The ideological interface between Psalm 1 and Psalm 2[1]

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ABSTRACT

This article is a social-scientific investigation of the ideology displayed in Psalm 1 and the ideology displayed in Psalm 2. It endeavours to describe the ideological points of contact between the two psalms, so as to determine the possible ideological point of view of the editor who juxtaposed the two psalms to form an introduction to the book of Psalms as a whole. The article concludes that the editor of the Psalms propagated a view of Yahwism as presupposing and necessitating a theocratic society, both nationally and internationally.

A INTRODUCTION

This article is an investigation of the ideological links between Psalm 1 and Psalm 2. Because some manuscripts of Acts 13:33 refer to Psalm 2:7 as the 'first psalm', and because Psalm 1:1 and Psalm 2:12 contain macarisms that can be seen as a frame for the two psalms read together, scholars have suggested that the two psalms should be seen as a unity. Bardtke (1973) has investigated the tradition found in the Babylonian Talmud (Tractate Berakoth 9b) that sought to explain why Psalm 104 is referred to as the one-hundred-and-third psalm. The explanation given to this problem in the Talmud is that the first two psalms were read as one. Formal proof of this was also found by the rabbis in the fact that Psalms 1:1 and 2:12 seem to correspond to one another. As Bardkte (1973:2) notes, the whole incident also proves that the Talmudic authors were acquainted with the two psalms as separate entities.

Before the rise of the *Gattungsforschung*, there was a tendency to see many links between the two psalms (Bardtke 1973:12). This approach has almost disappeared since the time of Gunkel, but some modern investigators have also argued that there is enough evidence to accept the unity of Psalm 1 and Psalm 2.[2]

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[1] I dedicate this article to professor James Alfred Loader. He lectured numerous undergraduate and post-graduate courses in which I sat as a student. I never ceased to be amazed by his sharp intellect, his proficiency at expressing himself, and the ease with which he could and still keeps up a research output of tremendous quantity and quality. I trust that we will benefit from his academic insight for many years to come.

[2] Cf Terrien (2002:79-80) for a list. Brownlee (1971:321-322) refers to the many Hebrew manuscripts that unite the two psalms. He also refers to the Talmudic tradition of their being combined and the support for this among some of the Church Fathers. Bardtke's (1973) investigation has been mentioned above. His

Others, however, have stressed the differences in vocabulary, imagery, and structure of the two psalms (e g Willis 1979 and Millard 1994:9-10).[3]

The point of departure for this investigation is not a supposed original unity, but the compositional juxtaposition of the two psalms.[4] Gerald Wilson (1986) has argued convincingly that Psalm 2 actually functions as the introduction to the first book of psalms, or even the combined first and second books. Psalm 1, in turn, is an even later editorial addition that had to serve as an introduction to the whole Psalter (Wilson 1986:88, cf also Kittel 1922:1, Kraus 1966:2, 12). We thus have two 'separate' introductions to the book of Psalms or to major sections of it, and the question arises as to how these two (originally involuntary) neighbours relate.

I would like to undertake the investigation of the composition in terms of the ideological points of view of the two psalms. The questions that interest me are: What ideology is visible in Psalm 1, how does that differ from the ideology displayed by Psalm 2, and how is the ideology of the implied editor,[5] who put them next to one another, visible in this combination?

Numerous definitions of 'ideology' are available. Clines (1995:2-3) lists four possible denotations and 13 possible connotations. From the denotations he

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article seems to be a response to that of Brownlee, although he nowhere makes this explicit as far as I can see. Willis (1979:381) does indeed respond to Brownlee, pointing out that many more manuscripts (and Church Fathers) treat Psalms 1 and 2 as two separate psalms. According to Millard (1994:10), the combination of the two psalms in certain manuscripts may simply reflect a Jewish exegetical attempt to form a parallel between Pss 1-19 and the *Shmone 'Eshre*. If Pss 1-2 were read as a unity, Ps 19 as a Torah-psalm would end the composition of Pss 1-19 in a way that is similar to that of the Eighteen Benedictions, namely with 'Let the words of my mouth be acceptable…' (cf also Willis 1979:386). Some scholars (e g Brownlee 1971:321) have also used 4QFlor to argue that Pss 1-2 were seen as a unity at Qumran. It alludes to Ps 2:1 in connection with the interpretation of Ps 1:1. Bardtke (1973:8-9) is also of the opinion that Qumran knew the two psalms as a unity and argues for a different version of Psalm 2 in a pre-Masoretic text-form, a version that gave rise to their unification in both Greek and Hebrew manuscripts. He (Bardtke 1973:14) argues that the original form of Psalm 2 was a wisdom text concerned with the revolt of nations against their (own!) kings and that the royal or messianic elements were only later inserted. Willis (1979:381-384), however, is not even convinced that Qumran knew the combination of the two.

