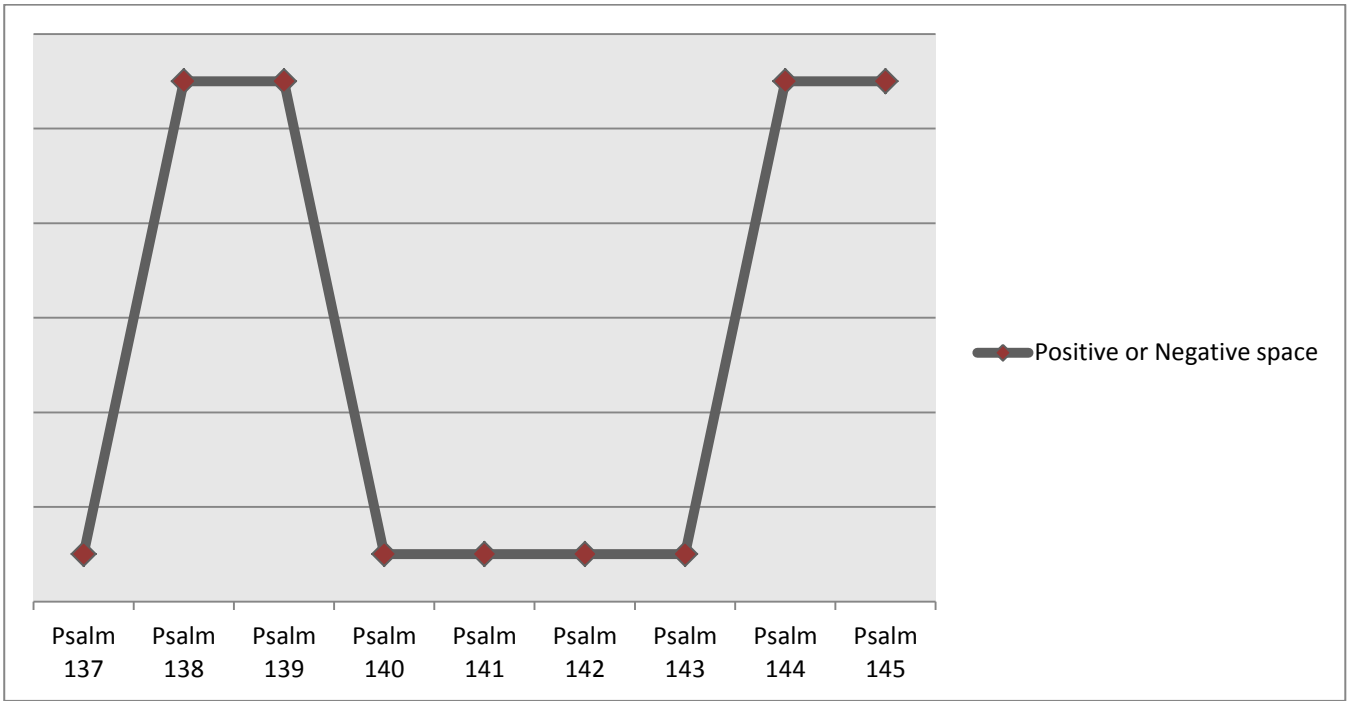

Figure 4: Diagram depicting spatial movement in Psalms 137-145

Although one can draw a map of the spatial fluctuation in the collection, it is also vital to recognise that there is spatial movement within each of these psalms. Space and its dimensions are not static, but rather flexible and therefore one finds a flow from positive space to negative space to positive space again within a single psalm.

The collection of psalms with its spatial ups and downs, alternating between positive and negative, is a blueprint of life itself. Daily, we find ourselves in a wide array of spaces varying from positive to negative to positive again. What we learn from Psalms 137-145 is that we can end each day at-centre and close to YHWH since YHWH's presence transcends all classifications of space.

At the beginning of this study, remembered space was defined as a space in which collective memories of a people's shared history are employed to transform their identity in

light of changing circumstances. During our journey through the collection of Psalms 137-145, it, however, also became clear that the psalmists added another dimension to remembered space. In most of the psalms, remembered space is applied to their understanding of YHWH and YHWH's works in creation and history. Therefore, remembered space should also include the memory of how YHWH *transformed* spaces. Remembered space serves as the point of departure for the spatial deconstruction in Psalms 137-145. Through remembered space, spaces of hope for the postexilic community's present and future are created.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, a spatial analysis was done on each psalm in the collection of Psalms 137-145. The spatial analysis stressed the important role that remembered space plays throughout the collection. This fact demonstrates the link between space and memory. It was determined that Psalms 137-145 form a spatial narrative built from memory. The predominant memory that drives the collection is that of how YHWH transformed the postexilic community's space.

Yet, Psalms 137-145 not only represent the importance of remembered space and spatial movement in the psalms, but also represent the growth of the postexilic community's understanding of YHWH and themselves. Their renewed theology led to a reflection on their identity and ultimately a reshaping of their identity in the aftermath of the exile. Therefore, the next chapter takes a more in-depth look at the identity of the postexilic community and how Psalms 137-145 influenced the creation of a renewed identity. This is done by studying the identity markers that the in-group in each of these psalms designate to themselves.

CHAPTER 5
IDENTITY AS A PRODUCT OF REMEMBERED SPACE

5.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters it became clear that Psalms 137-145 played a significant role in the establishing of a renewed identity for the postexilic community. For this reason, the current chapter reflects on the link between space, memory and identity. Bowman (2013:93) summarised this link in his essay, *The Place of the Past: Spatial Construction in Jeremiah 1-24*, where he states that memory, being a product of place and experience, forms identity.

Chapter 5 starts off by discussing the deconstruction and reconstruction of Judaic identity as evident in the collection of psalms. In order to do this, the different characteristics of a postexilic identity are taken into account. Several studies on the identity of the in-group are part of the discussion (Berges 2000; Levin 2001). Thereafter, the link between identity and remembered space in Psalms 137-145 is stressed. This chapter seeks to deepen our understanding of who the postexilic community consisted of by exploring who the role players were behind the texts of postexilic Yehud. In order to do this, one must keep in mind the circumstances in postexilic Yehud as discussed in Chapter 3. History, memory, space and socio-economic circumstances shaped the identity of the postexilic community as the people of YHWH. Berquist (2006:54), therefore, reminds us that identity is multi-faceted and should not be reduced to the binary distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Identity is formed and reformed according to ever-changing circumstances. Identity formation is, therefore, not static, but a dynamic process (Berquist 2006:63). The section that follows, describes how the different components mentioned here came together to reconstruct the identity of postexilic Jews.

5.2 Judaic identity: Deconstruction and reconstruction

The deportation of the Judaic community to Babylonia threatened the identity of YHWH’s people. Their identity markers, which included the temple, Zion and the Davidic rule, were destroyed. However, it is important to realise that their identity as people of YHWH did not disappear or perish whilst they were in exile. On the contrary, the sense of them being the people of YHWH only grew stronger (Gerstenberger 2002:208). During the exile social cohesion among the deportees strengthened, maintaining their identity and a future hope of restoration (Gerstenberger 2002:208). Their social cohesion, and ultimately their identity, were reconstructed in the postexilic times by remembered space – by the collective memories from their history. In agreement with this, Langille (2014:62) notes that a cultural crisis and the memory of that crisis led to the emergence of new collective

identities. Psalms 137-145 are evidence of this. Before we can answer the question as to who the redactors behind Psalms 137-145 were, we must first ascertain the elements of the reconstructed identity of the postexilic community.

5.2.1 Elements of postexilic identity formation

In his paper, *Constructions of Identity in Postcolonial Yehud*, Jon Berquist (2006:54-59) reflects upon different strands that made up identity in postexilic Yehud. Two of these strands consist of identity being formed by ethnicity and nationality. In terms of nationality, one must consider the relationship between a Persian identity and a Judean identity in the postexilic period. Both of these had political connotations (Berquist 2006:56). The Persian Empire imposed a particular national and political identity on their subjects by representing them as blissfully participating in the empire by willingly subduing themselves to the Persian Emperor (Tucker 2014:165). In reaction to the imposed Persian identity, the postexilic community constructed their own national identity by defining themselves as Judeans. With this designation came another element, namely, identity as religion (Berquist 2006:57). Thus, the postexilic community did not allow themselves to be defined only in imperialist political terms. They reconstructed and redefined their identity further through their identification with YHWH. The postexilic community defined themselves in terms of their worship of YHWH. In doing this, they created a religious grouping of the 'faithful'.

Although Berquist (2006:57) is of the opinion that Judean identity is to be seen as separate from religion, I hold that the religious aspect played an unmistakeable role in postexilic identity formation. The religious component in the identity of Judeans was utilised to reconstruct the other components of their identity. This is seen in the way that the postexilic writers deconstruct Persian imperial ideology. Instead of affirming the universal rule of the Persian Emperor, the writers and editors of postexilic texts claim that YHWH is the ultimate cosmic ruler (Tucker 2014:165). An additional aspect of the religious identity of the postexilic community was the canon. At that time, the Torah and Prophets that were available to the worshippers of YHWH played a significant role in forming their identity. The canon contained memories of their history, reminding them of the long way YHWH had come with them and motivating the Judeans to trust in YHWH as the only rightful king and universal ruler (Berquist 2006:64).

Another component of identity formation in the postexilic period is that of the different roles played by different people in society. Berquist (2006:58) states that this is a bottom-up model for creating identity. In the postexilic society, religious and political leaders played the main roles. These were also the groups that competed over the 'true' Israel (Brettler 2017:284). Within the confines of religion, different priestly groups came into being,

including the Zadokite priesthood as well as the Levitical temple servants. The Zadokite priesthood played a prominent role during the postexilic time (Gillingham 2014:204). This was discussed in section 3.3.3. These groups were responsible for the production and editing of much of the postexilic literature and therefore also for the formation of a Judean identity.

Additionally, identity formation has to do with defining who one is not – thus creating the category of the 'other' (Kaminsky 2011:17). In the discussion up to this point it has been noted that different groups and their roles in the postexilic society contributed to the forming of a Judean identity. There existed a myriad of Yahwistic communities in postexilic Yehud. In addition to the community in Jerusalem, there were also the community in Elephantine and the Benjaminites to name but two (Brettler 2017:285-286). It is, therefore, important to note when reading the texts in the Hebrew Bible that most postexilic texts are addressed to the community's own group – the in-group. Kaminsky (2011:18) calls the in-group the 'elect' while he calls the group that is portrayed as the enemies of YHWH, the 'anti-elect'. These groups are clearly discernible in the Psalter as a whole. However, one can also detect the differing opinions of different groups on the 'anti-elect' since there are also texts in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Ezekiel 40-48 and Isaiah 56) that are open to foreigners and call upon all the nations to praise YHWH (Kaminsky 2011:19).

