

RECENT RESEARCH ON THE MAJOR PROPHETS



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RECENT RESEARCH ON THE MAJOR PROPHETS

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FOREWORD

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, commonly referred to as the Major Prophets, have long been the subject of intense scrutiny by biblical scholars, generating hundreds of books and thousands of articles during the 20th century. The diversity of approaches to these three prophets, and the number of theories that have been proposed to explain the origins of the books bearing their names, are considerable. As we move into the 21st century, the variety of scholarly approaches to these prophets is proliferating. Biblical scholars, especially those who do not work primarily in one or more of these prophets, need a convenient means of coming to terms with the growing complexity of scholarship on these prophets. This has been the chief factor driving the creation of this volume. The focus is on approximately the past quarter-century of scholarship.

I want to express my appreciation to Kerry Barner and to SAGE Publications for permission to reproduce in this volume a number of articles that have appeared in *Currents in Biblical Research*, the journal for which I serve as Senior Editor and Editor for Old Testament. Without the cooperation by SAGE, this volume would not have been possible. The specific articles for which permission to reproduce was granted are: the two on Isaiah by Marvin Sweeney; the two on Jeremiah by Robert Carroll; and two on Ezekiel, one by Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, and the other by Risa Levitt Kohn. To these articles from *Currents* have been added several others, which bring the discussions up to scholarship at the present time: the articles on Isaiah by Melugin and Kim; the article on Jeremiah by Diamond; and the second article on Ezekiel by Levitt Kohn. I have written an introductory chapter which brings together, in compacted form, the variety of scholarship that has appeared in approximately the past 25 years.

Inevitably, when scholarship is moving quickly and approaches are multiplying, not everything of value will be included. For that the editor and the writers apologize. Nevertheless, this volume provides a comprehensive, though not exhaustive, presentation and analysis of scholarship on these three prophets.

Many thanks are due to my skilled Associate Editor, schuyler kaufman, whose tireless dedication to the task, and meticulous attention to detail, have made this volume possible. Her enthusiasm for addressing the many matters of detail that needed to be rectified has been remarkable, as has

been her ability to sharpen the focus and clarity of phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. I also want to thank my colleague, Herbert Hash, for reading portions of the manuscript and providing helpful suggestions.

Finally, I want to thank the hundreds of scholars who have written on one or more of these prophets. Their eagerness to try new approaches, their willingness to ask the tough questions, their enthusiasm for dialogue with other scholars, and their intense interest in these three prophets and the books that bear their names have produced a synergy and dynamism in the study of these prophets that promises many good things in the years to come.

Alan J. Hauser
April 2008

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Robert Carroll's 'Surplus Meaning and the Conflict of Interpretations: A Decade of Jeremiah Studies (1984-95)' was originally published in *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 4 (1996), pp. 115-59; and his 'Century's End: Jeremiah Studies at the Beginning of the Third Millennium' in *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 8 (2000), pp. 18-58.

Katheryn Pfisterer Darr's 'Ezekiel among the Critics' was originally published in *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 2 (1994), pp. 9-24.

Risa Levitt Kohn's 'Ezekiel at the End of the Twentieth Century' was originally published in *Currents in Biblical Research* 2 (2003), pp. 9-31.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
ACEBTSup	<i>Amsterdamse cahiers voorexegese en bijbelse theologie</i> , Supplement Series
<i>AcOr</i>	<i>Acta orientalia</i>
<i>AcT</i>	<i>Acta theologica</i>
<i>AnBib</i>	<i>Analecta biblica</i>
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ARM	Archives Royale de Mari
ASOR	American Schools of Oriental Research
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
<i>ATJ</i>	<i>Ashland Theological Journal</i>
ATSAT	Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament
<i>AusBR</i>	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
<i>AUSS</i>	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
<i>BARev</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BARUCH	Baruch ben Shaphan, the putative historical figure
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
<i>BCPE</i>	<i>Bulletin du Centre Protestant d'Etudes</i>
BEATAJ	Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BEvT	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BI	Book of Isaiah
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation: A Journal of Contemporary Approaches</i>
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
BIOSCS	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament
BLS	Bible and Literature Series
<i>BN</i>	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
<i>BRev</i>	<i>Bible Review</i>
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca sacra</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>BTrans</i>	<i>Biblical Translator</i>

BThSt	Biblich-theologische Studien
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAT	Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i> , Monograph Series
<i>CBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica, Old Testament
<i>CR:BS</i>	<i>Currents in Research: Biblical Studies</i>
<i>CTJ</i>	<i>Calvin Theological Journal</i>
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
<i>DTT</i>	<i>Dansk teologisk tidsskrift</i>
EABS	European Association of Biblical Studies
EBib	Etudes bibliques
EF	Erträge zur Forschung
<i>EI</i>	<i>Eretz Israel</i>
<i>EstBib</i>	<i>Estudios bíblicos</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>ETR</i>	<i>Etudes théologiques et religieuses</i>
<i>EvJ</i>	<i>Evangelical Journal</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>The Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>The Expository Times</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FB	Forschung zur Bibel
FCB	Feminist Companion to the Bible
<i>FdC</i>	<i>Fragmenta de cultura</i>
FOTL	Forms of Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FThL	Forum theologiae linguisticae
<i>Fund</i>	<i>Fundamentum</i>
<i>FzB</i>	<i>Forschung zur Bibel</i>
<i>HAR</i>	<i>Hebrew Annual Review</i>
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HBS	Herders biblische Studien
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
<i>Hen</i>	<i>Henoch</i>
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>Hok</i>	<i>Hokhma</i>
<i>HS</i>	<i>Hebrew Studies</i>
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
<i>HTS</i>	<i>Hervormde theologiese studies</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Biblical Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
<i>IBS</i>	<i>Irish Biblical Studies</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary

<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
IRT	Issues in Religion and Theology
ITC	International Theological Commentary
<i>ITQ</i>	<i>Irish Theological Quarterly</i>
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JANES</i>	<i>The Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society</i>
<i>JANESCU</i>	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JATS</i>	<i>Journal of the Adventist Theological Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBLMS</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature, Monograph Series</i>
<i>JBQ</i>	<i>The Jewish Bible Quarterly</i>
<i>JBT</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie</i>
JEREMIAH	Jeremiah ben Hilkiah, the putative historical figure
<i>Jeremiah</i>	The extant scroll of Jeremiah
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNSL</i>	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
<i>JPTh</i>	<i>Jahrbücher für protestantische Theologie</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>The Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSNTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JTSOA</i>	<i>Journal of Theology for Southern Africa</i>
<i>JTT</i>	<i>Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics</i>
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KHAT	Kurzer Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
LASBF	Liber annuus Studii biblici franciscani
LD	Lectio divina
<i>LTJ</i>	<i>Lutheran Theological Journal</i>
LXX	Septuagint
LXXV	Hebrew precursor to the Septuagint
<i>MSJ</i>	<i>The Master's Seminary Journal</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
NCB	New Century Bible
NEBib	Neuer Echte Bibel
<i>NGTT</i>	<i>Nederduits gereformeerde theologiese tydskrif</i>
<i>NIB</i>	<i>New Interpreters Bible</i>
NIBCOT	New International Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIV	New International Version
<i>NRT</i>	<i>La nouvelle revue théologique</i>
NSKAT	Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar (Altes Testament)
<i>NTT</i>	<i>Nieuw theologisch tijdschrift</i>

OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
ÖBS	Österreichische biblische Studien
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OTA	<i>Old Testament Abstracts</i>
OTE	<i>Old Testament Essays</i>
OTG	Old Testament Guides
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Old Testament Message
OTS	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
OTS	Old Testament Studies
PEGLMBS	<i>Proceedings, Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Society</i>
PIBA	<i>Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association</i>
PIOL	Publications de l'Institut orientaliste de Louvain
PJT	<i>Pacific Journal of Theology</i>
PRS	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
QD	Quaestiones disputatae
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RBB	<i>Revista biblica brasileira</i>
RelSRev	<i>Religious Studies Review</i>
ResQ	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
RevBib	<i>Revista biblica</i>
RevExp	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
RevQ	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
RHPR	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
RIBLA	<i>Revista de interpretaci3n biblica latino-americana</i>
RivBib	<i>Rivista biblica italiana</i>
RLT	<i>Revista latinoamericana de teologia</i>
SBA	Studies in Biblical Archaeology
SBAB	Stuttgarter biblische Aufsatzbände: Altes Testament
SBB	Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLSS	Society of Biblical Literature Semeia Studies
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
ScEs	<i>Science et esprit</i>
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SEÅ	<i>Svensk exegetisk årsbok</i>
SJOT	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SJSJ	<i>Supplement to the Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
Sol	<i>Soleriana</i>
SOTI	Studies in Old Testament Interpretation
SSN	Studia semitica neerlandica
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
TB	Theologische Beiträge
TBT	<i>The Bible Today</i>
Theo	<i>Theologika</i>

<i>TPQ</i>	<i>Theologisch-praktische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>TRu</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
<i>TSAJ</i>	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
<i>TSR</i>	Texts and Studies in Religion
<i>TTod</i>	<i>Theology Today</i>
<i>TTZ</i>	<i>Trierer theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>UBL</i>	Ugaritische-biblische Literatur
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
<i>USQR</i>	<i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i>
<i>UUÅ</i>	Uppsala Universitetsårsskrift
<i>VF</i>	<i>Verkündigung und Forschung</i>
<i>Vid</i>	<i>Vidyajyoti</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>VTSup</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i> , Supplement Series
<i>WBC</i>	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>WMANT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>WstBC</i>	Westminster Bible Companion
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>WW</i>	<i>Word and World</i>
<i>ZAH</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Althebraistik</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZBK</i>	Zürcher Bibel Kommentar
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Alan J. Hauser

The remarkable changes that have swept through biblical scholarship in the past three decades have caused a dramatic reconfiguration of the ways in which scholars approach the interpretation of a specific text, or of a particular book. The historical-critical consensus that dominated scholarship well into the 1970s no longer controls the agenda. Rather, a wide variety of new issues, methodologies, and interpretive perspectives have appeared on the scholarly landscape, refreshing and challenging the scope of previous interpretive agendas. For some, the historical-critical perspective is no longer viable, and must give way to new and more promising approaches. For others, historical criticism remains a useful tool, but one which must become more pliable as it interweaves its insights with those of newer approaches. Whatever the view of individual scholars toward historical-critical methodology, it is clear that multi-faceted, interdisciplinary approaches to biblical interpretation are likely to be common for the foreseeable future. Even for those who pursue a singular or two-pronged approach to the text in their own nuanced scholarship, it is clear that other approaches must be taken into account when inquiring into the full interpretive ‘meaning’ of a text. No longer will one or two approaches to a text suffice.

The breadth and inclusiveness of the contemporary interpretive agenda may be seen in many areas of biblical scholarship. This volume will focus on the ways in which this contemporary agenda has profoundly influenced scholarly work on the three Major Prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Several of the articles contained in this volume (Sweeney 1993 and 1996, Carroll 1996 and 2000, Darr 1994, and Levitt Kohn 2003) have appeared in previous issues of *Currents in Biblical Research* (formerly *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*), of which I am Senior Editor. Other articles, those of Kim, Melugin, Diamond, and Levitt Kohn are more recent, updating and building upon those previously published in *Currents*. Combined, these articles will provide an encompassing perspective on contemporary research treating the three Major Prophets. Many thanks go to Kerry Barner of SAGE Publications, publisher for *Currents*, for permission to include these earlier articles. The *Currents* articles, along with those by Kim, Melugin, Diamond, and Levitt Kohn should make this a most useful volume.

In this introduction, I will provide an overview of each article, treating its major points. While contemporary biblical scholarship on Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel has developed in ways idiosyncratic to the characteristics of each book, the study of all three books has benefitted from an enlivened and expanded configuration of interpretive methodologies. This introduction will point to samples in the interpretive panorama for each book, and lead the reader into the extensive discussions of scholarship contained in each of the ten articles that follow. The reader should consult the bibliography which follows the treatment of each Major Prophet.

I. *Isaiah*

A. *Marvin Sweeney: 'The Book of Isaiah in Recent Research'.*
CR:BS 1 (1993), 141-62.

Prior to 1993, a major change had occurred in the ways some scholars were approaching Isaiah. Sweeney notes that, 'Based upon Duham's identification [1892] of First, Second, and Third Isaiah, scholarly research throughout most of the 20th century proceeded as if Isaiah 1-39, Isaiah 40-55 and Isaiah 56-66 (or alternatively Isaiah 40-66) comprised completely independent prophetic books' (Sweeney 1993: 78). By the time of Sweeney's 1993 article, however, many scholars had 'shifted their interest away from reconstructing the events and historical personages mentioned in the biblical tradition to identifying the literary work and theological perspectives of the anonymous tradents and redactors who shaped that tradition' (1993: 78). As a result, 'the literary character and setting of biblical texts, including their structure and thematic development, their redactional formation and intent, and their social and institutional matrices' (1993: 78) had recently come to the forefront of scholarly attention.

Thus, if study of the book of Isaiah had for many years been fractured into two or three pieces, as evidenced in the scope and shape of a century of Isaian studies and commentaries, by 1993 the focus on the final form of the book of Isaiah had scholars delving into the complex interrelatedness of its 66 chapters. The inner interpretive dynamic of the book of Isaiah had become a major focal point for discussion, and previous concepts of several separate 'volumes' of Isaiah no longer framed scholarly discussions. For example, the role of Trito-Isaiah in the formation of Isaiah 1-66 was becoming clear.

Sweeney begins his brief survey of this shift with Vermeylen's 1977, 1978 two-volume study. As part of his discussion of the lengthy redactional process involved in the formation of Isaiah 1-35, begun in the 8th century BCE and completed in the 3rd century BCE, Vermeylen identifies seven stages of redaction. The fifth stage, Vermeylen argues, presents a hermeneutical perspective for Isaiah 1-35 that corresponds closely to Trito-Isaiah's. This

discussion about the influence of Trito-Isaiah in helping to shape the first part of Isaiah anticipates subsequent discussion about the internal cohesiveness and interactiveness of the various parts of the book of Isaiah in the final formation of the book. Likewise, Ackroyd's 1978 study of Isaiah 1–12 calls into question whether First Isaiah should be studied as a separate piece from the rest of the book, since later theological interpretations have certainly influenced these twelve chapters. Ackroyd argues that, by combining the passages in which judgement is pronounced upon both Israel and Assyria with the passages in which salvation is promised for Jerusalem, post-exilic redactors brought the message of the 8th century prophet to bear on their own post-exilic situation. As Sweeney notes, 'Ackroyd thereby maintains that the authentication of the prophetic message lies not in its original situation, but "in the continuing process by which prophetic word and receptive hearing interact"' (Sweeney 1993: 79).

Childs's canon-critical approach to Scripture leads him to focus on the final, canonical form of the book of Isaiah. Seeing the message of Deutero-Isaiah about the salvation received by repentant Israel as the completion of the message of First Isaiah, 'Childs questions whether Deutero-Isaiah ever circulated independently and asserts that chs. 1–39 are assembled according to a clear theological pattern that is meant to anticipate Deutero-Isaiah' (Sweeney 1993: 79–80).