3 In contrast to this, however, Auffret (1982:174) has proposed that both psalms have a chiastic arrangement of four sections, and that there is similarity between the corresponding elements of the two structures.

4 Millard's (1994:10) conclusion is that the two psalms should be seen 'als eine unterschiedene Einheit von zwei Psalmen'.

5 The 'implied editor' is the one that can be known through the manifestation of his editorial activity, just as the 'implied author' is someone else than the historical person who authored a text. Cf Robbins (1996:21).

lists, the following compilation can be made: an ideology is a set of relatively coherent ideas amounting to a world-view held by a particular group of people, often the dominant group in a society.

Elliott (1993:130) gives the following very useful definition of ideology as it is used in social-scientific criticism:

> An integrated system of beliefs, perspectives, assumptions, and values, not necessarily true or false, that reflect the perceived needs and interests of a group or class at a particular time in history; that contain the chief criteria for interpreting social reality; and that serve to define, explain, and legitimate collective wants and needs, interests, values, norms, and organizational goals in a continuous interaction with the material forces of history.

As Robbins (1996:193) explains, the ideological implications of a text are more than its ideational or theological content. An investigation of the ideology of a text entails exploring 'the manner in which the discourse of a text presents comprehensive patterns of cognitive and moral beliefs about humans, society and the universe that are intended to function in the social order' (Robbins 1996:193).

I should now like to investigate – using the definition of Elliot and the tools employed in social-scientific criticism – firstly the ideology displayed by Psalm 1, then that of Psalm 2, and finally the implied ideology of the editor who inserted Psalm 1 before Psalm 2 to serve as an introduction to the book of Psalms. It should be noted that this investigation is not about Psalm 1 as a fitting introduction to the Psalter as a whole,[6] but only about the ideological connections between the first two psalms.

B THE IDEOLOGY REFLECTED IN PSALM 1

Psalm 1 was produced by someone who had a profound awareness of a deep ideological divide between two groups of people in society. The two groups are characterised and distinguished by their mode of conduct. On the one hand, the implied author saw himself as part of the so-called in-group, a group of people whose interests and ideology he would like to further. They are described in moral terminology as 'righteous' or 'just' people (צדיקים) (vv 5-6). Members of this group dissociate themselves from the opposing group (or should do so).

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6 Others have undertaken such an investigation. Note especially Childs (1979:513-514). Childs thinks that the function of Ps 1 as a heading to the Psalter has the implication that the Torah mentioned in Ps 1 was interpreted to include the sacred writings of the Psalter itself, so that the faithful were urged to meditate on this section of the 'word of God' as well. The redactional position of Ps 1 shows that the psalms which were the words of men to God were now considered God's word to men (Childs 1979:513).

Members of *that* group are described in opposite terms as 'wicked' (רשׁעים), 'sinners' (חטאים), and 'scoffers' (לצים), people whose company should be avoided completely. Members of the in-group are enticed by the implied author to dissociate themselves from such people by holding up to the audience the prospect of real happiness, success, and honour if they do; but also the threat of utter failure and shame if they don't.

According to the implied author, members of the in-group indulge and delight in only one specific activity, namely meditation on the Torah of Yahweh (v 2). Such meditation, a continuous (יומם ולילה) interaction with the Torah of Yahweh, is contrasted diametrically with any interaction with members of the out-group (they should not 'walk', 'stand', or 'sit' with them).[7] The implied author also sees no possibility that members of the out-group could be assimilated into or tolerated within the in-group: 'sinners' will not 'stand up' (קום) in the 'assembly' or 'congregation' (עדה) of the in-group (v 5).