From the above discussion, it is clear that multiple forces influenced identity formation in the postexilic period. In order to discuss the question of identity thoroughly, one must take the complexity of the matter into account. Furthermore, identity formation is a process. The conflicts over the true Yahwist Judean identity were both an internal and external struggle. Internally, the postexilic literature aims to prove who the true YHWH worshippers were. Externally, the Yahwist community had to substantiate themselves against imperial powers imposing a certain identity on them. As a result of there being different YHWH groups, it follows that there was not a single postexilic identity for the people of YHWH, but rather a diversity of identities. Throughout these struggles the religious component as well as the roles that groups of people played in society were the determining factors for the establishing of postexilic identity.

5.2.2 The community behind Psalms 137-145

Throughout Book V, and, especially in Psalms 137-145, there are designations as to the speakers' group, or the in-group. The group dynamics in Psalms 137-145 were discussed alongside the social-scientific analysis in Chapter 3. There is an inextricable link between group dynamics and identity, since one's identity was determined by the group to which one belonged (Pilch & Malina 1993:88). In Chapter 3, it was determined that the in-group consisted of the faithful and righteous YHWH-worshippers, whilst the out-group was made

up of the wicked and foreign nations. In almost all of the psalms in the collection, the in-group identified themselves as the group associated with YHWH. These self-designations provide a framework for the identity of those to whom the psalms were addressed. Tucker (2014:165) mentions that Book V of the Psalter (re)constructs an identity for the people of YHWH in reaction to their circumstances in the Persian Empire. Tucker (2014:166) goes on to mention that the reconstruction of the identity of YHWH's people is evident in the language used in the psalms of Book V, as well as the contents of the speakers' confessions and the claims they make about themselves. This understanding of identity corresponds to the model of identity as the different roles played by different people in society (cf. Berquist 2006:58).

Within Book V, there are mainly three groups that tell something of the identity of the postexilic community. They include the servants (עבדים), the poor (אבינים) and the beloved/faithful (חסדים). All three of these groups are discussed below. According to Levin (1993:375), there are notable differences among the work of these redactional groups, since each had its own focus and main themes. There are, however, also commonalities in the views that these groups represent. This is discussed below.

Ulrich Berges (2000:7) wrote an essay on the role of the servants (עבדים) in the Psalter. This group is primarily found in Books IV and V. At the beginning of Book V, the restoration and return from exile is emphasised as an answer to the ending of Book IV (Psalm 106:47). The postexilic community is characterised as the servants of YHWH. Berges (2000:16-17) notes that there were two conditions to belonging to the group of the servants. First, one had to have been part of the group of people that were deported to Babylonia. Second, one had to 'find delight in the fear of God's name'. The second condition was harder to judge, and rather relied on social power in discerning who was part of the group of the servants (Berges 2000:17). In the previous section (5.2.1) it was mentioned that the reconstruction of a postexilic identity had a double purpose. The first purpose was to establish an external identity over against foreign powers. The second purpose was to create an internal identity in order to determine who the true YHWH worshippers were. Ideologically speaking, the servant-group wanted to settle the internal clash between different groups of YHWH-followers so as to indicate that they were the 'true Israel'. Therefore, the theology of the servants entailed sincerity in worshipping YHWH and an openness to followers of YHWH from other nations (Berges 2000:14, 18).

In addition to the servant-theme, Book V also reflects the theme of the poor and oppressed. The servant-theme is connected to the theme of the poor, since the theology of the servants represented a perspective in favour of the poor. Thus, I do not completely agree with Berges (2000:15) that the theme of the servants is completely absent in Psalms 137-145. Besides the speaker calling himself the servant of YHWH in Psalm 143 (see

verses 2 and 12), the collection of Psalms 137-145 also took the bias of the servant-theology for the poor a step further in developing a theology that focuses specifically on the poor. The socio-economic circumstances in which the postexilic community lived, necessitated the development of such a theology. Tucker (2014:180) also stresses the close connection between the 'servants' and the 'poor' in Book V.

Levin (2001:253) writes that poverty was a major crisis in postexilic Yehud. This led to the development of a social group that interpreted their economic situation religiously by claiming that they enjoyed privilege in YHWH's eyes (Levin 2001:264). In many of the psalms, the speaker describes himself as poor and needy. The self-designations of the speakers in Psalms 137-145 also fall in the semantic field of the poor and needy. The in-group is described as lowly, humble, afflicted, bowed down, fallen down and oppressed. These are the people in Psalms 137-145 who are close to YHWH. Moreover, the word 'poor' (אבינים) is used explicitly in Psalm 140. Levin (2001:265) writes that the references to the poor in the psalms correspond with the laws about the poor in Deuteronomy 24, establishing Torah-authority for the group of the poor.

It is interesting that caring for the poor was one of the main concerns of the king in the Ancient Near East (Levin 2001:253). Seeing as the postexilic community came to regard YHWH as the universal king, caring for the poor was also one of YHWH's tasks. Therefore, the poor were the people of YHWH in a special sense (Levin 2001:253). The poor put their trust in YHWH since they believed that he would save them from the oppressive poverty they were experiencing. God would do this by letting the proud and false worshippers come to a fall. The judgement and justice of YHWH was therefore something to look forward to with hope (Levin 2001:265).

According to Tucker (2014:174), the theology of the poor originated in the postexilic community upon realising that no human power is successful. The theology of the poor deals with the power issues in postexilic Israel. Since the postexilic community experienced no deliverance from power and authorities, they increasingly came to realise that it is only YHWH who is truly concerned with them and their circumstances and who will respond to them (Tucker 2014:175-176). Through self-describing as poor or part of the group of the poor, the psalmists acknowledge that they are unable to change their own circumstances and that it is only YHWH who can bring relief.

The poor-group played a significant role in the theology of Psalms 137-145 and in establishing an identity for the postexilic community on an external level – in opposition to the prosperous power of the Persian Empire.

The third clear group that we encounter in Psalms 137-145, is that of the faithful or righteous (חסדים). This group should also be taken note of in the discussion on identity in postexilic Yehud. In the collection of Psalms 137-145, the חסדים are associated with David, especially since Psalms 138-145 are a Davidic collection. In this regard, Gillingham (2014:204) talks about the 'Davidising of the Psalter' by the Levitical temple servants. Gillingham (2014:204) argues that the Levitical singers were one of the groups of redactors of the Psalter. They established their own authority by portraying David in a certain way – as an example of piety. In this way the Levitical temple servants aligned their identity and theological agenda with that of David.

David acts as the identification figure of the faithful (חסדים) in the collection of psalms. It is important to take note of David's figurative role in the collection. David leads the postexilic community in prayer, supplication and praise (Van Grol 2010:336). The Davidic collection in Book V (Psalms 138-145) recalls the previous Davidic Psalters in the Psalter. By alluding to the memory of those Davidic collections, the postexilic community creates an identity for themselves based on the iconic character of David.

Van Grol (2010:324-325) takes the חסדים as reference to the in-group as a whole throughout Psalms 137-145. The in-group, or the community of the speaker, include those who are 'low' and who are victims of evil. They are the ones whose lives are threatened by the out-group, yet they choose to serve YHWH and live in an intimate relationship with God (Van Grol 2010:326). The appropriate reaction of the in-group to the deliverance they receive from YHWH is praise (Van Grol 2010:326). That is the reason why Psalm 145 is a psalm of praise that concludes the collection. Van Grol (2010:326) continues to stress that the worshipping community portrayed in Psalms 137-145 is both an object of YHWH's help and a subject of YHWH's praise. Throughout these psalms, the help to and blessing of the in-group by YHWH is emphasised.

To summarise: the collection of Psalms 137-145 uses various terms to identify the in-group; the true YHWH-worshippers. They are the servants of YHWH, the poor and the faithful. These designations represent the internal and external struggle to reconstruct a Yahwistic identity in the light of social, economic and political circumstances in postexilic Yehud. We will never know with certainty who the actual people in these groups were. What we have in our Bibles today, is an integration of these groups and their theologies. When reading these texts, one must do so responsibly, whilst taking into account their complexity.

5.2.3 The other side: The out-group

As Kaminsky (2011:17) mentioned, creating identity requires the creation of boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. The section up to this point has focused on the 'us'-side of the coin. This brief discussion will focus on the other side – the side of the out-group. By determining who the out-group consisted of, we can get a clearer picture as to the identity of the people of YHWH in Psalms 137-145. As was the case with the in-group, the out-group is also described using various terms. These include the oppressors, wicked, enemies and 'sons of foreigners', to name but a few.

Since the struggles attested to in Psalms 137-145 include an internal struggle between different groups of YHWH-worshippers, the psalmists struggle in these psalms to maintain their own integrity in order to stay loyal to the group that they believe constitutes the true YHWH-worshippers. This is especially seen in Psalms 141 and 143. Van Grol (2010:333) is of the opinion that the controversial groups included orthodox Judeans on the one hand and Hellenistic Judeans on the other hand. Thus, the psalmists struggled to make sense of their identity on national, political, cultural and religious levels. This brings the question of conformity to the surrounding imperial culture into the discussion. The wicked and the enemies threatened the true worship of YHWH since they sought their own glorification and not the glorification of YHWH (Van Grol 2010:333). As a result, the psalmist decides to humbly side with YHWH, rather than with people.

5.3 Space, memory and identity

According to Berquist (2006:63) identity is formed by different 'social sites'. In essence, this means that identity is formed by different spaces. Among these are family, folktales, pilgrimage, religion and rituals (Berquist 2006:63). Most of the spaces mentioned here can be classified as remembered space – spaces in which memories are employed to transform identity in light of present circumstances. The remembered spaces Berquist (2006:63) mention, include folktales, pilgrimage, religion and rituals. It is only through remembering who they once were that the postexilic community could forge a new identity in the new space they occupied. In this way, space, memory and identity unite.

In Psalms 137-145, identity is reconstructed by making use of memory as a product of space. Psalm 137 depicts the postexilic community's struggle for identity brought about by a major crisis. In order to rebuild their identity, the community calls upon their collective memories to create a new space in which they can worship YHWH with integrity and sincerity. Throughout Psalms 137-145, the psalmists describe their struggle to find their true identity in the postexilic community characterised by various groups claiming that they worship YHWH, as well as imperial power threatening to overtake the national, political

and religious identity of the Judeans. Psalms 137-145 depict a spatial journey in which a community travels to find itself based on the memory of YHWH's presence and loyalty. Through this journey, they also call upon the memory of their role model, David. They strive to be as pious as he was, but more than that, they strive to be YHWH's servants, like David once was.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter related the study on remembered space to the question of a postexilic identity. In the previous section, the findings of the chapter on the relation between space, memory and identity were summarised. It was found that the postexilic community used collective memory of the exilic crisis as well as an exemplary figure, David, to create a new space in which they could transform their identity as the servants of YHWH.