Clements's numerous articles focus on inner-biblical exegesis, pointing to the dynamic interrelatedness of different units within the book of Isaiah as it grew through various redactional stages.

Brueggemann's 1984 discussion emphasizes the role of the community and its social dynamic in the formation of the final text of Isaiah. Rendtorff's 1984 study examines the formation of the book of Isaiah as a whole. Rendtorff 'argues that chs. 40–55 form the compositional core of the book of Isaiah and that neither First nor Third Isaiah can be understood apart from Second Isaiah. First Isaiah was composed as a précis for Second Isaiah, and Third Isaiah binds them together' (Sweeney 1993: 81). Watts's two-volume commentary, *Isaiah 1–33* (1985) and *Isaiah 34–66* (1987), does not split the book along traditional scholarly lines; and, with his view that the book of Isaiah was composed during the Persian period, presents 'an important challenge to scholars who attempt to reconstruct a historical picture of the prophet based on the text of Isaiah' (Sweeney 1993: 82). Steck's study of Isaiah 35 (1985) argues that Isaiah 35 is a redactional bridge that ties together the major blocks of Isaiah 32–34 and 42–62. Steck does not view Trito-Isaiah as an individual prophet, nor does he see any solid verification of an Isaianic school. He does not see Isaiah 56–66 as a textual block that can stand by itself; rather, it 'represents a redactional continuation of the earlier Isaianic corpus' (Sweeney 1993: 82), and therefore played a crucial role 'in shaping Proto-Isaiah and the final form of the book' (Sweeney 1993: 83).

Sweeney's own monograph (1988a) focuses on Isaiah 1–4 and its relationship to the post-exilic understanding of the Isaianic tradition. Sweeney begins with the methodological presupposition that the final redaction of the text is the key to understanding all that is in the book, since that redaction determined the current shape of the book's literary characteristics and ideas. Thus, redaction is not just the joining together of previous collections of traditions, using transitions and terse literary links at key points in the text, but rather is a dynamic and encompassing process wherein texts received from an earlier age are thoroughly reformulated and reconfigured to suit the needs of the age and community in which the redaction takes place. A comprehensive understanding of the final redactional stage can then prepare the way for 'analytical work designed to identify earlier textual stages and thereby to determine the hermeneutical perspectives and influence of the text's redactors in shaping the final form of the text' (Sweeney 1993, 83). Sweeney sees the final form of the book as an exhortation to the Judean community in the 5th century. Chapters 2–4 have affinities to Isaiah 40–55 and 60–62 (as well as Haggai and Zechariah 1–8), and are a redactional introduction to a 6th-century form of the book. Chapter 1, with clear affinities to chs. 65–66, is an introduction to the book composed as part of the final 5th-century redaction.

Sweeney then treats Gosse's numerous studies discussing the interrelatedness of various Isaiah texts in the redactional stages of the book. For example, Gosse's 1990b study of Isaiah 34–35 argues that these chapters serve as the introduction to Second and Third Isaiah, and are closely linked to Isaiah 59–63. Like Vermeylen and Steck, he emphasizes the role of Trito-Isaiah in the redaction of the book of Isaiah, as does Anderson (1988). In his 1989 study, Vermeylen 'argues that the many interrelationships between the various parts of the book indicate successive rereadings of the tradition in light of later historical circumstances' (Sweeney 1993: 85). Beuken's numerous studies highlight Trito-Isaiah as an interpreter of previous sections of the book. His 1989 study 'of Isaiah 61 focuses on the chapter's references to Isaiah 40–55, which demonstrate that in the eyes of Trito-Isaiah the message of Deutero-Isaiah is still valid, although the realization of the earlier prophet's promises will be changed because they apply to a new age' (Sweeney 1993: 87). As Sweeney notes, 'This study is particularly important because it points to Trito-Isaiah's method in interpreting earlier texts by way of free adaptation of texts rather than by quotation' (Sweeney 1993: 87). Beuken's 1991 study on Isaiah 65–66 sees these chapters serving a threefold function: they provide the closure to the book of Isaiah as a whole, while also serving as the closing for Deutero-Isaiah, and the closing for Trito-Isaiah.

As may be seen, by the close of the 1980s scholars had recognized the need to go beyond previous methodologies, which had been based on the

assumption that First, Second, and Third Isaiah were essentially separate works that needed to be studied and understood as independent entities. This realization led to the Society of Biblical Literature's creation of a new program unit titled 'The Formation of the Book of Isaiah'. Melugin and Sweeney were named chairs. The interests of this seminar may be observed in several publications from the late 80s and early 90s. Conrad, in *Reading Isaiah* (1991), understands Isaiah strictly as a literary work, and avoids the historical questions that often dominated previous interpretation of the book. Conrad prefers instead to use a reader-response approach that focuses on the implied reader of the text, in order to uncover its meaning. He 'views attempts to reconstruct its prior literary history and the original intention of its author(s) as inherently subjective and irrelevant to understanding the final form of the book' (Sweeney 1993: 88). While not every scholar will approve Conrad's avoidance of historical questions, 'his study represents an important attempt to read Isaiah as a coherent piece of literature' (Sweeney 1993: 89).

Seitz, while also treating Isaiah as a single book, sees value in a literary-historical perspective. He does, however, challenge three major assertions often voiced by historical critics: '(1) that the final shape of the book is accidental or the product of successive supplementation; (2) that the book moves in geographical terms from Judah to Babylon and back to Judah and in temporal terms from the eighth through the sixth centuries BCE; and (3) that there are internal divisions between a clear proto-Isaiah prophet, a Babylonian prophet and a Persian period prophet' (Sweeney 1993: 89). Since the book has only one commissioning narrative, has no clear boundaries between First, Second and Third Isaiah, and has only one superscription, it is clear that Isaiah is a single literary work. Rendtorff's presentation to the 1991 Seminar (1991a) 'points to Seitz's work as a major example of the shift in scholarly priorities from a diachronic to a synchronic reading of Isaiah. Melugin's 1991 seminar paper affirms Seitz's view that Isa. 40.1-8 presents a reactivation of YHWH's word for a new age rather than an individual prophetic commission' (Sweeney 1993: 90). Significantly, as already noted, Seitz works within the historical contextuality of the various redactions of the book. For example, Seitz sees Isaiah 36-37 as the conclusion to an earlier form of the book, which presented Hezekiah as a role model for his successor Manasseh.

Sheppard's 1992 paper highlights the shifts in meaning that take place as Isaiah is read in different communities and theological contexts. In other words, 'the meaning of the text shifts according to the historical and social context in which it is read' (Sweeney 1993: 91). The text can therefore function at multiple levels: in the various redactional contexts in which a particular tradition is placed during the course of the formation of the book; and in the context of its being understood as Scripture within the Jewish and

Christian communities. For example, Sheppard focuses on the meanings that terms or phrases such as 'Jerusalem and Judah', 'Jerusalem', 'Israel', 'fear not', and 'Torah' can have, both prior to and after the completion of the book of Isaiah.

As Sweeney notes in closing his 1993 article, the new developments which had occurred by that time set the stage for 'a whole new range of possibilities for considering the process by which Isaiah was produced and the interpretation of its final form' (Sweeney 1993: 92). Of key importance are: the consideration of the book's internal hermeneutics, which after much interaction led, in due course, to the final form of the book as we know it; and the analysis of the final form and message of the book apart from previous scholarly presuppositions revolving around constructs such as First Isaiah, Second Isaiah, and Third Isaiah.