It is not clear whether the author saw everyone *not* affiliated with the in-group as members of the out-group. The two groups are so strongly contrasted, with the whole psalm taking on an antithetic structure, that it might seem that this was indeed the case. The strength of the feelings of dissociation from certain actions or people might have polarized society in the eyes of the poet. But Weiser ([1962] 1975:103), who ascribes this 'black and white' contrasting to the author's 'educational purpose', does not see a sectarian exclusivity in it. He is probably correct.

What does the implied author believe about members of the in-group? He propagates the idea that they are the only really fortunate members of society: they are the ones who are 'blessed', 'happy', or 'fortunate' (אשׁרי). They enjoy the sustenance of Yahweh, like a tree planted next to abundant water, and they thrive for that reason. They are productive, they remain full of health and they succeed in life (v 3). What is especially emphasised is the role Yahweh plays in their success and prosperity (v 6). In contrast, it is because Yahweh does not oversee *their* path that members of the out-group will meet with disaster (אבד).

The *needs* of the in-group probably also become visible in these descriptions. Its members need sustenance, vitality, success, and prosperity, perhaps also longevity. In the continuous interaction with the material forces of history, one may infer, there is a competition between the in-group and the out-group. The need to provide assurance of these matters to the in-group might indicate how important they were considered to be, and might also reveal that not

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7 Van der Ploeg (1973:38) thinks that the negative feelings are against sin as it manifests itself in the actions of certain people, not primarily the people themselves. The polarity, however, is between two groups of people (characterised by various actions and its consequences), not two kinds of activity. Cf the structural analysis of Girard (1996:138f) from which this seems clear.

everybody was convinced that this was the best way of obtaining those qualities. This becomes clear to a certain extent in the way in which the contrast in-group versus out-group overlaps with the opposition between *appearance* and *reality* in the psalm.

According to the implied author, the out-group *appears* to be active, lively, and full of vitality, moving on a 'road' (v 1). The in-group, in contrast, appears merely to be sitting still (v 2 and v 3). But this is only appearance; so the implied author would like the implied reader to see. Reality is quite the opposite. It is true; the righteous person (sits and) meditates all day and all night (v 2). He seems to be motionless, *planted* like a tree (v 3). But in a spiritual sense, members of this group are the ones whose road stretches out into the future (v 6). They are the ones who are productive (like a tree producing fruit) and full of vitality (like a tree with leaves that never wither). The movement of the members of the out-group, in contrast, are meaningless and sterile. They are like chaff scattered by the wind, seemingly lively and boisterous, but their movement is the result of their sterility. This is highlighted through the alliteration of the two similes, the righteous being 'like a tree' (כעץ) and the wicked 'like chaff' (כמץ). That is also why the metaphor of life as a road, used at the beginning and end of the poem, is shown to run into a dead end for the wicked: walking, standing, and sitting on and along the road of the wicked spell deceleration, a coming to a standstill (v 1) and eventually destruction (v 6). Members of the out-group will also have to remain *seated* in judgement and among members of the in-group (v 5).

By arguing that the righteous are the only ones who travel on a road with a destination, the author might be hinting that not all members of the in-group are one hundred percent convinced that this is the case. Members of the out-group seem to be successful. That is why the implied author has to argue that appearances can be deceiving, that real success is measured differently and will only be evident in judgement (v 5).

Above all, perhaps, the in-group is in need of *honour*. Honour was the core value of society in biblical times, and Psalm 1 describes the road to honour for the righteous and the road to shame for the wicked. The psalm assures members of the in-group that the wicked will be the ones who stand ashamed, or rather, who will *sit* ashamed: the wicked will not *rise* in the judgement and in the congregation of the righteous. The lack of success – and therefore the shame – of the wicked will become apparent to all, while Yahweh's approval of the righteous – and therefore their vindication and honour – will likewise be evident in the end (vv 5-6).

In the ideology of the implied author of Psalm 1, then, there is only one way to be truly happy, prosperous, successful, and honourable, and that is to shy away from the company of bad people and to immerse oneself in the Torah of Yahweh. Those who are like-minded, who honour Yahweh above all else by

holding his instruction in high regard, also form a community. They are the 'congregation of righteous' (v 5), and they can be spoken of collectively as a group, using a plural like that for the 'community' of wicked people and sinners (vv 5-6).