Fundamentally, the purpose of the collection of Psalms 137-145 is to reconstruct the identity of the faithful in an internal and external struggle against other groups that were threatening their national and religious identity. In the end, the postexilic community finds their identity in YHWH, since God is the one who has kept them and delivered them, even and especially where human power failed them. This brings us to the penultimate chapter, describing the postexilic community's reconstruction of their faith and understanding of YHWH.

CHAPTER 6
REMEMBERED SPACE AND WORSHIP OF YHWH

6.1 Introduction

Whereas Chapter 5 reflected on the link between remembered space and identity in Psalms 137-145, Chapter 6 connects the study on remembered space and identity to the religious life of the postexilic community. The discussion in this chapter is built on the premise that there occurred a shift in thinking about religion and YHWH's role and work in the lives of the faithful during the postexilic period. The postexilic community not only reconstructed their identity in the period following the return from exile, but also their understanding of YHWH. The religion of the Israelites was contested by traumatic events such as the exile and postexilic imperial rule, yet these events also strengthened and deepened their faith (Becking 2012:298). This chapter argues that the people of YHWH reconstructed their faith through remembered space. This is evident in the collection of Psalms 137-145, as is discussed at the end of the chapter.

6.2 Postexilic understanding of YHWH with reference to Psalms 137-145

This section discusses the postexilic understanding of God in detail. First, a look is taken at the development of monotheism in the Persian period, after which the postexilic community's comprehension of YHWH's presence is explored. Thereafter, the influence and application of Persian royal ideology to YHWH is examined.

6.2.1 The development of monotheism

Any discussion on the development of monotheism must take into account the religious diversity within the Israelite religion itself. Miller (2000:62) writes in this regard about the distinction between 'popular' and 'official' religion in Israel. Popular religion is the religion as practiced within the family and household, whilst official religion can be identified with the orthodox state religion. Family and household religion were especially popular in pre-exilic, monarchic Israel and Judah (Albertz 2012:55). However, popular religion started to retreat to the background as the Deuteronomic reform created an official Judean set of beliefs and practices (Albertz 2012:55). By the time of the postexilic period, state religion played the main role in Yehud.

Römer (2015:210), in accordance with this, argues that the Deuteronomistic literature was in large part responsible for the promotion of monotheism in Israel. To substantiate his argument, Römer (2015:217) refers to 2 Kings 24 where the Deuteronomists interpret the fall of Jerusalem as YHWH's wrath against his people. Rather than being defeated by the

Babylonian gods, YHWH is presented as being in control – using the Babylonian king and gods in his master plan. It is especially during the Persian period that the notion of YHWH as 'the only true god in the universe' developed (Römer 2015:218). Römer (2015:218) continues to note that YHWH was seen as the God that ruled over all nations, yet he still had a special relation to Israel.

The description above accords with what Miller (2000:48) calls 'orthodox Yahwism'. Orthodox Yahwism characterises the theology of the Psalter, and also, as we will see, the theology of Psalms 137-145. This orthodox version of the postexilic community's faith consisted of exclusive worship of YHWH as the only god. From the exile onwards and especially during the Persian period, resistance to the worship of other gods in Yahwism increased (Miller 2000:16). In addition to this, blessing and salvation were considered to be the work of YHWH (Miller 2000:48). Another feature of orthodox Yahwism was, of course, aniconism. In contrast to surrounding cults, the Yahwistic cult did not represent their deity with images or cultic figurines. Archaeological evidence seems to support this observation. Stern (2006:201) states that no cultic figurines were found from the Persian period in Jerusalem. Aniconism was linked to the worshipping of YHWH as the only god – or monotheism. The aniconism of the Yahwist cult had implications for the way that the faithful understood the presence of YHWH. More will be said about this in section 6.2.2.

The names of YHWH came to play an important role in the promotion of monotheism. The name אלהים was used in the sense of the one, only and unique God (Römer 2015:226). God introduced himself as יהוה to Moses. This is a unique name that Israel could use as the privileged people of YHWH (Römer 2015:226). Here it is necessary to mention the Deuteronomistic Name theology which, in line with aniconism, proposed that YHWH is represented by his Name in the temple and not by an image (Mettinger 1997:177-178). In other words, YHWH's presence at the temple was not a physical presence but was situated in his Name. The phrase 'your Name' is mentioned a few times in this collection of psalms – see, for example, Psalms 138, 140, 142 and 145.

The centralisation of the Yahwist cult in Jerusalem is the next characteristic of orthodox Yahwism. This is attested to in coins from Yehud that were discovered (Stern 2006:202). These coins bore the names of various priests, confirming the importance of the Jerusalem temple and priesthood in the postexilic period. The Jerusalem temple of the postexilic era functioned as the centre for the institutionalised practice of Yahwism. It is, however, important to note that the function and understanding of YHWH's presence at the temple had undergone a change from the First Temple to the Second Temple period. This transformation is also discussed in 6.2.2.

The last significant feature of orthodox Yahwism is that it established certain festivals at certain times. These festivals would celebrate YHWH's saving acts by reflecting on the community's memory of delivery in history (Miller 2000:50). The festival calendar uses remembered space and came to fulfil an important function in Judaism. Together with the establishing of a festival calendar, Judaism also increasingly developed cultic regulations in order to give expression to YHWH's holiness and the commission of the community to also be holy (Miller 2000:14).

All of the themes of orthodox Yahwism mentioned here are present in Psalms 137-145. The collection stresses that YHWH is the only god worth praising – thereby establishing exclusive worship of YHWH as the ruler of the world. Psalms 137-145 also emphasise the works, characteristics and blessing of YHWH throughout the history of the faithful.

In a concluding note, it is worth mentioning that the metaphors used to describe the relationship between YHWH and his people grew through the centuries. In an earlier period, YHWH as creator and father was emphasised. These metaphors for YHWH did not fall out of use in later periods but were complemented by adding other metaphors to understand YHWH from, such as YHWH being the universal king. Furthermore, YHWH was characterised as gracious and merciful – highlighting YHWH's faithfulness and steadfast love (Miller 2000:13; also see Psalm 145). Some of the other prominent metaphors used with regard to YHWH in Psalms 137-145 include the ways of YHWH (Psalms 138 and 145), divine knowledge (Psalms 139 and 144), YHWH as refuge, rock, shield, deliverer and protector (Psalms 142, 144 and 145) and of course, YHWH as king (Psalm 145). Several anthropomorphic references are also made, such as the mouth of God (Psalm 138), the right hand of YHWH (Psalms 138, 139, 141, 143, 144 and 145). The petitioners also call upon the seeing (Psalm 139) and hearing (Psalms 140, 141, 143 and 145) abilities of YHWH.

The above characteristics of YHWH in Psalms 137-145 can be arranged into a number of categories (cf. Kärkkäinen 2017:15-16). The first category is that of the creator God. Because God is the creator, he possesses divine knowledge. Second, YHWH is the God who delivers and who has delivered in the past. Therefore, the petitioners in Psalms 137-145 can call upon YHWH to once again deliver them from their postexilic circumstances under imperial rule and amid different religious factions. Third, YHWH is the God who provides. This role of YHWH is once again based on remembered space.

In the discussion thus far a few basic tenets of postexilic monotheistic Yahwism were described. But the postexilic image of YHWH was also connected to Zion theology. Therefore, the reinvention of Zion theology receives attention next.

6.2.2 Zion theology reinvented

In earlier chapters, mention was made of the shift in Zion theology from the pre-exilic time to the postexilic time. In this part of section 6.2, we will be discussing how the postexilic community reinvented Zion theology in terms of the presence of YHWH. In pre-exilic understanding, mount Zion was the dwelling place of YHWH – the place where God was present on earth (Ollenburger 1987:45). In addition, YHWH was seen as the king ruling from Zion and simultaneously protecting Zion (Ollenburger 1987:66). The feature of YHWH's kingship was extensively developed in the postexilic era. The next section, 6.2.3, specifically examines this element.

The fact that Zion was perceived to be secure, inviolable and resorting under the protection of its king, YHWH, motivated YHWH's people to rejoice and celebrate – as seen in many Zion psalms. Hence, Zion and Jerusalem functioned as a symbol of refuge and security in the pre-exilic times. The security of Zion is rooted in the presence of YHWH there (Ollenburger 1987:66). It then follows that the events of the exile and the capture of Jerusalem and Zion meant that Zion was never inviolable in the first place or that YHWH's protective presence has left Zion.

The exilic events moved the Yahwist community from a space of perceived divine presence to a space of perceived divine absence. This movement symbolises the struggle between the faithful's picture of YHWH and YHWH's unpredictable activities (Kärkkäinen 2017:19). Therefore, the presence of YHWH or his absence became one of the most important themes in postexilic theology. This is attested to in Psalms 137-145. There are various direct references to the face or presence of God in Psalms 139, 141, 142 and 143. The other psalms also deal with the presence of YHWH in second-, third-, and fourthspace. Ultimately, the collection regards YHWH as being omnipresent – YHWH is universal king and ruler and therefore present wherever the postexilic community finds itself.

The movement from divine absence to divine presence is apparent in Psalms 137-145. Psalm 137, for example, grapples with the seeming absence of YHWH. The presence and absence of YHWH can also be expressed in terms of memory: remembering and forgetting. The community wants to guard itself from forgetting, yet at the same time its members call upon YHWH to remember them and their circumstances. The human and divine acts of forgetting and remembering are intertwined. Becking (2012:298) writes the following on the role of forgetting and remembering YHWH's presence in Psalm 137:

> The community is urged to not give in and to not forget the good things God has done on their behalf despite the fact that Zion lay in ruins. This fuels the hope that God will remember his people and once more act on their behalf…

The postexilic community saw the need to transform their understanding of YHWH's presence, especially as it pertained to Zion theology. Here it is important to note the role of the temple. In pre-exilic Israel the temple was the space associated with the presence of YHWH. With the destruction of the temple, prophets, such as Ezekiel, rethought this theology. In Ezekiel 10, Ezekiel witnesses the presence of YHWH leaving the temple and going to the exiles. A passage such as this one has far-reaching theological implications. It confirms that YHWH's presence is not limited to the temple. The presence of YHWH spans over time and space. That is what the exiles had to discover and what the postexilic community had to learn upon returning to a temple in ruins. This theological rethinking is also evident in Psalms 137-145 as well as in the whole of the postexilic era where the temple primarily came to function on a symbolic (second-, third- and fourthspace) level. In the postexilic era, Zion and the temple, as it existed before the exile, became a fourthspace memory that gave the community hope. The temple and Zion also had secondspace ideological meaning as the symbolic meeting place between YHWH and his people. But more than that, the temple functioned on a lived space level since the people's faith formed part of their everyday life. This meant that, although most of the official cultic practices and pilgrimages took place at the temple, the people of YHWH always had the temple (as symbol for YHWH's presence) with them.