Sweeney's 1993 article surveys key issues that brought about a dramatic change in the way the book of Isaiah is now analyzed by scholars. Sweeney's 1996 article, Kim's new article, and Melugin's new article carry these developments down to current times.

B. Marvin Sweeney: 'Re-evaluating Isaiah 1–39 in Recent Critical Research'. CR:BS 4 (1996), 79–113.

Building on his 1993 article, Sweeney notes that 'The book of Isaiah as a coherent literary whole indeed presents the eighth-century prophet Isaiah ben Amoz, but it does so in relation to a sweeping historical and ideological scenario that extends from the eighth to the fifth centuries BCE' (Sweeney 1996: 94). As 'scholars have turned to the study of ever larger literary structures and themes in an effort to understand the character and message of biblical literature' (Sweeney 1996: 95), they have used newer forms of literary criticism, such as reader-response criticism, structural form criticism, rhetorical criticism, textual poetics, etc. These new methods have led scholars 'to recognize that texts present historical reality according to their own perspectives and purposes, which may or may not correspond to historical reality as it actually existed' (Sweeney 1996: 95). One must therefore take account of the literary character of the entire book, and its use and development throughout several centuries, prior to any attempt to derive historical conclusions about Isaiah ben Amoz. Focusing on short, independent, self-contained units of text is no longer considered a sound methodology.

As early as 1955, Jones discussed an Isaianic school, but proposed that the school was more interested in applying the sayings of Isaiah to their own, later situations than in preserving the sayings of Isaiah. Becker (1968), like Jones, sees the Babylonian invasion and the exile of Judah as the time when many of these sayings were seen to have new meaning. Lack (1973) argues that the final form of the book is a late 5th century creation by a redactor concerned with eschatology, who added much of Isaiah 13–23; 24–27;

33; and 34–35, as well as adding 6.1–9.6 to an earlier edition of the book, which already included Isaiah 40–66 (Sweeney 1996: 97). Clearly, scholarship was moving toward the conclusion that issues and concerns from the exilic and post-exilic periods played a substantial role in the formation of Isaiah 1–39, in addition to the pre-exilic concerns that also influenced the formation of these chapters. An example of a pre-exilic concern would be Barth's proposed (1977) 7th century redaction, which he claims supported the political and religious reforms of King Josiah, and contained much that is now in Isaiah 2–32. Barth 'rejects the view that Isaiah is formed from several previously independent collections and argues instead that the book is the product of a process of gradual growth' (Sweeney 1996: 98). As seen above, Vermeylen's concept of relecture, 'rereading', has been strongly influential in getting scholars to focus on the rereading of earlier Isaiah texts in the context of later times.

Three commentaries from this period reflect the influence of the newer approaches that were beginning to take hold in Isaiah scholarship. Clements's Isaiah 1–39 commentary (1980a), building on the work of scholars such as Becker, Barth, and Vermeylen, asserts that 'Later additions were not spurious, but reflect the interests of later redaction in preserving the message of Isaiah and in interpreting it in relation to the subsequent history of Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem' (Sweeney 1996: 100). Kaiser's second edition commentary on Isaiah 1–12 (1983) was also influenced by these newer developments. Kaiser sees Isaiah ben Amoz to be a legendary figure, and claims that the book took on its eschatological character during its final reformulation in the Hellenistic period. Unlike the first edition of his commentary on Isaiah 1–12 (1972), the second edition pays particular attention to the formation of the entire book, rather than focusing on short units of text. The first (1972) of Wildberger's three volumes on Isaiah 1–39, like the first edition of Kaiser's commentary, focuses on short, independent, self-contained units, but his completed work in 1982 presents an overview of the book as a whole.

Kaiser and Wildberger's commentaries 'are the last major commentaries to view Isaiah 1–35 (36–39) as an autonomous book, separate from Isaiah 40–66, with its own history of literary growth. More importantly, they mark the end of exegetical focus on the short, self-contained form-critical text unit as the basis for literary analysis' (Sweeney 1996: 101). As research continued, the difficulty of maintaining that Isaiah 1–39 ever constituted a self-contained, separate book became increasingly apparent, even as discussions concerning the historical figure of Isaiah ben Amoz and the redactional formation of the traditions in First Isaiah underwent significant changes. Isaiah 1–33 and 34–66 came to be seen as the primary literary units in the book of Isaiah.

The 7th century 'Assyrian' or 'Josianic' redaction of Isaiah has been examined in relation to larger textual patterns. L'Heureux (1984) discusses

the redactional history of Isa. 5.1–10.4. Challenging Vermeylen's argument that the Song of the Vineyard (Isa. 5.1–7) is from an exilic Deuteronomistic hand, L'Heureux argues that the poem is in fact from Isaiah of Jerusalem. He examines the poetic structure of larger units, focusing on Isa. 5.25–29 and 9.7–10.4, and then argues for 'the existence of an original six-strophe poem that is employed to encase the Emmanuel booklet in a chiastically constructed double inclusio that combines both the Outstretched Hand series (5.25–29 and 9.7–10.4) and the Woe series (5.8–24) in a text introduced by the Song of the Vineyard (5.1–7)' (Sweeney 1996: 102). L'Heureux therefore finds a coherent textual block focusing on 'social justice and argues that the coming punishment of Israel and Judah by Assyria is caused by the failure of the upper classes...who oppressed the poor and failed to trust in the Davidic tradition' (Sweeney 1996: 102–103).

Sheppard (1985) focuses on 'The Anti-Assyrian Redaction and the Canonical Context of Isaiah 1–39', looking at the earlier Assyrian redaction of Isaiah, and discussing how it both influences and is influenced by later editorial renditions. His extensive analysis of numerous texts in the earlier chapters of Isaiah is designed 'to clarify the hermeneutics by which editorial changes in context produce changes in meaning for later readers of the Isaiah material' (Sweeney 1996: 103). Sweeney notes that Sheppard's work is 'particularly important in that it points to redaction as an activity that does not simply supplement and recast an earlier tradition, but does so on the basis of internal signals and motifs from the preexisting text, so that later redaction expands, reapplies, and thereby continues the message of the earlier text' (Sweeney 1996: 103–104).

Anderson (1988) examines the editorial structure of Isaiah 5–10 (11), following Childs's proposal (1979) to interpret the text as it stands. Anderson's primary interest is the theological perspective of this textual block.

Some works in the 1980s focus on Isaiah ben Amoz, raising the question of the historicity of the prophet and the passages that may be attributed to him. Machinist (1983) applies Assyriological sources to the study of First Isaiah, seeking 'to establish that the message of hope found in the First Isaiah traditions stems from Isaiah ben Amoz himself and not from a later 7th-century redaction' (Sweeney 1996: 105). Machinist finds numerous correspondences of motifs and images in First Isaiah with Assyrian royal records. As Sweeney notes (1996: 105–106), according to Machinist 'the use of these images, motifs, and language forms in First Isaiah demonstrates the historicity of the tradition, in that Isaiah or his circle of followers would have encountered Assyrian practices and language at first hand'. Roberts, another Assyriologist, has presented a series of articles which 'combine an interest in defining a historical perspective on the writings and outlook of First Isaiah with a redaction-critical hypothesis on the literary formation of this material' (Sweeney 1996: 106). Arguing that Isaiah must be seen both

as a prophet of judgment and a prophet of salvation, he argues ‘for redactional expansion and reapplication of Isaiah’s oracles during the lifetime of the prophet’ (Sweeney 1996: 106). For example, Roberts argues that Isaiah ‘reapplied the message of threat against northern Israel and reassurance for Judah from the context of the Syro-Ephraimitic War to that of the later Assyrian invasions’ (Sweeney 1996: 107).