The social status of the party whose interests are promoted in Psalm 1 cannot be very low. The possibility of being able to meditate on the Torah 'day and night' could be taken as an indication that the more basic human needs, such as that for food and clothing, have been provided for. Members of this group have an opportunity, perhaps even the ability to achieve success with everything they do (v 3). As a group, they share the tradition about the decisive nature of Yahweh's revelation to Moses and to Israel through the Torah. They have a firm belief that attachment to this tradition is the only way to be permanently successful, honoured, and fortunate. At the same time, however, everything in society is not as they would like it to be. There are those who show a lack of concern for Yahweh, for the tradition that only he can assure prosperity. Some members of the out-group even mock Yahweh and the pious,[8] so that there is an urgent need for Yahweh to intervene in their situation and to extend honour to those who deserve honour and shame to those who deserve shame.

The norm that the in-group uses to judge society is the norm given to them by Yahweh, namely his Torah. The group of people whom the author represents can therefore be described as a religious movement. They believe in a theocracy and would like to have a society run according to the decrees of Yahweh and a judiciary based on the Torah (v 5). Since this ideal is not yet reality – for judgement is a future matter or is still hidden[9] – they can probably best be described as a religiously oriented faction or reform movement within society as a whole. It is possible that members of Yahweh's own people are included in the out-group: corrupt officials, ruthless businessmen or leaders who have become disillusioned with the theocratic ideals of the in-group.

The strategy of the author is to compare the style of living, the success and therefore the true honour of members of the in-group with that of the out-group. By asserting that members of the in-group are the only ones that can hope to achieve true happiness, success, and honour in the long run, the implied author

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8 According to Van der Ploeg (1973:38), to 'mock' is a typical wisdom word that indicates disregard for God and ridicule of the pious. Weiser ([1962] 1975:104) says that a comparison of this text with Isaiah 28:14 indicates that it is God whom they mock. It is interesting to note that in that context (in Isaia) it is the rulers in Jerusalem who are referred to as 'scoffers'.

9 Eaton (2003:63) thinks of 'the judgement which is ever close at hand, ever manifesting itself in the trials of life', or otherwise 'of the final judgement, when God makes an end of this world'. But Weiser ([1962] 1975:107) notes that the image of the winnowing of the chaff, which immediately precedes the reference to judgement in Psalm 1, is especially used in the Bible as an illustration of God's final judgement.

effectively urges his audience to choose for affiliation with the righteous and against affiliation with those who reject this tradition. The psalm is a teaching about life and the ideal society, a declaration of trust in Yahweh's rule, but at the same time also a subtle appeal to Yahweh to vindicate the pious by foiling the designs of the wicked who seem to achieve success in society.

C THE IDEOLOGY REFLECTED IN PSALM 2

The out-group in Psalm 2 is described in political terms rather than moral or ethical principles such as in Psalm 1. Words used to refer to them include 'nations' (גוים) (vv 1, 8), 'peoples' (לאמים) (v 1), 'kings of the earth' (מלכי־ארץ) (v 2), 'monarchs' or 'rulers' (רוזנים) (v 2), once again 'kings' (מלכים) (v 10), and finally 'judges' (שׁפטים) (v 10). Based on the surmise that in-groups and out-groups form polarities in texts, the opposing in-group should thus also consist of a political entity. It must be the people of Israel or Judah. They seem to be referred to with the two pronominal suffixes in the direct speech of the implied out-group in verse 3 (the nations want to throw off '*their* bonds' and '*their* cords'). But this is not the case. Yahweh and his anointed are the immediate antecedents in verse 2. The only reference we have to the *people* of Israel or Judah as the in-group, is probably their inclusion in the relative phrase of verse 12: '*those who take refuge* in him'. The 'him' refers to the political and religious leader of the in-group, their king.[10] He is also called 'my king' by Yahweh (מלכי) (v 6). This leader is further referred to as 'the anointed' of Yahweh (משׁחיו, cf נסכתי) (vv 2 and 6). The pronominal suffixes attached to 'king' and 'messiah' indicate a close relationship between Yahweh and the leader of the in-group, as does the pronominal suffixes that have been mentioned above, suffixes that group Yahweh and his anointed together. This means that the polarity in Psalm 2 is between *other* kings and Yahweh's *own* king.