As mentioned in section 6.2.1, the prevalence of aniconism in the Yahwistic cult also had an influence on the postexilic community's understanding of YHWH's presence. Deuteronomists held that aniconism was a safeguard of the transcendence and presence of YHWH (Miller 2000:20). By not physically representing God with figures and objects, the transcendent nature of God's presence was preserved.

Many of the metaphors used by petitioners to describe YHWH in Psalms 137-145 are associated with Zion theology. This is also the area where the reinvention of Zion theology can be best seen. Whereas Zion was a symbol of security, refuge and protection before the exile, the postexilic community saw YHWH as their symbol of security, refuge and protection. The postexilic community's understanding grew to such an extent that they no longer found their safe space and certainty in a physical, firstspace locale (such as Zion or the temple), but that YHWH himself became their safe space. Likewise, YHWH's presence was no longer seen to be confined to firstspace places such as the temple, but YHWH's presence was an all-encompassing reality that embraced all four dimensions of space.

6.2.3 Persian imperial influences on the understanding of YHWH

The postexilic community's deconstruction and reconstruction of their understanding of YHWH did not only happen in reaction to the memory of the exile, but also in reaction to their circumstances under imperial rule after returning from exile. As was the case in other eras in Israel's history, the religious and political ideas of surrounding cultures influenced the people of YHWH in their religious thought. As a result, the postexilic community used the political ideas of the Persian Empire and applied it to YHWH. By doing this, the faithful deconstructed the power of the Persians and reconstructed a renewed understanding of God.

The most notable expansion of the postexilic community's image of YHWH is seen in their application of Persian royal ideology on YHWH's character and works. YHWH was understood in terms similar to those of the king in Persian times. In his extensive work on the Persian Empire, Briant (2002) examined the Persian representation and ideology of royalty. In his book, Briant (2002:165) describes Darius as the builder-king who restored and rebuilt parts of the Empire. In Book IV and V of the Psalter, YHWH is also portrayed as returning and restoring his people to their land, but also letting them rebuild their faith on a second- and thirdspace level. Furthermore, some psalms (see Psalms 89 and 103) imagine YHWH enthroned amid a heavenly assembly of other gods and angels. This represents YHWH as the one, true king and ruler over them all. This image corresponds to that of the Persian king, who is seen as the only true king, ruling over the whole universe (Römer 2015:228). Yet another influence of other religions on the image of YHWH is found in Psalm 144 where YHWH is depicted as the one who teaches the psalmist's hands to wage war and battle. These warrior characteristics of YHWH reflect the character of the god Baal (Miller 2000:25).

The metaphors of YHWH as warrior and king discussed above, have to do with God's governance and power. Human (2010:527) mentions that YHWH's universal rule and providence are among the key themes in Book V of the Psalter. As king and ruler, YHWH establishes order and justice (Kärkkäinen 2017:17). This is the reason why it is especially the vulnerable groups – the poor and powerless – in postexilic Israel who call upon YHWH as their king. In numerous psalms in the collection (Psalms 138, 139, 143, 144 and 145), reference is made to YHWH's right hand – a symbol for power. By emphasising YHWH's power to rule and conquer the universe, the postexilic community deconstructed imperial power. Whereas the Persian Empire claimed absolute power by the emperor to rule over all nations, the postexilic community countered these claims by stating that YHWH was the only true God of heaven (Tucker 2014:142).

The image of YHWH sitting on his throne, looking down from heaven, is connected to the notion of YHWH amid the assembly of heavenly beings discussed earlier with reference to Römer (2015:228). According to Tucker (2014:143) these images locate the dwelling place of YHWH in the heavens. This image was developed in response to Zion being regarded as not being the dwelling place of God anymore. The shift in thinking about YHWH's presence was thus a spatial shift from earth (temple) to heaven. In the collection of psalms that this study focuses on, Psalm 144 represents the theology that Tucker (2014:144) speaks about. In Psalm 144 the petitioner calls upon YHWH to stretch out the heavens and come down to help the petitioner in the face of a threat.

Tucker (2014:143, 145) mentions, however, that the location of God in the heavens did not revoke YHWH's immanence and involvement with his people. Instead, the psalmist of Psalm 144 acknowledges the presence of YHWH. Tucker (2014:145) summarises the community's experience of YHWH in heaven as follows:

> In each psalm mentioned above, the location of Yahweh in the heavens is juxtaposed with the plight of the praying community, yet in each instance, the distance between the two is overcome by Yahweh's capacity to "bend down" to his suffering people.

What Tucker (2014:145) proposes is an understanding of YHWH who simultaneously considers his transcendence and immanence. I can agree with this, but from the spatial analysis in the study I, however, cannot agree with a view that situates YHWH only in heaven above. In this regard, I would rather side with Schmid (2005:15) who understands the whole of the cosmos as the temple of YHWH. The postexilic community could thus experience the presence of YHWH across all spatial dimensions. This is closer to my inference that YHWH's presence transcends a single spatial dimension.

Another feature of YHWH as king that has to be considered is that of the relationship between the king and his subjects. In Persian royal ideology, the relationship between the king and his faithful was of essential importance. One became a kinsman of the king by being faithful to the king (Briant 2002:324). This relationship between the king (YHWH) and the faithful is also the primary relationship described in Psalms 137-145. It was believed that when the faithful proved their loyalty and faithfulness to the king, the king would bestow blessing and gifts on them (Briant 2002:324). Similarly, the petitioner in Psalm 141 proves his faithfulness to YHWH alone despite temptations to become part of other groups pretending to be sincere and faithful to YHWH.

In this section (6.2), different aspects on the postexilic understanding of YHWH were described. Now that an overall picture of the situation has been drawn, it is time to relate these insights to remembered space.

6.3 Remembered space and worship of YHWH

The goal of this brief section is to interpret the meaning of what has already been said in this chapter. It has become clear throughout the chapter that the postexilic community's understanding of YHWH was reconstructed on various levels. The main transformation that took place happened on a spatial level. This meant that the postexilic community's way of worshipping completely changed. Their worship was not confined to a physical, firstspace such as the temple anymore, but came to life in all dimensions of space. Due to the disillusionment with Zion theology, the people of YHWH had to make sense of YHWH's presence by finding a balance between God's transcendent and immanent involvement in their world.

In addition, there occurred a shift in the postexilic community's thinking about their relationship with God. The people of YHWH saw themselves as the faithful kinsmen of the universal king. In order to deconstruct imperial power and the internal strife over the true YHWH worshippers, the postexilic community applied Persian royal ideology to YHWH. As a result, God was seen as the universal king and ruler of all nations. Consequently, it did not matter what power people tried to exert over the faithful, they knew that the true power and authority resided with YHWH. This eliminated any human threat in their lives.

This shift in thinking could only have taken place because the community understood YHWH in spatial terms that were rooted in remembered space. It is precisely their memory of how YHWH had transformed their earlier spaces that enabled them to think differently about their current circumstances. This led to them understanding God as playing different roles. Based on cultural memory, they came to know God as creator, a merciful deliverer and provider. In this way, the postexilic community reconstructed their faith by means of remembered space.

Psalms 137-145 represent the postexilic community's realisation that the presence of YHWH encompasses all spaces. In fact, when the petitioners confess that YHWH is their refuge and shield, they are essentially confessing that YHWH is their safe space. YHWH is not only the substance of space, but also the one who creates and recreates space. Therefore, YHWH is the only one who can truly transform the space of the postexilic community.

6.4 Conclusion

Kärkkäinen (2017:22) strikingly summarises what this chapter set out to explain:

The people of Israel came to a fuller understanding of their God, Yahweh, through a centuries-long struggle, often vis-à-vis other gods and religions.

This chapter demonstrated how influences from Israel's own history (memory), their political circumstances and surrounding religious ideologies played an intertwining role in the postexilic community's journey to a deeper understanding of YHWH and, ultimately, themselves (identity). The chapter also highlighted that the postexilic community reconstructed their understanding of YHWH and their identity (see Chapter 5) through the use of space.

Up to this point the study has discussed Psalms 137-145 from a social-scientific perspective, as well as from a spatial perspective. The importance of remembered space in these psalms was emphasised after which the way that the postexilic community reconstructed their identity and understanding of YHWH was investigated. It is now time to reflect on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

7.1 Introduction

Remembered space: Memory and identity in Psalms 137-145. The title of the study promised four things. First, that this will be a study on (remembered) space. Second, that the study will involve memory. Third, that the study will have something to say about identity. Lastly, that the previous three aspects are all found in Psalms 137-145.

We have now come to the end of the study. It is time to determine whether the study has indeed done what it set out to do. Therefore, this concluding chapter reflects on the findings of the study, providing an overview of the contents of the study as well as an interpretation of the relevance of the study.

The dissertation started off by asking the question as to what the relation between space, memory and identity is in Psalms 137-145. This purpose of this chapter is to convince the reader that the study has indeed answered the research question. This is done by indicating that in Psalms 137-145 space is represented through memory to form identity.

7.2 Overview of the study

Before an overview of the main chapters of the study is given, it is necessary to remind the reader of the notion underlying the choice of grouping Psalms 137-145 together. In section 2.3.2 it was determined that, although Psalm 137 seems out of place in Book V, it fulfils a very specific function. Psalm 137 takes the postexilic community back in time to the exilic crisis. The exile came to function as some sort of a type-scene in Israel's history – signifying suffering, powerlessness and pain. Whenever the community was threatened by suffering and weakness, they would recall the memory of the exile in order to recall YHWH's saving acts and draw hope from that. Therefore, Psalm 137 functions as a description of the religious and identity crisis of the postexilic community, articulating the experiences of the postexilic community under imperial rule. In this sense, Psalms 138-145 provide an answer to the crisis described in Psalm 137. Psalms 138-145 react to the crisis by claiming that YHWH has the ultimate power and is the universal ruling king. This enables the collection to move from an inability to sing a song and worship YHWH in Psalm 137 to the singing of a new song in Psalm 144. As a whole, the collection of Psalms 137-145 seeks to redefine the identity of the postexilic community and to reconstruct their understanding of YHWH in the light of the memory of YHWH's history with them. In doing this, the postexilic community created a new space for themselves, remembered space, in which they could experience YHWH and find courage to face their challenges. Therefore,

Psalms 137-145 can be considered to be the climax of the postexilic community's use of memory to reinterpret space, identity and faith.