Wiklander (1984) also focuses on defining the textual cohesiveness of the First Isaiah traditions and their relationship to the historical prophet. Treating Isaiah 2–4, Wiklander’s extensive analysis leads him to conclude that these chapters have a tight, coherent structure. Referring to the failure of the text to mention Jerusalem’s destruction, Wiklander concludes ‘that the entire text was written by a single author sometime between 734–622 BCE...the period of Assyrian hegemony over Judah’ (Sweeney 1996: 108). Sweeney correctly takes Wiklander to task for presuming that the identification of a unified structure in a text must indicate that the text is by a single author. Still, the study is valuable, in that it demonstrates the literary coherence of this large block of text. Again, as noted earlier, Isaiah scholars are moving away from focusing on smaller units of text, and instead are analyzing larger blocks of text.

Gitay’s dissertation on Isaiah 40–48 (1981) presents another literary approach that discusses the textual coherence of Isaiah’s oracles in relation to Isaiah ben Amoz. Gitay treats the role of the prophet as an orator addressing an audience, and applies this concept to Second Isaiah. Turning then to First Isaiah, Gitay (1983b) ‘opens an entirely new dimension of the discussion by defining Isa. 1.2–20 as an example of a unified communicative discourse that demonstrates the prophet’s interaction with an audience by pointing to its persuasive aspects’ (Sweeney 1996: 108). Two additional articles (1983a, 1984) point to the interaction between prophet and audience. Concerning Gitay’s 1991 monograph on Isaiah 1–12, Sweeney faults Gitay, as he does Wiklander, for Gitay’s ‘equation of literary coherence with authorial coherence’ (Sweeney 1996: 110).

The ongoing emphasis on Isaiah 1–39 as literature has resulted in a number of studies on allegory and metaphor: Niditch’s study of metaphor and poetic technique in Isaiah 1 (1980) views the chapter as a redactional unity; Exum’s 1981 study on simile and poetic technique in Isaiah focuses on Isaiah 29–31; Bjørndalen’s 1986 work studies allegorical speech in Amos and Isaiah; Nielsen (1989) examines the tree as metaphor in Isaiah; covering prophetic literature in general, Talmon (1991) analyzes agricultural metaphors in addition to metaphors pertaining to trees; Sweeney (1994a) discusses the metaphorical use of lions and birds of prey in Isaiah 31, along with the rhetorical features of the chapter, as a means of focusing the literary unity of the chapter as a parenetic against forming an alliance with Egypt; and Darr (1994) treats the use of family imagery in

the book of Isaiah, including imagery pertaining to children, women, and childbirth.

The question of whether Isaiah ben Amoz is essentially a prophet of judgment, with promise-oriented salvation oracles coming from later redactions, or whether Isaiah spoke both woe and weal, has been extensively debated. Various scholars have argued, based upon a careful study of the literary character of Isaiah 1–39, that Isaiah may well have been a prophet both of woe and weal. Hogenhaven's examination (1988) 'of the name "Israel" in the Isaiah tradition convinces him that the prophet understood the term as a reference to the united kingdom of Israel, including both northern Israel and southern Judah'. Combined with the David/Zion theology spread throughout the Isaiah tradition, 'this defines the prophet's political outlook as one that presupposes the right of the house of David to rule over a united kingdom of Israel and Judah' (Sweeney 1996: 111). Isaiah's theology is interwoven with politics. 'The concept of "return" associated with the prophet's son, Shear Yashub, "a remnant shall return" ...has nothing to do with religious repentance; it refers to the ultimate return of the northern kingdom to Davidic rule' (Sweeney 1996: 111).

Laato's dissertation (1988) on Isaiah's messianic expectations asks, 'did Isaiah expect that Assyria would attack and "purify" Judah in anticipation of a new ideal king, or was this view articulated by the tradents of the prophet's tradition?' (Sweeney 1996: 112). Since the prophecy concerning a future monarch presented in Isa. 8.23–9.6 contains elements of the Davidic/Zion tradition that predate Isaiah 'and call for the defeat of enemies, [t]his oracle may then be attributed to Isaiah ben Amoz' (Sweeney 1996: 112).

Irvine's 1990 dissertation treating Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis examines the political character of Isaiah's message in relation to this crisis. If Ahaz is presented negatively in the Deuteronomistic History in 2 Kings 16, Irvine argues that Isaiah nevertheless supported Ahaz and the house of David against Rezin's designs, anticipating that Ahaz could regain the northern kingdom of Israel for Davidic rule once Assyria intervened. Like Hogenhaven, Irvine sees the name 'Shear Yashub' as pointing to the eventual return of the northern kingdom to Davidic rule. Isaiah 9.1–6 'portrays Ahaz as the ideal monarch of the Davidic dynasty who would preside over a reunited kingdom at peace' (Sweeney 1996: 113). According to Sweeney, Wegner's dissertation (1993), which closely studies the 'messianic' passages in Isa. 7.10–17, 8.23–9.6, 11.1–9, and 32.1–8, errs because:

its contention that Isaiah is the author of these passages is often based solely on the possibility that Isaiah could have been the author. Nevertheless, it contributes overall to the realignment currently taking place in scholarship that Isaiah is not exclusively a prophet of judgment, but a prophet who holds out the possibility that Judah and the house of David could triumph in the aftermath of Assyrian incursion (Sweeney 1996: 113).

In his study of Isa. 8.16–9.16 (1994b), which closely analyzes the disputation genre present in this passage, Sweeney argues ‘that in the passage the prophet claims that the Assyrian subjugation of Israel provides an opportunity for the house of David to reestablish its rule over Israel’ (1996: 113).

Regarding Isaiah 36–39, there has been a growing interest in the way in which these chapters fit into the literary and ideological character of the book of Isaiah as a whole. Clements (1980b) argues that chapters 36–37 ‘represent the ideology of the Josianic reform in that they portray the triumph of YHWH and Davidic/Zion-centered theology over the arrogant Assyrian monarch’ (Sweeney 1996: 113–14). Ackroyd’s 1982 study of chapters 36–39 sees Hezekiah idealized as a righteous monarch who turns to YHWH and brings about Jerusalem’s deliverance, while Ahaz is an unfaithful monarch whose failure to trust YHWH’s promises causes Judah’s subjugation to Assyria.

Intriguingly, numerous scholars now view Isaiah 36–39 more as an introduction to Isaiah 40–66 than as a conclusion to Isaiah 1–39 (Sweeney 1988; Seitz 1990; Melugin 1976). Others assess the impact of Isaiah 36–39 on the shaping of the First Isaiah tradition. Gonçalves’s 1986 study ‘notes the ideological character of Isaiah 36–39 in the context of an attempt to reconstruct the message of the historical prophet’ (Sweeney 1996: 114). Gonçalves sees the change from a prophet who opposed social injustice and an alliance with Egypt, to a prophet who affirmed Jerusalem’s inviolability as the work of a 7th century Josianic redaction supporting Josiah’s reform program. Smelik’s 1986 study maintains that the Hezekiah narratives of 2 Kings 18–20/Isaiah 36–39 were composed for the book of Isaiah, rather than for 2 Kings. Hardmeyer’s 1990 monograph sees the siege of Jerusalem in 589–587 BCE as the probable setting for the Hezekiah narrative. Hardmeyer sees the Hezekiah narrative as ‘a massive polemic against Jeremiah’s (and Ezekiel’s) advice to submit to Babylon’ (Sweeney 1996: 115). Seitz (1991), on the other hand, ‘points to the 7th century, especially the reign of King Manasseh, as the setting for the composition of the Hezekiah narratives and a great deal of the remaining Isaiah tradition’ (Sweeney 1996: 116).