The ideology of Psalm 2 can therefore probably be described – to begin with – as 'imperialistic'. The situation implied is one in which Israel or Judah dominates other political entities. The leaders of these political groups, their kings and rulers and judges, have taken advantage of a temporary lack of leadership in Jerusalem to 'conspire' (רגשׁ) and 'plot' (הגה) against this dominion, they have 'taken a stand' (יצב hitp) and have 'banded together' (יסד ni) against Yahweh and his anointed. They want to 'break free' (נתק pi) from and 'throw off' (שׁלך hi) the dominion laid upon them. But this rebellion will not succeed. Yahweh is not impressed; he is amused instead. To the new king he promises even more nations as 'an inheritance' (נחלה) and 'the ends of the earth' as 'a possession' (אחזה). These nations and locations will come under the newly anointed king's 'iron rule' (שׁבט ברזל) and will be 'shattered like pottery',

[10] Some commentaries and translations of the Bible, by removing the reference to 'the son', take this to refer to Yahweh: 'those who trust in Yahweh'.

presumably only if and when they become unruly. The rulers of the foreign nations are consequently advised to 'act wisely' (שׂכל hi), to let themselves be 'chastened' (יסר ni), to 'serve' Yahweh and 'tremble' (גיל ברעדה), to 'show respect' (עבדו ביראה) for Yahweh and his anointed (נשׁק), lest he 'become angry' (אנף), for this happens 'quickly' (יבער כמעט אפו).

The 'imperialism' in the psalm is therefore a *theocratic* imperialism. The rather optimistic, perhaps even hyperbolic, presentation of political reality is not so much an utterance of imperialism as it is a declaration of faith in Yahweh's global rule.[11] Lack of cooperation on the part of the nations is seen as rebellion against Yahweh in the first place (v 2). It is a rejection of his decree (חק) that the king has become his son. This expression does not indicate divine kingship. It refers to the patron-client relationship. Similarly to the word 'father' being used to refer to the role and status of a patron (Malina 1998:151), so the word 'son' often refers in the Hebrew Bible to the role and status of a client in this relationship.[12] Against this background, the expression 'today I have become your father' simply means that a patron-client relationship has been established. The emphasis on the time ('today') is meant to exclude the idea of a physical begetting (Weiser [1962] 1975:113). As a powerful patron, Yahweh is able to protect and expand the kingship and rule of the newly anointed king.

To whom is Psalm 2 addressed? The nations are referred to – for the greater part of the psalm – in the *third* person: 'they', 'their', 'them'. Only in verses 10-12 are their leaders addressed directly with five imperatives: 'be wise', 'be warned', 'serve', 'tremble', and 'kiss'. The implication is that these directives are also given for the instruction of the audience that is addressed directly in the first three-quarters of the psalm. The commands at the end are not really meant as diplomatic notes, but are inserted so as to have an effect on the in-group. The in-group constitutes the real addressees. They are a religious-political entity[13] centred on Jerusalem (ציון הר־קדשׁי). The implied author seems to be a member of the religious and political elite, closely associated with priestly and royal circles alike. The implied audience would include members of the same elite, but could also include citizens of the middle and lower strata. The readers are presumed to share the tradition about the divine election of the house of David for royal dominion in Israel, as the close extratextual relationship with 2 Samuel 7 shows. The 'decree' of Yahweh (חק) probably refers not only to the declaration of appointment of the new king, but also to this tradition.

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11 As Weiser ([1962] 1975:111) remarks: 'At the centre of history is no longer the struggle of the great world powers for existence, but God, whose relationship with the earthly powers will determine their destiny.'

12 Cf 2 Sam 7:14, the text that is alluded to here: 'I will be his father, and he will be my son'.

13 Van der Ploeg (1973:42) notes that temple and palace formed a single complex on Mount Zion.

The audience is further implied to share the belief that Yahweh has dominion over the whole earth (to 'the ends of the earth'). He 'dwells' or 'is enthroned' (ישב) in heaven, but is closely involved in the international relations of his people. Kingship in Israel, so the audience is presumed to believe, is a mere representation of the kingship of Yahweh. Lack of recognition of this belief on the part of the nations is of no concern to Yahweh; he laughs at such ignorance of his power and intentions. But mirth on his part can suddenly change to wrath (v 5) and if he so chooses, unwilling subjects can be subdued with brute force. Yahweh's power and wrath is mirrored in the power and anger of his anointed (vv 9, 12).