At this point, I would like to remind the reader of section 1.3 in Chapter 1, where the research methodology was outlined. The methodology was presented in the shape of an umbrella to outline the research approach, method and focus. The discussion in the rest of this section will be similarly structured, discussing each layer of the umbrella and its outcome in the study.

The social-scientific research approach was applied to Psalms 137-145 in Chapter 3. This was done in order to gain an understanding of the circumstances in which these psalms originated. For this reason, an extensive overview was given of the social circumstances in Persian period Yehud, starting with political ideology. The rulers of the Persian Empire claimed that they had a worldwide kingdom in which the creator god legitimised their rule. Furthermore, the Persians permitted all their subjects to practice their own culture and religion. However, the socio-economic circumstances in the empire were not ideal. People suffered from poverty and the empire did not always use its power judiciously. On a religious level the postexilic community searched for a collective religious identity and had to rethink their previous understanding of YHWH – including Zion theology.

For the social-scientific analysis, each psalm was individually analysed according to a set of social values. At the end of the chapter the most prominent and common social values which could be discerned among the collection of psalms, are listed. The most notable values present in the collection include group orientation, power and honour and YHWH as patron of Israel. The sharp distinction made between the faithful people of YHWH (the in-group) and the wicked (the out-group) should be understood against the background of different religious groups competing against each other to prove who the true worshippers of YHWH were. It was established throughout the study that the question of power and honour pertains to both internal (within the postexilic Jewish community) and external (with regard to the Persian authorities) power struggles. The answer to the problems of the postexilic community is found in their understanding of YHWH as patron who protects them and in whom ultimate power resides.

Chapter 4 examined Psalms 137-145 from a spatial perspective. This was not only the most extensive chapter in the study, but also the chapter on which the study as a whole is founded. Again, each psalm was discussed individually, identifying all four dimensions of space in every psalm. From the spatial and mnemonic analysis in Chapter 4, it was concluded that Psalms 137-145 represent a spatial journey from a place of silence and hopelessness to a place of praise and hope. Movement is made possible in the collection through the medium of remembered space.

The spatial narrative of Psalms 137-145 can be summarised as follows:

Psalm 137 starts the collection off by reminding the postexilic community of a time of crisis in their past. This puts the community's current feelings of shame and powerlessness into perspective. The collection then moves from this negative remembered space to a seemingly more positive remembered space in Psalm 138 where the community is reminded of YHWH's steadfast love. Psalm 139 then moves in a secondspace dimension, focusing on the faithful person's relationship with YHWH where divine knowledge is stressed. Additionally, YHWH's presence is described in Psalm 139 as covering all four dimensions of space as well as all three dimensions of the worldview of the time. Psalms 140-143 largely share similar themes and therefore also share a similar spatial orientation. Here the spatial atmosphere in the collection shifts because in these psalms the petitioners are off-centre, and their lives are being threatened. These poems reflect the same crisis that Psalm 137 alludes to – powerlessness in the face of imperial domination and internal strife among different YHWH-groups. Yet, despite their dire circumstances, the petitioners of Psalms 140-143 can still confess their faith in YHWH, a faith based on remembered space that aids the petitioners in making sense of their suffering. Psalms 144 and 145 conclude the collection on a positive note. The postexilic community praises YHWH in these psalms for he is their rock and refuge, the space in which they can live life to the fullest despite difficult circumstances. The community rejoices in YHWH, the true king who rules over the entire world.

There are especially two recurring themes that characterise Psalms 137-145: YHWH's presence and power (human as well as divine). Both themes are deconstructed and reconstructed in the collection. This is done by taking changing spaces and memory into consideration. At the beginning of the collection, the presence of YHWH is understood in exclusive terms – only in certain spaces. Yet as one moves through the collection, the community recalls their past experiences and comes to the realisation that YHWH has always been present, even in their suffering and crises. In fact, YHWH has not only been present in the different dimensions of space in their lives, he has become a space, a fourthspace in which they could take refuge and find hope. This knowledge proves to solve the problem of power for the postexilic community, because once they have realised that YHWH is present in all dimensions of space, they also realised that YHWH is also the one in whom power truly resides.

All four dimensions of space feature throughout the collection, alternating between negative and positive spatial orientation. On a firstspace level, the collection takes us to the exile (Psalm 137), the heaven, earth and Sheol (Psalm 139) and to the temple where sacrifices are being offered (Psalm 141). On a second, abstract space level, the collection

describes the faith of the postexilic community – a faith that was no longer exclusively attached to firstspace places such as the temple. Rather, faith was understood as a particular mindset and ethos which required loyalty to YHWH and the Torah from the faithful. The collection functions on a thirdspace level, signifying the confrontation between different religious groups within the postexilic community and the struggle of the postexilic community with imperial power. It is, however, fourthspace, or remembered space, which functions as the defining space in the collection through which the reconstruction of identity and faith takes place. It is through remembered space that the postexilic community created a socio-spatial alternative for their current circumstances in postexilic Yehud.

The various challenges that the postexilic community faced, influenced their understanding of YHWH and their self-understanding as the faithful. In the summary of the spatial narrative in Psalms 137-145, it was seen that space and memory, remembered space, characterises the growth and movement in the collection. And where space and memory coincide, identity is reshaped. From this description it is clear that space, memory and identity are closely intertwined and interrelated in Psalms 137-145. In answer to the research question, one can thus define the relationship between space, memory and identity as interdependent. The one influences the other and without one, the others would not be able to develop fully.

From the overview of the study, it becomes clear that the different dimensions of space were used to remind people of certain events connected to YHWH's steadfast love and presence. The collection of Psalms 137-145 grapples with life's ever-changing spaces in order to relate it to faith and the understanding of the way that God works in, through and around these spaces. In the end, it is remembering-in-space that provided the postexilic community with hope and courage to move towards the future.

7.3 Relevance of the study

Our lives play off in ever-changing spaces. In the past five or so decades, almost all dimensions of space have changed. Due to technology, our firstspace has changed radically. The phones we use, the cars we drive and the homes we live in, have all changed. In secondspace, political systems have changed; the way people think about politics, religion, society and the environment have changed. On a thirdspace level, confrontation between groups has taken on new dimensions with, for example, the refugee crisis and xenophobia increasing all over the world. In addition to the reshaping of well-known dimensions of space, new dimensions of space have also developed. Think, for example, of cyberspace, or the virtual space created by virtual reality.

As I am writing this chapter, the world finds itself in the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic. The current space that the world, including our own country and community, finds itself in is that of fear. The pandemic wreaks havoc in all dimensions of space – firstspace, secondspace and thirdspace. The space of overwhelming fear and confusion created by the pandemic leads the faithful to asking questions about their faith, about God's role in the world and in their lives. This is also what the postexilic community did. It is only natural that we would want to relate our faith and our understanding of God to our current crises and situations. Where do God and our faith fit into the bigger picture? To what dimension of space does our faith in God belong in relation to the other dimensions of space? Psalms 137-145 provide an example of how people in the postexilic period dealt with these questions.

These are but a few examples demonstrating the relevance of critical spatiality for reading biblical texts, as well as for our everyday lives and our faith. But the study wanted to prove, in particular, the relevance of *remembered* space in the reading of texts. It has become clear throughout the study that remembered space is the glue that keeps the collection of psalms together from beginning to end. Although it is a fourth dimension of space, the power of remembered space lies in its influence on all other dimensions of space. One can demonstrate the influence of remembered space with another example from everyday life. As a young South African, born after 1994, my life in post-Apartheid South Africa has been characterised by the memory of Apartheid, which is very much being kept alive. The memory of Apartheid (remembered space) influences all dimensions of space in South Africa. This is clearest on a thirdspace level in racial tensions that erupt every now and again. It is also evident in firstspace places such as the workplace where the injustices of the past are still in the process of being corrected. On a secondspace level, the memory of the past is being used by some politicians to justify their own behaviour in post-Apartheid South Africa.

In this way, the remembered space of a traumatic period influences and, to a large extent, determines the physical, abstract and lived space of societies. In a similar way, the remembered space created by the exilic events and the way that the people experienced YHWH's presence, determined their physical, imagined and lived space in postexilic times.

There are certain implications of a remembered space reading for the interpretation of Psalms 137-145. Hermeneutically speaking, a remembered space reading widens the spatial lens through which one interprets texts. This, in turn, means that on a social-scientific level, a remembered space reading of these specific psalms aids in reconstructing a clearer picture of the circumstances of the postexilic community in a defining time for the faith of Israel. On a structural level, it proved to deepen understanding of the structure of Book V of the Psalter as well as the arrangement of collections within

book V by helping one identify Psalms 137-145 as a mini collection. Furthermore, remembered space highlighted the postexilic community's search for identity and a fuller understanding of YHWH as reflected in Psalms 137-145. Through reading Psalms 137-145 from the perspective of remembered space, we were able to gain insight into the struggles of the postexilic community on a social, political, economic and religious level.

7.4 Conclusion: The road ahead

Remembered space certainly provides a much-needed perspective for interpreting biblical texts. It combines methods that are currently receiving a lot of attention in scholarship – critical spatial theory, memory studies and identity. Critical spatial theory applied to biblical studies is, to its very core, an interdisciplinary study. Yet, one must be careful when combining different research methods and disciplines to not reduce the one in order to make it fit with the other. The various research methods should rather complement each other – something this study aimed to do. A study of this nature should therefore be conducted with great caution and responsibility to stay true to what the biblical text says.

However, the fact that remembered space – the convergence of space and memory – as a research method is not well established in biblical studies yet, is also where the limitation of this study lies. One can identify a few blind spots, such as the need for a more nuanced understanding of how memory and forgetting function, as well as the distinction between harmful and helpful memories. The function of memory in relation to the Book of Psalms should also receive more attention.

Therefore, when looking at the road ahead, I believe there is a lot of space (pun intended) to expand the concept of remembered space. There are various biblical texts from the Hebrew Bible waiting to be interpreted from the combined perspectives of spatiality and memory. The research possibilities in this field will spark dynamic discourses in biblical studies on which other scholars can in turn build.

Remembered space, as a space in which the collective memories of a people's shared history are employed to transform their identity in light of changing circumstances, helped the postexilic community to reflect upon the past in order to gain the courage to reorient themselves to take on the present and the future. The remembered space in Psalms 137-145 teaches us that hope lies in remembering and reconstructing space.