In closing his survey, Sweeney notes ‘As current research demonstrates, the First Isaiah tradition must be considered in relation to the exilic and post-exilic settings of the formation of the book of Isaiah as a whole, but it must also be considered in relation to the pre-exilic settings which shaped the image and message of the prophet on whom the tradition is based’ (Sweeney 1996: 116). Likewise, in light of the scholarship Sweeney discusses, we observe a growing scholarly consensus that: (1) scholars must not focus exclusively on short, self-contained form-critical units of tradition, but must place them in the broader context of the larger literary structures in the book, and consider their meaning for readers in various periods of the book’s formation; (2) historical Isaiah should no longer be viewed as

only a prophet of judgment, but also as a prophet of hope, who advanced the ideology of David/Zion and YHWH's support for the house of David and for Jerusalem; and (3) scholars must pay careful attention to the inter-relationship between First Isaiah and Second and Third Isaiah, as well as Jeremiah.

C. Hyun Chul Paul Kim: 'Recent Scholarship on Isaiah 1–39' (2008).

Kim's article carries scholarship on Isaiah 1–39 up to the contemporary scene. Citing Rendtorff's 1997 article treating the diversity of scholarship in recent Isaiah studies, Kim notes that, while Rendtorff endorses approaches that look for 'topics, themes, expressions, and even ideas characteristic of the book as a whole' (Rendtorff 1997: 122), Rendtorff does not dismiss the usefulness of diachronic approaches. While placing more weight on synchronic approaches, Rendtorff notes that a primarily synchronic approach 'does not mean a denial of diachronic questions but a change—and perhaps a reversal—of scholarly priorities...the priority is now clearly given to the interpretation of the text in its given context' (Rendtorff 1997: 118).

1. *Composition.* The first portion of Kim's article, treating the composition of Isaiah 1–39, bears out the recognition by scholars of the continuing relevance of diachronic issues within the broader context of synchronic approaches. Kim indicates that he will be building upon and updating the five earlier articles published by Sweeney in 1993 and 1996 (a, b, c, d). He also notes that, given the volume of scholarship produced during the past decade, his analysis will of necessity be selective, rather than exhaustive.

As Kim indicates (p. 119), scholarship is shifting from attention to the 'author' of each major section of Isaiah to the redactor(s) at each stage of redactional additions, with the focus on the historical background and theological outlook of each stage of redaction. Blum (1996, 1997), however, argues that the core material in Isa. 1.21–11.5 goes back to a single composition compiled by Isaiah himself, near the end of his prophetic activity. While Blum indicates that 'recent redaction analysis presumes, in its new paradigm, that the oracles of the preexilic prophets disappear behind later redactions, Blum argues that this assumption neglects a fundamental question concerning the possibility of identifying the texts of those prophets from the 8th century BCE'. Blum 'argues that it is more plausible that the relatively bulky "older" substance was assembled fairly early, by the prophet himself or by members of his circle; and that greater collections or compositions formed the core materials of the pertinent book in the diachronic path' (Kim 2008: 120). Blum defends his stance by a close study of the chiasmic ring structure in Isaiah 1–11, which has the core materials of Isaiah 6–8 at its center, with the sequencing of Isaiah 1–11 corresponding to the temporal stages of Isaiah's career as a prophet.

Becker disagrees, seeing instead numerous redactional layers and editorial stages. Maintaining that Isaiah 6 and 8 form the literary core, 'Becker makes the innovative claim that Isaiah was originally a "prophet of salvation" ' (Kim 2008: 120), closely tied to the Judean dynasty. Pfaff (1996) uses the 'remnant' motif to trace five different stages, ranging from the 8th century to the 4th century. Barthel (1997) approaches Isaiah both synchronically and diachronically, arguing 'that Isaiah 6–8 and 28–31 contain core materials from the prophet Isaiah' (Kim 2008: 120–21). Isaiah 7 was originally meant as a warning to the Judean dynasty, but was subsequently reinterpreted in light of changed circumstances. Berges (1998) uses a similar combined methodology to conclude that Isaiah 36–39 are the center of the book, 'focusing on the judgment and salvation of Zion' (Kim 2008: 121). Boadt (2001) works to identify authentic materials from Isaiah the prophet, which were extant prior to the Babylonian exile. His caveat is that 'if later authors did the rewriting well, we may never be sure of all these editorial additions' (p. 177). Skeptical of a minimalist approach, Boadt 'argues that the core structure of the unified collection may have been composed toward the end of Hezekiah's reign' (Kim 2008: 121). Looking at three key motifs, the 'day of YHWH', judgment, and hope for an ideal king, Boadt presents a basic pre-exilic composition: chs. 2–12 (734–743 BCE); chs. 13–33 (715–791 BCE); and chs. 34–38 (701 BCE).

Blenkinsopp (2000a, 2000b) sees the final redaction stage of the book of Isaiah as taking place during the Hellenistic period, prior to Antiochus IV (167 BCE). He dates Isaiah 1–39 to the period after 570 BCE. While accepting the usefulness of a synchronic approach, Blenkinsopp chooses to place more weight on a diachronic approach: 'We cannot, without willful naïveté, concede exclusive privilege to the "final form" of the texts without regard for the tensions inherent in the texts and the questions which their juxtaposition and their internal relationships generate... This, it seems to me, is the best theoretical and theological justification for the currently much-maligned historical-critical method in its application to Isaiah' (Blenkinsopp 2000b: 26).

Clements (1997b) acknowledges the complexities present in the book as a whole, and prefers to understand them as 'the work of a plurality of authors from a Jerusalem temple circle [rather] than by endeavoring to focus on two individuals—the presumed First and Second Isaiahs' (p. 9). These writers reacted to two crucial historical events: 701 BCE; and 587 BCE. Clements goes on to claim (2000) that Isaiah did compose a written memoir, parts of which may be found in 6.1–11; 7.2–17; and 8.1–8, 11–18. While the passages tied to the children's names expressed hope, they were reconceptualized to express divine judgment. Building on Steck's work on Isaiah 35 (1999), Clements (2002) sees Isaiah 35 as a closure to 5–35. Clements also discusses the apocalyptic dimension in Isaiah 5–35.

Williamson sees much of Isaiah 6–9 as linked to the prophet, but regards attempts to reconstruct a memoir as not helpful. He does see 8.1–4; 8.16–18; and 30.8–9 as representative of the prophet's thinking. Discussing the two seemingly discrepant ideas of judgment and hope evident in the prophetic corpus, Williamson concludes that these point to 'the development in Isaiah's thinking about the nature of hope under judgment' (2000: 297). 'The proclamation of salvation by Deutero-Isaiah was consciously modeled as a fulfillment of what Isaiah himself had foreseen, but not experienced' (2000: 299). Gosse (1996) expands on the thesis, proposed by Williamson in 1993 and 1994, that Isa. 8.23b–9.6 'inspired the relations between the first and second parts of the book of Isaiah, first with the time of darkness and then with the time of the light' (Gosse 1996: 62). Gosse discusses in detail the redactional influence of Isa. 8.23b on Isaiah 56–66.

Matthews (1995) examines the place of Isaiah 34–35, as a literary unit, within the book as a whole. He examines intratextual comparisons between the two chapters, and intertextual readings with Ezekiel 35–36. He also examines close correspondences with Isa. 63.1–6. Gitay calls for a different methodology, arguing that 'the scroll maintains texts, which are preserved in the form of their historical proclamation rather than reworked into a coherent book format through the pens of final editors' (1997b: 64). Gitay calls for a return to form criticism, but with a rhetorical twist which emphasizes 'the "contextual situation" for the intended audience' (Kim 2008: 125). Clearly, this approach depends heavily on Gitay's assumption that, for each text, the 'historical situations implied in the rhetorical intention of the discourse remain intact' (Kim 2008: 125).