The social value of honour plays a very important role in this psalm. Honour – the honour of Yahweh, that of his anointed, and that of his people – runs like a golden thread through the psalm. National honour centres in the supremacy of Yahweh over the gods of other nations, and this is manifested in the dominion of Israel's king over the kings of other peoples. Yahweh 'sits' (ישב) in heaven (v 4). This is an indication of his rule.[14] The rebellion of other nations is a challenge to the honour of Yahweh and his anointed. Yahweh has accorded honour to his king and, as the patron of his anointed, will sustain that honour. He shames the leaders of the rebellion by laughing (שחק) at them and by mocking them (לעג) (v 4). He promises to even extend the honour of his messiah to the ends of the earth (v 8). For that reason the nations are warned to act wisely by honouring Yahweh (עבדו יראה) as well as his client king (נשקו־בר).

Since honour plays such an important role in the psalm, it can be inferred that this feature reflects one of the perceived *needs* of the in-group. The audience is required to share the belief that Yahweh exercises control over all kingdoms and that he will make his reign manifest through the king instated in Jerusalem. But the psalm probably served as a confirmation and strengthening of this notion at a time when Yahweh's dominion was not as evident to all. The absence of such obeisance is at such a time explained as rebellion, and the description of Yahweh's anger and the resultant terror among the nations is a prophetic promise of what will happen when Yahweh intervenes to safeguard his honour. The in-group, not the international arena, is informed that it would be better for other nations to subjugate themselves to the king of Israel.

It seems that it was in the interest of the author and his close associates to emphasise the divine sanctioning of the election and instatement of the king. The psalm is perhaps not so much an attempt at establishing international recognition of the authority of the king, than it is an attempt at establishing national acceptance of the idea of Yahweh's universal rule through the king.[15] The

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14 Cf 1 Sam 4:4 (Yahweh being 'seated' or 'enthroned' on the cherubim). Cf also 1 Ki 22:19, Ps 29:10, etc.

15 Eaton (2003:67) says '[t]he original function of the psalm was to serve in the establishment of David's dynasty as instrument of God's government of his

authority invoked in Psalm 2 is meant to impress also, perhaps primarily, the members of the in-group and to instil in them the desire to 'seek refuge' with – rather than to oppose – the messianic king of Yahweh. Any attempt to oppose the rule of the king, who represents Yahweh's authority, is condemned through a description of divine ridicule, divine anger, divine sanction, divine promise, divine threat, and divine protection. From all this it transpires that the ideological mode of the psalm could perhaps be more accurately described as an *authoritarian theocracy* rather than a theocratic imperialism.

The strategy of the author is to re-enact the coronation of the new king.[16] The beginning of the psalm contains clear evidence that the psalm is not the actual liturgical script for the ascension to the throne,[17] but an ideological document devised to explain why Yahweh's rule is not accepted universally, and to exhort members of the in-group to accept the ideology of the divine appointment and authority of the king. By quoting from a real or imagined ceremony of enthronisation in verse 6 onwards, the author invests the king with divine authority and reconfirms the ideology of Yahweh's universal rule through him. After the end of the monarchy, the psalm was seen as 'a prophecy yet to be vindicated' (Eaton 2003:67).

D THE IDEOLOGICAL INTERFACE BETWEEN PSALM 1 AND PSALM 2

Psalms 1 and 2 are both documents with a clear ideological vision. Both were written to protect the interests, needs, values, norms, and organizational goals of a particular group of people. Both psalms have the ideal of a theocratic society,

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creation' even though it has 'a poetic vision, which knows the ideal unity of the world…'

16 It could have been used to commemorate the enthronisation of the king, but hardly – as is often simply supposed – during the enthronisation ceremony itself. It would fit better in a pre-exilic setting, but it would serve also to instigate messianic expectations in the post-exilic era.