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ADDENDUM A

HEBREW TEXT AND TRANSLATION OF PSALMS 137-145

i) Psalm 137

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	עַל נַהֲרוֹת בָּבֶל שָׁם יָשַׁבְנוּ גַּם־בָּכִינוּ בְּזָכְרֵנוּ אֶת־צִיּוֹן׃	At the rivers of Babylon, there we sat, we also cried/wept when we remembered Zion.
2	עַל־עֲרָבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ תָּלִינוּ כִּנֹּרוֹתֵינוּ׃	On the willows in the midst of (it) we hung our lyres/harps.
3	כִּי שָׁם שְׁאֵלُונוּ שׁוֹבֵינוּ דִּבְרֵי־שִׁיר וְתוֹלָלֵינוּ שִׂמְחָה שִׁירוּ לָנוּ מִשִּׁיר צִיּוֹן׃	Because there our captors asked us the words of a song and our oppressors/they that wasted us (asked) joy: 'Sing for us a song of Zion.'
4	אֵיךְ נָשִׁיר אֶת־שִׁיר־יְהוָה עַל אַדְמַת נֵכָר׃	How can we sing the song of YHWH on the land of foreigners/in a foreign land?
5	אִם־אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ יְרוּשָׁלִָם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי׃	If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget (herself).
6	תִּדְבַּק־לְשׁוֹנִי	לְחִכִּי אִם־לֹא אֶזְכְּרֵכִי אִם־לֹא אַעֲלֶה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלִַם עַל רֹאשׁ שִׂמְחָתִי׃	May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not bring Jerusalem up above the head of my joy.
7	זְכֹר יְהוָה	לִבְנֵי אֱדוֹם אֵת יוֹם יְרוּשָׁלִָם הָאֹמְרִים עָרּוּ	עָרּוּ עַד הַיְסוֹד בָּהּ׃	Remember, YHWH, the sons/descendants of Edom, the day of Jerusalem saying: 'Lay bare/shatter, lay bare/shatter to the foundation in her.'
8	בַּת־בָּבֶל הַשְּׁדוּדָה אַשְׁרֵי שֶׁיְשַׁלֶּם־לָךְ אֶת־גְּמוּלֵךְ שֶׁגָּמַלְתְּ לָנוּ׃	Daughter of Babel, the one to be destroyed, blessed is the one who repays you with the recompense which you have dealt to us.
9	אַשְׁרֵי שֶׁיֹּאחֵז וְנִפֵּץ אֶת־עֹלָלַיִךְ אֶל־הַסָּלַע׃	Blessed is he who seizes and smashes to pieces your children into the rock/stone.

ii) Psalm 138

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	לְדָוִד אוֹדְךָ בְכָל־לִבִּי נֶגֶד אֱלֹהִים אֲזַמְּרֶךָּ׃	A psalm of David. I will praise you with all my/my whole heart in front of the gods I will sing praise to you.
2	אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל־הֵיכַל קָדְשְׁךָ וְאוֹדֶה אֶת־שִׁמְךָ עַל־חַסְדְּךָ וְעַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ כִּי־הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל־כָּל־שִׁמְךָ אִמְרָתֶךָ׃	I will bow down to the temple of your holiness and let me praise your name for your lovingkindness and for your faithfulness because you have magnified your word above all of your name.

3	בְּיוֹם קָרָאתִי וַתַּעֲנֵנִי תַּרְהִבֵנִי בְנַפְשִׁי עֹז:	In the day that I called out, you answered me, you alarmed me (strengthened) with strength in my soul.
4	יוֹדֻךָ יְהוָה כָּל־מַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ כִּי שָׁמְעוּ אִמְרֵי־פִיךָ:	All the kings of the earth will praise YHWH because/when they hear the words of your mouth.
5	וְיָשִׁירוּ בִּדַרְכֵי יְהוָה כִּי גָדוֹל כְּבוֹד יְהוָה:	And they will sing of the ways of YHWH because the glory of YHWH is great.
6	כִּי־רָם יְהוָה וְשָׁפָל יִרְאֶה וְגָבֹהַּ מִמֶּרְחָק יְיֵדָע:	Though YHWH is high, he sees the lowly/humble but the high/haughty/proud he knows from a distance.
7	אִם־אֵלֵךְ בְּקֶרֶב צָרָה תְּחַיֵּנִי עַל אַף אֹיְבַי תִּשְׁלַח יָדֶךָ וְתוֹשִׁיעֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ:	If I walk in the midst (inner part) of distress, you will revive me over the anger of my enemies, you will send your hand, your right hand will save me.
8	יְהוָה יִגְמֹר בַּעֲדִי יְהוָה חַסְדְּךָ לְעוֹלָם מַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ אַל־תֶּרֶף:	YHWH will complete on behalf of me, YHWH, your kindness is everlasting, do not abandon the work of your hands.

iii) Psalm 139

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר יְהוָה חֲקַרְתַּנִי וַתֵּדָע:	For the choir director. A psalm of David. YHWH, you have searched me and known me.
2	אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ שִׁבְתִּי וְקוּמִי בַּנְתָּה לְרֵעִי מֵרָחוֹק:	You know when I sit and when I stand, you understand my intentions/thoughts from far.
3	אָרְחִי וְרִבְעִי זֵרִיתָ וְכָל־דְּרָכַי הִסְכַּנְתָּה:	You disperse my wandering and my lying down and you are familiar with all my roads.
4	כִּי אֵין מִלָּה בִּלְשׁוֹנִי הֵן יְהוָה יָדַעְתָּ כֻּלָּהּ:	Because there is not a word on my tongue and look YHWH knows it all.
5	אָחוֹר וָקֶדֶם צַרְתָּנִי וַתָּשֶׁת עָלַי כַּפֶּכָה:	You have enclosed me from behind and before and you set over me your palm.
6	פְּלִאָיָה דַעַת מִמֶּנִּי נִשְׂגְּבָה לֹא־אוּכַל לָהּ:	This knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is too high; I am unable for it (to attain it).
7	אָנָה אֵלֵךְ מֵרוּחֶךָ וְאָנָה מִפָּנֶיךָ אֶבְרָח:	Where shall I go from your spirit and where shall I flee from your presence?
8	אִם־אֶסַּק שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אָתָּה וְאַצִּיעָה שְׁאוֹל הִנֶּךָּ:	If I ascend to heaven you are there, and if I spread out in Sheol – look, you!
9	אֶשָּׂא כַנְפֵי־שָׁחַר אֶשְׁכְּנָה בְּאַחֲרִית יָם:	If I lift the wings of the dawn and settle in the end of the sea,
10	גַּם־שָׁם יָדְךָ תַּנְחֵנִי וְתֹאחֲזֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ:	Even/also there your hand leads me and your

		right-hand grasps/lays hold of me.
11	וָאֹמַר אַךְ־חֹשֶׁךְ יְשׁוּפֵנִי וְלַיְלָה אוֹר בַּעֲדֵנִי:	If I say: 'Surely the darkness shall cover me', and the light around me will be night.
12	גַּם־חֹשֶׁךְ לֹא־יַחְשִׁיךְ מִמֶּךָּ וְלַיְלָה כַּיּוֹם יָאִיר כַּחֲשֵׁיכָה כָּאוֹרָהּ:	Even the darkness is not dark from you and the night shines as day, darkness as light to you.
13	כִּי־אַתָּה קָנִיתָ כִלְיֹתָי תְּסֻכֵּנִי בְּבֶטֶן אִמִּי:	Because you have bought/possessed my kidneys, you cover me in my mother's womb.
14	אוֹדְךָ עַל כִּי נוֹרָאוֹת נִפְלֵיתִי נִפְלָאִים מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וְנַפְשִׁי יֹדַעַת מְאֹד:	I will praise you because I am fearfully and distinctly, wonderful is your works/deeds that my soul knows in abundance.
15	לֹא־נִכְחַד עָצְמִי מִמֶּךָּ אֲשֶׁר־עֻשֵּׂיתִי בַסֵּתֶר רֻקַּמְתִּי בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת אָרֶץ:	My bones were not hidden from you when I was made in secret, (when) I was woven in the depths of the earth.
16	גָּלְמִי רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ וְעַל־סִפְרְךָ כֻּלָּם יִכָּתֵבוּ אֲחָד בָּהֶם: וְלוֹ יָמִים יֻצָּרוּ	Your eyes have seen my embryo and on your book they were all written, the days they were formed when there was not one of them.
17	וְלִי מַה־יָּקְרוּ רֵעֶיךָ אֵל מֶה עָצְמוּ רָאשֵׁיהֶם:	How precious are your purposes for me, O God, how many is the sum (head) of them.
18	אֶסְפְּרֵם מֵחוֹל יִרְבּוּן הֱקִיצֹתִי וְעוֹדִי עִמָּךְ:	If I should count them, they are more than the sand, when I awake, I am still with you.
19	אִם־תִּקְטֹל אֱלוֹהַּ| רָשָׁע וְאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים סוּרוּ מֶנִּי:	If you shall slay the wicked, God, and the men of blood turn away from me!
20	אֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרֻךָ לִמְזִמָּה נָשְׂא לַשָּׁוְא עָרֶיךָ:	Who speak evil plan against you, your enemies lift (your name) in vain.
21	הֲלוֹא־מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ יְהוָה אֶשְׂנָא וּבְתָקוֹמְמֶיךָ אֶתְקוֹטָט:	Do I not hate them, YHWH, who hates you and do I not loathe those that rise up against you?
22	תַּכְלִית שִׂנְאָה שְׂנֵאתִים לְאוֹיְבִים הָיוּ לִי:	I hate them with a complete hate, they become my enemies.
23	חָקְרֵנִי אֵל וְדַע לְבָבִי בְּחָנֵנִי וְדַע שַׂרְעַפָּי:	Search me, O God, and know my heart, examine me and know my thoughts.
24	וּרְאֵה אִם־דֶּרֶךְ־עֹצֶב בִּי וּנְחֵנִי בְּדֶרֶךְ עוֹלָם:	And see if there is a distressful way in me and guide me in the everlasting way.

iv) Psalm 140

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:	For the choir director. A Psalm of David.
2	חַלְּצֵנִי יְהוָה מֵאָדָם רָע מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְרֵנִי:	Deliver, me YHWH from the evil man, guard/protect me from the man of violence,
3	אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ רָעוֹת בְּלֵב כָּל־יוֹם יָגֻורוּ	who think/devise evil in their hearts, every day