Kim summarizes his survey of the composition of Isaiah 1–39 by noting that: a number of scholars argue for an Isaiah memoir (*Denkschrift*), even though they differ on aspects of content and context; other chapters also play into the formative stages of the book, including Isaiah 24–27, 34–35, and 36–39; and, most scholars combine, as Rendtorff suggests, synchronic and diachronic approaches.

2. *Intertextuality*. Noting that there have been some issues concerning methodological clarity, Kim nevertheless indicates that intertextuality continues to be a major component in Isaiah scholarship. Monographs by Tull (1997) and Sommer (1998) focus on 'echoes' in (especially Second) Isaiah from Jeremiah, Lamentations, Psalms, and other texts in the Hebrew Bible. Beuken (2000b) probes the relationship between Isaiah 12, the concluding chapter of the 'core' of Isaiah, and Isaiah 25, part of the so-called Isaiah apocalypse. In another study, Beuken (2002) discusses 'the thematic discrepancy between Isaiah 10.5–34, and 11, despite the similar tree motifs' (Kim 2008: 127). Beuken's 1998 article inspects key words in Isaiah 28–32, examining 'the correlations of different oracles within these five chapters,

and within the entire book of Isaiah... Beuken's study offers an important example of looking at the interconnections within both smaller units and larger texts, utilizing intertextual and rhetorical criticisms' (Kim 2008: 127). Beuken's analysis also ties in ch. 33. Stansell's treatment (1996) of these same chapters is more synchronically oriented than is Beuken's: 'Far from entertaining questions of influence, borrowing, date or redactional intention and arrangement, my focus remained on a synchronic approach, imagining simply how a careful reader could perceive that major threads run throughout the book, connecting it into a larger whole' (Stansell 1996: 100). Stansell treats themes such as: the centrality of Zion; the exaltation of YHWH; deafness and hearing; blindness and seeing; and the use of the enemy as an instrument who will nevertheless be judged. Stansell underscores that these chapters 'make significant connections to each of the major sections of the book and thus help to bind together the immense literary complexity of the work' (pp. 100-101).

Sweeney (2001) discusses the intertextual relations between Micah 4–5 and Isaiah 2–4. He sees 'significant differences in thematic outlooks and religio-political perspectives... The Isaiah passage envisions the future restoration of Israel as a Persian province, whereas the Micah passage envisions the establishment of Israel as an independent state, accompanied by YHWH's punishment of the nations' (Kim 2008: 127-28). J. Willis (1997) finds nine themes which these two poems have in common with the Songs of Zion in the Book of Psalms. Conrad (2000) focuses primarily on Isaiah 40–66, but also discusses intertextual links between it and Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Conrad notes that 'both the Book of Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve portray prophets as writers whose words can be read out in another time' (1997: 17).

Polaski (2001) examines Isaiah 24–27 from a strongly synchronic intertextual approach, combined with the perspective of New Historicism. Polaski (1998b) also sees interaction with Pentateuchal legal texts and Ezekiel 16: Isaiah 24 may be read 'not as an example of "late prophecy", dependent on the presumed authority of D and P, but as an example of active negotiation with texts and/or their antecedent traditions which may serve to undergird those texts' authority' (1998b: 65-66). 'An intertextual approach situates the Isaiah apocalypse in its culture, envisioning that culture as a constant interaction between texts, as well as institutions, ideologies, and social classes (2001: 367-68).

Bosshard-Nepustil (1997) examines intertextual connections between Isaiah 1–39 and the twelve Minor Prophets, 'yielding two distinct redactional layers, from the Babylonian and Persian periods' (Kim 2008: 129). Nurmela (2003) establishes intertextual allusions between Isaiah and Zechariah on the basis of vocabulary alone, and argues that Zechariah is dependent on Isaiah. Rudman (2000) examines intertextuality between Isaiah

24–27 and several Jeremiah texts. The Isaiah texts quote older texts from Jeremiah and reapply them, in a midrashic manner, to new situations.

Intertextual issues may also be raised in regard to books and texts beyond the Hebrew Bible. These would include texts such as the Septuagint, the Targumim, and the Dead Sea Scrolls, and literature such as the apocrypha, the Mishnah, and the various midrashim. One example is Van der Kooij's 1998 monograph, which compares the Masoretic Text of the oracle of Tyre (Isaiah 23) to the Septuagint, treating both verbal variants and 'the larger literary contexts of the Septuagint text as a coherent unit'. This study and its method 'is innovative in the way that literary criticism is employed in text-critical investigations' (Kim 2008: 130). In a subsequent study (2002), Van der Kooij examines passages from the Wisdom of Ben Sira (48.24-25) and the Septuagint text of Isaiah (41.2-4), discussing the ways in which these manuscripts reconceptualize the meaning of 'the "coming" things, or the "later" things, to be equal to the "last" things. The terms involved appear to have become part of "eschatological" idiom, attested in sources as early as the Wisdom of Ben Sira' (Van der Kooij 2002: 140).

3. *History of Interpretation.* Clearly, intertextuality has been operative since the beginning of interpretation. Sawyer's 1996 monograph treats the history of the interpretation of Isaiah, primarily from the vantage point of Christian interpretation. In his 2002 study on the role that Isaiah has played in the history of Zionism, Sawyer discusses *Wirkungsgeschichte* or 'reception history', the 'history of the impact of the Bible on those who read it and use it down the centuries' (2002: 246). There is a clear 'need for more interdisciplinary dialogue with the rich history of Jewish interpretive traditions, including the rabbinic literature and beyond' (Kim 2008: 131). McMichael's article (1996) examines the interpretation of Isaiah by the medieval scholar de Espina, focusing especially on medieval Christian anti-Jewish hermeneutic. Stansell (2000) discusses Romanticism and the commentary on Isaiah by Robert Lowth, who is also discussed by Tull (2000c). Sweeney (2002) discusses 19th century scholars who influenced Duhm's understanding of Isaiah. Blenkinsopp sums up the task before Isaiah scholars: 'To write the history of the interpretation of the book of Isaiah would be an immense undertaking, calling for the collaboration of experts in different fields and epochs, over a considerable period of time. Even to familiarize oneself with the major expositors in the premodern period... would be a task for a lifetime' (2000a: 92).

4. *Readers and Readings.* Kim points to areas of readership that have received attention by scholars: ancient readers, and modern readers. He notes that 'Almost none of these synchronic studies aim to discount the importance of the historicity of the ancient text or of past scholarship' (Kim

2008: 132). Literary features treated in these readings include: rhetorical patterns, metaphors, figurative language, symbols, imagination, and aesthetic dimensions of texts.

Darr (2001) discusses the imagery of the ‘unfaithful female’ in Isaiah’s vision. ‘Applying a reader-oriented approach, the study focuses on the “ancient, sequential reader” as a heuristic construct in the synchronic reading’ (Kim 2008: 132). She emphasizes the shift from the negative female imagery in Isaiah 1–39 to the positive imagery in Isaiah 40–55, and then back again to the negative imagery in Isaiah 56–66. Laato’s 1998 monograph treats the book of Isaiah as an ideological unity. ‘My strategy is to show that the Assyrian invasion in Isaiah 36–39 connects different texts inside Isaiah 1–35 which together open the way to understanding of the message of Isaiah 40–66 where the crux is the marvelous destiny of Zion’ (p. 13). ‘[T]he Assyrian invasion and the annihilation of the enemy army before Jerusalem [Isaiah 1–39] constitutes a paradigm in the Book of Isaiah which attempts to convince the potential readers [Isaiah 56–66] that the marvelous fate of Zion is more than merely utopian visions of the future [Isaiah 40–55]’ (p. 124).