17 It begins with a rhetorical question about the uprising of rulers and leaders. The question is intended to draw attention to the futility of the attempted rebellion. The focus is therefore on defending the notion of divine rule through the king in Jerusalem and not on the enthronisation of the king. In his article on the 'rhetoric of religious politics in Psalm 2', Johan Coetzee stresses the importance of distinguishing between the rhetorical situation and the historical situation (Coetzee 1998:235). He nevertheless makes a strong case for Psalm 2 to have been created precisely to serve as the political-cultic answer of the king (during enthronisation, after the promulgation of his divine sonship of Yahweh). Viewed from such a rhetorical perspective, the opening question serves to introduce the problem (tension in international relations), which the psalm seeks to solve with rhetorical means (Coetzee 1998:231).

run according to the rules laid down in religious tradition. In the case of Psalm 1, that tradition is described as the 'Torah of Yahweh'. In the case of Psalm 2, the tradition is taken from Nathan's prophecy in 2 Samuel 7, so that it can be described as an early prophetic tradition.[18] There is nevertheless similarity with the Torah mentioned in Psalm 1 in the fact that the 'decree' (חק) of Yahweh's election and the establishment of a patron-client relationship with the king is mentioned. In both psalms, the honour of individual members of the in-group and the honour of the in-group as a whole are important concerns.

According to Psalm 1, honourable existence is only possible if one dissociates oneself from certain elements in society and draws inner strength and guidance from Yahweh and religious tradition. This would guarantee acceptance among the religious elite and success in the long run. Intervention by Yahweh to establish justice will bring about the end of the seeming success of members of the out-group. According to Psalm 2, the same truths apply on a national scale. Honourable existence for the people of Israel or Judah will become a reality when all other nations and their rulers accept Yahweh's universal dominion through his king in Jerusalem. Yahweh will intervene to judge those who rebel against his authority, since he has the power to do so. He will establish the rule, and thus the honour, of his anointed far and wide as he has promised according to tradition. This will put an end to the seeming success of those rulers and cause them to seek association with the people of Yahweh rather than opposition to them.

It thus seems that the ideal of a theocratic society, the norms of religious tradition meant to organise society, and the dissociation from members of the out-group because of their disregard for divine authority as expressed in tradition, all form facets of the ideological interface between the two psalms. Even though Psalm 2 was found in this investigation to be not primarily a liturgical text for enthronisation of a new king, it would make better sense if understood against a monarchical setting. After the end of the monarchy, the theocratic ideal would turn into a messianic and later an eschatological ideal.

The interest group whose ideology is reflected in Psalm 2 thus must have had close connections with the *political* elite. Psalm 1 shows no trace of a similar setting or connections. The ideology of Psalm 1 rather reflects the interests of the *religious* elite of post-exilic times when dedication to the Torah became more and more important as a characteristic of Yahweh-worship.[19]

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[18] Millard (1994:128) refers to the 'kanonischen Horizont' of both Psalm 1 and Psalm 2: 'Rekurriert bei fortlaufender Lektüre der Bibel Ps 1 auf die *Tora*, so bezieht sich Ps 2 insbesondere auf den Kanonsteil der *Propheten* zurück'.

[19] Van der Ploeg speaks in this regard of life according to the law becoming both the ideal and the privilege of post-exilic piety (Van der Ploeg 1973:37). Eaton (2003:61) describes the images of the well-watered tree and the two ways that part to opposite directions as characteristic of Wisdom teaching. But, according to him,

There are numerous superficial links between Psalm 1 and Psalm 2,[20] such as the metaphor of life as travelling on a road (דרך, Ps 1:1, 6; Ps 2:12); the macarisms used in Psalm 1:1 and Psalm 2:12; the 'Torah of Yahweh' (תורת יהוה) and the 'decree of Yahweh' (חק יהוה) being used as a norm for society, the righteous not 'sitting down' (ישב) with mockers (לצים, Ps 1:1) and Yahweh, 'seated in heaven' (ישב) mocking (לעג, Ps 2:4) the leaders of foreign nations; the idea that respect for Yahweh is the only safeguard against calamity (אבד) and assurance of success (אשרי) (Ps 1:6 and Ps 2:12), and Yahweh's intervention to judge members of the out-group, thereby preserving justice, order and the interests of his clients (Ps 1:4, 6 and Ps 2:5, 12). Auffret (1982:174) further adds repetition of 'give' (נתן), 'day' (יום), and the stem שׁפט.[21]