	מִלְחָמוֹת׃	they stir up wars.
4	שָׁנְנוּ לְשׁוֹנָם כְּמוֹ־נָחָשׁ חֲמַת עַכְשׁוּב תַּחַת שִׂפְתֵימוֹ סֶלָה׃	They sharpen their tongue like a serpent, the poison of a viper is under their lips. Selah
5	שָׁמְרֵנִי יְהוָה מִידֵי רָשָׁע מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְרֵנִי אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ לִדְחוֹת פְּעָמָי׃	Keep me, YHWH, from the hands of the wicked, guard me from the man of violence, who have devised to push my feet.
6	טָמְנוּ־גֵאִים פַּח לִי וַחֲבָלִים פָּרְשׂוּ רֶשֶׁת לְיַד־מַעְגָּל מֹקְשִׁים שָׁתוּ־לִי סֶלָה׃	The proud have hid a bird trap and cords for me, they spread out a net for the hand of an entrenchment, they have set a snare/bait for me. Selah
7	אָמַרְתִּי לַיהוָה אֵלִי אָתָּה הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי׃	I said to YHWH: ‘you are my God, hear, YHWH, the voice of my supplications.
8	יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֹז יְשׁוּעָתִי סַכְתָּה לְרֹאשִׁי בְּיוֹם נָשֶׁק׃	YHWH, Lord, the strength of my salvation, you have covered my head in the day of battle.
9	אַל־תִּתֵּן יְהוָה מַאֲוֵי רָשָׁע זְמָמוֹ אַל־תָּפֵק יָרוּמוּ סֶלָה׃	Do not give, YHWH, the desires of the wicked do not grant his plan so that they won’t be exalted/raised. Selah
10	יְכַסּוּמוֹ׃ רֹאשׁ מְסִבָּי עְמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ	The head of those that surround me, may the evil of their lips cover them.
11	יָמִיטוּ עֲלֵיהֶם גֶּחָלִים בָּאֵשׁ יַפְּלֵם בְּמַהֲמֹרוֹת בַּל־יָקוּמוּ׃	May glowing charcoal stagger/stumble over them, may they fall into the fire, in a bottomless pit, (that) they cannot rise/stand up.
12	אִישׁ לָשׁוֹן בַּל־יִכּוֹן בָּאָרֶץ אִישׁ־חָמָס רָעָה יְצוּדֶנּוּ לְמַדְחֵפוֹת׃	Let the man of a tongue not be established on earth, a man of violence. May evil hunt them hastily/swiftly.
13	יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה דִּין עָנִי מִשְׁפַּט אֶבְיוֹנִים׃	I know that YHWH will do judgement for the afflicted, judgement/case for the poor.
14	אַךְ צַדִּיקִים יוֹדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ יֵשְׁבוּ יְשָׁרִים אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ׃	Surely the righteous will praise Your name, the upright will dwell in Your presence.

v) Psalm 141

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד יְהוָה קְרָאתִיךָ חוּשָׁה לִי הַאֲזִינָה קוֹלִי בְּקָרְאִי־לָךְ׃	A Psalm of David. YHWH, I call to you, make haste to me, hear my voice when I cry to you.
2	תִּכּוֹן תְּפִלָּתִי קְטֹרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ מַשְׂאַת כַּפַּי מִנְחַת־עָרֶב׃	Let my prayer be established before you like incense and the lifting up of my hands/palms like the evening sacrifice.

3	שִׁיתָה יְהוָה שָׁמְרָה לְפִי נִצְרָה עַל־דַּל שְׂפָתָי:	Set watch, YHWH, over my mouth, watch over the door of my lips.
4	אַל־תַּט־לִבִּי לְדָבָר| רָע לְהִתְעוֹלֵל עֲלִלוֹת בְּרֶשַׁע אֶת־אִישֵׁי פֹעֲלֵי־אָוֶן וּבַל־אֶלְחַם בְּמַנְעַמֵּיהֶם:	Do not incline my heart to an evil matter, to do evil deeds of wickedness with men that do wickedness and let met not eat of their delicacies.
5	יַהֲלְמֵנִי־צַדִּיק חֶסֶד וְיוֹכִיחֵנִי שֶׁמֶן רֹאשׁ אַל־יָנֵי רֹאשִׁי כִּי־עוֹד וּתְפִלָּתִי בְּרָעוֹתֵיהֶם:	Let the righteous smite me in kindness and let him reprove me, (it is) oil on the head, do not let my head refuse it because still my prayer is against their evil.
6	נִשְׁמְטוּ בִידֵי־סֶלַע שֹׁפְטֵיהֶם וְשָׁמְעוּ אֲמָרַי כִּי נָעֲמוּ:	Their judges are thrown down in the hand of a cliff and they hear my words because they are delightful.
7	כְּמוֹ פֹלֵחַ וּבֹקֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ נִפְזְרוּ עַצְמֵינוּ לְפִי שְׁאוֹל:	As when ploughs break in the ground our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol.
8	כִּי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֵינָי בְּכָה חָסִיתִי אַל־תְּעַר נַפְשִׁי:	But my eyes are on you, YHWH, Lord, in you I seek refuge, do not lay bare my soul.
9	שָׁמְרֵנִי מִיְדֵי פַח יָקְשׁוּ לִי וּמֹקְשׁוֹת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן:	Keep me from the hands of the bird traps/snares that they laid for me and the bait of the workers of wickedness.
10	יִפְּלוּ בְמַכְמֹרָיו רְשָׁעִים יַחַד אָנֹכִי עַד־אֶעֱבוֹר:	Let the wicked fall in their own nets, while I pass over.

vi) Psalm 142

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	מַשְׂכִּיל לְדָוִד בִּהְיוֹתוֹ בַמְּעָרָה תְּפִלָּה:	Maskil of David. A prayer when he was in the cave.
2	קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶזְעָק קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶתְחַנָּן:	My voice called out to YHWH, to YHWH my voice sought favour.
3	אֶשְׁפֹּךְ לְפָנָיו שִׂיחִי צָרָתִי לְפָנָיו אַגִּיד:	I poured out my complaint before him, I declared my distress before him.
4	בְּהִתְעַטֵּף עָלַי| רוּחִי וְאַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ נְתִיבָתִי בְּאֹרַח־זוּ אֲהַלֵּךְ טָמְנוּ פַח לִי:	When my spirit was weak/faint on me and you knew my path. In the way which I walked they hid a bird trap for me.
5	הַבֵּיט יָמִין| וּרְאֵה וְאֵין־לִי מַכִּיר אָבַד מָנוֹס מִמֶּנִּי אֵין דּוֹרֵשׁ לְנַפְשִׁי:	Look to the right-hand, but see there is no one who regards me. There is no escape for me, no resort for my soul.
6	זָעַקְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אָמַרְתִּי אַתָּה מַחְסִי חֶלְקִי בְּאֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים:	I call out to you, YHWH, I said: you are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

7	הַקְשִׁיבָה אֶל־רִנָּתִי כִּי־דַלּוֹתִי מְאֹד הַצִּילֵנִי מֵרֹדְפַי כִּי אָמְצוּ מִמֶּנִּי:	Bring attention to my cry because I have been brought very low. Deliver me from my persecutors because they are stronger than me.
8	הוֹצִיאָה מִמַּסְגֵּר נַפְשִׁי לְהוֹדוֹת אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ בִּי יַכְתִּרוּ צַדִּיקִים כִּי תִגְמֹל עָלָי:	Bring my soul out of the dungeon (so that) I may praise your name. The righteous will surround me because you will deal with me.

vii) Psalm 143

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד יְהוָה שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי הַאֲזִינָה אֶל־תַּחֲנוּנָי בֶּאֱמֻנָתְךָ עֲנֵנִי בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ:	A Psalm of David. YHWH, hear my prayer, give ear to my supplications in my steadfastness, answer me in your righteousness.
2	וְאַל־תָּבוֹא בְמִשְׁפָּט אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ כִּי לֹא־יִצְדַּק לְפָנֶיךָ כָל־חָי:	Do not come in judgement with your servant/slave because in your presence no living (person) is righteous.
3	כִּי רָדַף אוֹיֵב נַפְשִׁי דִּכָּא לָאָרֶץ חַיָּתִי הוֹשִׁיבַנִי בְמַחֲשַׁכִּים כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם:	Because the enemy has pursued my soul, he has crushed my life in the ground, he has made me dwell in the darkness like those who have been dead for long.
4	וַתִּתְעַטֵּף עָלַי רוּחִי בְּתוֹכִי יִשְׁתּוֹמֵם לִבִּי:	And my spirit was weak in me, my heart is appalled within me.
5	זָכַרְתִּי יָמִים מִקֶּדֶם הָגִיתִי בְכָל־פָּעָלֶךָ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ אֲשׂוֹחֵחַ:	I remember the days of the past/front/east, I utter/meditate on all your works, I muse on the work of your hands.
6	פֵּרַשְׂתִּי יָדַי אֵלֶיךָ נַפְשִׁי כְּאֶרֶץ־עֲיֵפָה לְךָ סֶלָה:	I spread out my hands to you, my soul for you like a weary land. Selah
7	מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה כָּלְתָה רוּחִי אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם־יֹרְדֵי בוֹר:	Answer me quickly, YHWH, my spirit is spent, do not hide your spirit from me and I become like (those) who go down to the pit.
8	הַשְׁמִיעֵנִי בַבֹּקֶר	חַסְדֶּךָ כִּי־בְךָ בָּטָחְתִּי הוֹדִיעֵנִי דֶּרֶךְ־זוּ אֵלֶךְ כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי נַפְשִׁי:	Let me hear your lovingkindness in the morning because in you I trust, let me know the way which I should walk because to you I lift up my soul.
9	הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבַי	יְהוָה אֵלֶיךָ כִסִּתִי:	Deliver me from my enemies, YHWH, into you I (take) cover.
10	לַמְּדֵנִי לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנֶךָ כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלוֹהָי רוּחֲךָ טוֹבָה תַּנְחֵנִי בְּאֶרֶץ מִישׁוֹר:	Teach me to do your will, because you are my God. Let your good spirit lead me into the land of fairness/righteousness.
11	לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה תְּחַיֵּנִי בְּצִדְקָתְךָ	תּוֹצִיא מִצָּרָה נַפְשִׁי:	For the sake of your name, YHWH, revive me, bring my soul out of distress in your righteousness.

12	וּֽבְחַסְדְּךָ֮ תַּצְמִ֪ית אֹ֫יְבָ֥י וְֽהַ֭אֲבַדְתָּ כָּל־צֹרֲרֵ֣י נַפְשִׁ֑י כִּ֝֗י אֲנִ֣י עַבְדֶּֽךָ׃	And in your lovingkindness annihilate my enemies and destroy all that show hostility to my soul because I am your servant.

viii) Psalm 144

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	לְדָוִ֨ד בָּ֘ר֤וּךְ יְהוָ֨ה צוּרִ֗י הַֽמְלַמֵּ֣ד יָדַ֣י לַקְרָ֑ב אֶ֝צְבְּעוֹתַ֗י לַמִּלְחָמָֽה׃	A psalm of David. Blessed is YHWH my rock who teaches my hands for war and my fingers to battle.
2	חַסְדִּ֥י וּמְצוּדָתִי֮ מִשְׂגַּבִּ֪י וּֽמְפַלְטִ֫י לִ֥י מָ֭גִנִּי וּב֣וֹ חָסִ֑יתִי הָרוֹדֵ֖ד עַמִּ֣י תַחְתָּֽי׃	My goodness and my stronghold, my refuge and my deliverer, my shield and he in whom I take refuge, who subdue my people under me.
3	יְֽהוָ֗ה מָֽה־אָ֭דָם וַתֵּדָעֵ֑הוּ בֶּן־אֱ֝נ֗וֹשׁ וַתְּחַשְּׁבֵֽהוּ׃	YHWH, what is a person/mankind that you know him, the son of man that you consider him?
4	אָ֭דָם לַהֶ֣בֶל דָּמָ֑ה יָ֝מָ֗יו כְּצֵ֣ל עוֹבֵֽר׃	Man is like a breath; his days are like a shadow passing by.
5	יְֽהוָ֗ה הַט־שָׁמֶ֥יךָ וְתֵרֵ֑ד גַּ֖ע בֶּהָרִ֣ים וְֽיֶעֱשָֽׁנוּ׃	YHWH, stretch out your heavens and come down: touch the mountains that they may smoke.
6	בְּר֣וֹק בָּ֭רָק וּתְפִיצֵ֑ם שְׁלַ֥ח חִ֝צֶּ֗יךָ וּתְהֻמֵּֽם׃	Flash lightning and scatter them, send your arrows and confuse them.
7	שְׁלַ֥ח יָדֶ֗יךָ מִמָּ֫ר֥וֹם פְּצֵ֣נִי וְ֭הַצִּילֵנִי מִמַּ֣יִם רַבִּ֑ים מִ֝יַּ֗ד בְּנֵ֣י נֵכָֽר׃	Send out your hand from above, set me free and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange/foreign sons
8	אֲשֶׁ֣ר פִּ֭יהֶם דִּבֶּר־שָׁ֑וְא וִֽ֝ימִינָ֗ם יְמִ֣ין שָֽׁקֶר׃	whose mouths speak vanity, their right hand is a right hand of deception/falsehood.
9	אֱֽלֹהִ֗ים שִׁ֣יר חָ֭דָשׁ אָשִׁ֣ירָה לָּ֑ךְ בְּנֵ֥בֶל עָ֝שׂ֗וֹר אֲזַמְּרָה־לָּֽךְ׃	I will sing a new song to you, YHWH on a harp of ten strings will I sing praise to you.
10	הַנּוֹתֵ֥ן תְּשׁוּעָ֗ה לַמְּלָ֫כִ֥ים הַ֭פּוֹצֶה אֶת־דָּוִ֥ד עַבְדּ֗וֹ מֵחֶ֥רֶב רָעָֽה׃	He who gives salvation to kings, who delivers David, his servant, from the sword of evil.
11	פְּצֵ֥נִי וְהַצִּילֵנִי֮ מִיַּ֪ד בְּֽנֵי־נֵ֫כָ֥ר אֲשֶׁ֣ר פִּ֭יהֶם דִּבֶּר־שָׁ֑וְא וִֽ֝ימִינָ֗ם יְמִ֣ין שָֽׁקֶר׃	Set me free and deliver me from the hand of foreign sons whose mouths speak vanity and their right hand is a right hand of deception/falsehood.
12	אֲשֶׁ֤ר בָּנֵ֨ינוּ כִּנְטִעִים֮ מְגֻדָּלִ֪ים בִּֽנְעוּרֵ֫יהֶ֥ם בְּנוֹתֵ֥ינוּ כְזָוִיֹּ֑ת מְ֝חֻטָּב֗וֹת תַּבְנִ֥ית הֵיכָֽל׃	That our sons may grow like plants in their youth and our daughters may be as corner pillars shaped as for a palace
13	מְזָוֵ֣ינוּ מְלֵאִים֮ מְפִיקִ֥ים מִזַּ֗ן אֶ֫ל־זַ֥ן צֹאונֵ֣נוּ מַ֭אֲלִיפוֹת מְרֻבָּב֗וֹת בְּחוּצוֹתֵֽינוּ׃	that our granaries may be full to gain every sort, that our sheep may make thousands and ten thousands in our open fields
14	אַלּוּפֵ֗ינוּ מְֽסֻבָּ֫לִ֥ים אֵֽין־פֶּ֭רֶץ וְאֵ֣ין יוֹצֵ֑את וְאֵ֥ין	let our cattle bear without breach and without

	עָוְחָה בִּרְחֹבֹתֵינוּ׃	going out. Let there not be an outcry in our streets.
15	אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁכָּכָה לּוֹ אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁיְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו׃	Blessed is the people who are thus for him, blessed are the people whose God is YHWH.

ix) Psalm 145

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
1	תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד אֲרוֹמִמְךָ אֱלוֹהַי הַמֶּלֶךְ וַאֲבָרְכָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃	A psalm of praise of David. I will exalt you, my God, king, and I will bless your name forever and ever.
2	בְּכָל־יוֹם אֲבָרְכֶךָּ וַאֲהַלְלָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃	Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.
3	גָּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד וְלִגְדֻלָּתוֹ אֵין חֵקֶר׃	Great is YHWH and he is to be greatly praised and his greatness is unsearchable.
4	דּוֹר לְדוֹר יְשַׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יַגִּידוּ׃	Generation for generation will praise your works and shall declare your strength/might.
5	הֲדַר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ וְדִבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה׃	I will meditate on the glorious honour of your majesty, your wondrous words.
6	וֶעֱזוּז נוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ יֹאמֵרוּ וּגְדוּלָּתְךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנָּה׃	And they will speak of the might of your fearful acts and I will recount your greatness.
7	זֵכֶר רַב־טוּבְךָ יַבִּיעוּ וְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ׃	They shall pour out the remembrance of your great goodness and they shall shout with joy your righteousness.
8	חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וּגְדָל־חָסֶד׃	YHWH is gracious and compassionate, long/slow to anger and great in loving kindness.
9	טוֹב־יְהוָה לַכֹּל וְרַחֲמָיו עַל־כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו׃	YHWH is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works.
10	יוֹדוּךָ יְהוָה כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְבָרְכוּכָה׃	They will praise all your works, YHWH and your devout/faithful will bless you.
11	כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמֵרוּ וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יְדַבֵּרוּ׃	They will speak of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your strength/might.
12	לְהוֹדִיעַ לִבְנֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרֹתָיו וּכְבוֹד הֲדַר מַלְכוּתוֹ׃	To declare/make known to the sons of man his might and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.
13	מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל־עֹלָמִים וּמֶמְשָׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל־דֹּר וָדֹר׃	Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and your rule in all generations.
14	סוֹמֵךְ יְהוָה לְכָל־הַנֹּפְלִים וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל־הַכְּפוּפִים׃	YHWH supports all that fall and raise all that are bowed down/oppressed.

15	עֵינֵי־כֹל אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּ וְאַתָּה נֹותֵן־לָהֶם אֶת־אָכְלָם בְּעִתּוֹ׃	The eyes of all wait on you and you give them their food in time.
16	פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ וּמַשְׂבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רָצוֹן׃	you open your hand and satisfy the favour/desire of every living thing
17	צַדִּיק יְהוָה בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו וְחָסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו׃	YHWH is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.
18	קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְכָל־קֹרְאָיו לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֻהוּ בֶּאֱמֶת׃	YHWH is near all who call upon him all that call upon him in truth.
19	רְצוֹן־יְרֵאָיו יַעֲשֶׂה וְאֶת־שַׁוְעָתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם׃	He will make the favour/desire of those who fear him, he will hear their cry for help, and he will deliver them.
20	שׁוֹמֵר יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־אֹהֲבָיו וְאֵת כָּל־הָרְשָׁעִים יַשְׁמִיד׃	YHWH keeps watch/guards all those who love him, but he exterminates all the wicked.
21	תְּהִלַּת יְהוָה יְדַבֶּר־פִּי וִיבָרֵךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃	My mouth will speak the praise of YHWH, all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

ADDENDUM B
SOCIAL VALUES CHECKLIST

The following list of values is used in the social-scientific analysis of Psalms 137-145 in Chapter 3 (Pilch & Malina 1993):

1. Social institutions:
   - Politics – powerful of powerless
   - Religion – righteous or wicked
   - Economics – poor or rich
   - Kinship – family and gender roles

2. Groups
   - In-group or out-group
   - Dyadism
   - Identity

3. Honour and shame (related to power)

4. Patron and client relationships

5. Meaning of references to body parts

ADDENDUM C

SPATIAL CATEGORIES IN ANALYSING PSALMS 137-145

The following exposition is mainly based on Prinsloo (2005:458-462 and 2013:9-11).

1. **Dimensions of space**
   1.1. Firstspace – concrete, physical space – e.g. description of place, environment.
   1.2. Secondspace – imagined, conceived and abstract space – ideological, religious dimensions of human behaviour.
   1.3. Thirdspace – lived space – confrontation between various social groups.
   1.4. Fourthspace – remembered space.

2. **Categories:**

Positive space	Negative space
Individual/community at-centre (properly oriented to the world); live in the presence of/near YHWH.	Individual/community: off-centre (in chaos and disorientation); far from the presence of YHWH.
Jerusalem: centre of universe; meeting point between human and divine world. Near temple = near to YHWH and at-centre.	Babylon: off-centre; symbol of being far from YHWH and temple.
Lived space safe/comfortable/acceptable	Lived space unsafe/uncomfortable/unacceptable
Three-story universe: North; ascend; high; near (positive) = realm of transcendent.	Three-story universe: South; descend; low; far (negative) = realm of death.
Direction: East = life, new beginning.	Direction: West = death, end.
Clean and holy	Unclean and unholy

3. More spatial distinctions to be made:

Public space	Private space
Gender space: men	Gender space: women
Social space: king, religious leaders	Social space: servant
Front: past, remembering	Behind: future