The editor who juxtaposed these two psalms must have been aware of all these similarities,[22] enough to establish a literary link between the two.[23] But the real connection is visible in his ideology that Yahwism presupposes and necessitates a theocratic society, and that the book of Psalms is all about the realisation of that ideal. If we take into consideration that Psalms 42-72 represent an extension of the first Davidic collection rather than an independent collection (Wilson 1986:88), with the theme and ideology of Psalm 72 corresponding closely to that of Psalm 2 (cf Wilson 1986:88-89), there may be more evidence forthcoming that the theocratic ideal was considered to be an important unifying

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in its focus on the Lord's Torah, the psalm seems to reflect a development in which 'the old stream of Wisdom teaching has run together with another current of piety – devotion to tora'. The parallel passage of Jeremiah 17:7-8 gives an idea of how the Wisdom tradition on its own might have represented the message (Eaton 2003:61).

20 Millard (1994:9) notes the repetition of הגה (Ps 1:2; 2:1) and אשרי (Ps 1:1; 2:12) 'an den Rahmenstellen'. He also lists the opposition between a single God-fearing person ('Gottgemäßen') and the many opponents of God as a common factor. According to him (Millard 1994:10), literary critics have expressed the suspicion that the repetition of the macarism at the end of Psalm 2 is another attempt to link the two psalms superficially. Willis (1979:392) also lists the 'counsel' of the wicked (עצה, 1:1) being parallel to the 'taking counsel' (יסד, 2:2) of the nations.

21 These words that are repeated are significant because Bardtke (1973:13) remarks that there is no point of similarity between Psalm 1 and verses 6-9 of Psalm 2. Since this is so in his view, he declares that this section 'erscheint als ein fremdes Stück gegenüber den herausgestellten Zusammenhängen'.

22 Brownlee (1971:324-325), who argues for the unification of the two psalms as a coronation liturgy, says that he has the impression that 'the fusion of the two psalms was facilitated through coincidental agreement as to vocabulary and theme and that this was strengthened through editorial adjustment of the language of the second psalm to that of the first'.

23 Millard (1994:134) has proposed that the combination Pss 1-2 has, apart from its function to introduce the Psalter as a whole, the function of introducing the smaller context of Pss 1-10, the so-called 'erste Kompositionsbogen' of the Psalter.

factor of the first two psalms.[24] Psalm 89, the conclusion of the third part of the Psalter, once again addresses the same theme of divine rule through a Davidic descendant, although it laments the (temporary) suspension of the covenant, and thus also the ideal of theocratic rule (cf Wilson 1986:89-91).

Psalm 1 was seen to be compatible to Psalm 2 because it displays the same ideal of honourable existence within a theocratic society, based on dedication to Yahweh's decrees and his promises of intervention to establish justice:

- The pious individual of Psalm 1 forms a parallel to the anointed of Yahweh in Psalm 2.
- The wicked, the sinners, and the mockers of Psalm 1 form a parallel to the rebellious kings and rulers of Psalm 2.
- The delight of the individual in the Torah of Yahweh (Psalm 1) forms a parallel to the strength the king draws from the decree of Yahweh (Psalm 2).
- The inner strength of the individual, *planted* like a tree next to streams of water and yielding fruit on time (Psalm 1), forms a parallel to the assurance given to the king who was *anointed* in Jerusalem that his rule will endure and expand (Psalm 2).
- The scattering of the wicked like chaff in the wind (Psalm 1) forms a parallel to the terrifying of the rulers by Yahweh, and their being dashed to pieces by the newly appointed king (Psalm 2).
- Finally, the prospect of happiness and honour for those who choose to *dissociate* themselves from the wicked (Psalm 1) corresponds to the promise of happiness for those who choose to *associate* with the anointed of Yahweh in Psalm 2.

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[24] Wilson (1985:208) says that the collection of Psalms 2-72 'takes on the character of a celebration of the faithfulness of YHWH to his covenant with David (introduced in 2:7-9), the benefits and responsibilities of which are the subject of Ps 72'.

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