The 1998 monograph of van Wieringen discusses the implied reader in Isaiah 6–12. He uses text-linguistic analysis (*Textlinguistik*), domain analysis, and communication analysis to examine ‘where and in what way the *implied reader* is situated in the text’ (p. 26). In his 2002 article, van Wieringen again utilizes a reader-oriented approach, ‘focused on the temporal framework for the implied reader of Isa. 2.2... The first temporal fulfillment indicates the days after the kings’ days, thereby causing the implied reader to anticipate the post-exilic period. The subsequent temporal perspective signals to the implied reader the time beyond the exile, with an open end’ (Kim 2008: 133).

Nielsen (2003) presents a new approach, which she terms ‘metaphorical criticism’, which has a good deal in common with rhetorical criticism. Building on her previous monograph (1989), Nielsen emphasizes ‘a metaphor’s innate openness to reuse or reinterpretation... [and] addresses the intricate relationship between imagery and intertextuality’ (Kim 2008: 134). Reading Isa. 5.1–7 in its relationship to 1 Kings 21 and Hos. 2.24–25, Nielsen argues that ‘some central metaphors may be markers for intertextual readings’ (Nielsen 2003: 31). Labahn (2003) presses forward with ‘metaphorical intertextual reading’ by arguing the need to distinguish between imagery and metaphor. Focusing on the polyvalent potential contained in metaphors, Labahn notes ‘A metaphor can, thus, not be taken up isolated from its literary context, but has to be read within its framework’ (p. 55). A case study on the ‘daughter of Zion’ metaphor (Isa. 1.8; 52.2; and 61.3) shows the possibility of multiple meanings, since these texts can be understood ‘either in a context of salvation or in a context of doom’ (p. 67), which is conditioned

by the intertextual interaction between the metaphor and addressees or readers.

Baumann (2003) explores the use of marriage as a metaphor in the prophetic books. She argues that ‘the appearance of the female personification of Zion as “wife” of YHWH in connection with promises of salvation is unique to Deutero- and Trito- Isaiah’ (p. 176). Isaiah 56–66 presents a critique of Jerusalem, as well as hopeful images of her marriage with YHWH. Trito-Isaiah thus presents ‘a “history of Jerusalem”: from sinfulness through marriage with YHWH to wealth of children’ (p. 189). The positive use of female imagery in Isaiah distinguishes it from Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, as does the multiplicity and plurality of its usage.

Blenkinsopp (2001) studies the theme of the return of the city to nature (e.g., Isa. 5.17, 27.11, and 32.14). ‘Blenkinsopp’s study incorporates diverse approaches, connecting historical, intertextual, and thematic investigations in the interpretation of the book of Isaiah’ (Kim 2008: 135). Carroll (2001) also discusses metaphors and imagery regarding the city in prophetic discourse, focusing on a broader context, including passages from Jeremiah (chs. 7, 25, 50–51), while also focusing on Isaiah 24–27. Carroll discusses the poetic function of phrases related to the city, including the issue of their ambiguity.

Landy (2000b) focuses on vision and voice in Isaiah in relation to the imagery of seeing and hearing in Isaiah, especially in chs. 1 and 6. Landy raises a fundamental hermeneutical issue regarding the complexity of Isaiah, and the multi-faceted force carried by its poetry: ‘Critics have devoted themselves to solving the problems of the text by assigning different sections or verses to different hands, by unraveling it. This, however, avoids the problem, and domesticates the prophet to our expectations... [whereas] the metaphor...introduces an element of uncertainty and ambiguity’ (pp. 30, 34). Landy also (2002b) probes the discourse of sexuality in Isaiah 1–12 (esp. 8.1–4 and ch. 12), exploring the multi-faceted nature of the metaphors. For example, 8.1: ‘Take for yourself a large placard and inscribe on it with a human stylus... The analogy between pen and penis is both explicit and ironic’ (p. 267). Landy also discusses the symbolic interactions between the prophet and God, seen in the poetic linkage of Isaiah 12 with Isaiah 6.

Clements, in his article ‘A Light to the Nations’ (1996), studies the themes of light and darkness throughout the entire book of Isaiah. Williamson (1998b) ‘explores the motif of divine and human kingship as a thread unifying the book of Isaiah... [T]he role of kingship in the pertinent texts (8.23b–9.6; 11.1–9; 16.4b–5; 32.1–5) is depicted as closely associated with building and preserving justice and righteousness’ (Kim 2008: 136). ‘[W]hat unites the Isaianic witness above all is not the identification of individuals or dynasties, nor the question of nearer or more distant hopes for fulfillment. Rather, it is that each passage contributes its own variation to the theme of the role of leadership in

God's ideal society—a leadership characterized by faithfulness, justice and righteousness' (Williamson 1998b: 112).

J. Willis (2001) discusses the symbolic names (chs. 7–9, and 60–62) and their theological themes in Isaiah. Rather than trying to reconstruct the passages and arrange them in their chronological order, Willis aims 'to analyze the passages in the book of Isaiah that deal with "the remnant" and with "returning" in the order that they appear, in an attempt to determine the significance of these ideas for the theological coherence of this book as a finished literary work' (pp. 76–77). 'These themes help connect the entire book of Isaiah with its implied audience of the post-exilic community' (Kim 2008: 137). Robinson (1998) examines the motif of deafness and blindness (6.9–10) as a metaphor in Isaiah 1–12, and in the book as a whole. Olley's 2001 study treats the metaphors of animals in Isaiah (esp. 11.6–9 and 65.25), which, in contrast to Ezekiel, portrays them quite positively. Klingbeil (1999) compares the ram, lion, and serpent in Isaiah to motifs in ancient Near Eastern iconography. Leclerc (2001) examines the use of the term 'justice' in Isaiah, along with the related terms 'righteousness', 'salvation', and 'instruction', in the three conventional sections of Isaiah.

5. *Biblical Theology and Contemporary Hermeneutics.* Sweeney (2000) discusses questions of theodicy raised in a study of the final form of Isaiah after the Shoah: 'YHWH's identification with the conqueror, YHWH's decree of judgment against Israel without the possibility of repentance, and the failure of YHWH's program to be realized by the end of the book' (p. 209). Interestingly, Sweeney observes, 'YHWH's demands for justice throughout the book of Isaiah include the obligation to demand justice, like Abraham in Genesis 18, from YHWH' (p. 219). 'Reading Isaiah in light of conceptual intertextuality and its interface with biblical theology has significant implications for Isaiah scholarship that acknowledge the hermeneutical dynamics between ancient settings and today's contexts' (Kim 2008: 133). Schroeder (2001) addresses the intertwined issues of history, justice, and the agency of God in history. '[T]he "strange work" of YHWH envisages not only the identification of the attack of the Assyrians with YHWH's action, but also the very involvement of the prophet Isaiah as an integral part of history' (Kim 2008: 139). A key hermeneutical presupposition of Schroeder's is: 'The Old Testament is not an object in space and time but a phenomenon in history and we can understand this phenomenon because we are in the same history' (Schroeder 2001: 56). 'Although the issues of theodicy are lacking in this explication of Isaiah, its contention for the universality of history, which encompasses both YHWH's and the readers' involvement, prompts an important hermeneutical quest' (Kim 2008: 139).

Melugin (1996b) 'proposes to pay more attention to synchronic rather than to diachronic analysis, to poetic and figurative language rather than

to historical events, to story rather than to history, and to “useful” rather than to accurate interpretive ventures’ (Kim 2008: 139). ‘[M]ost of what the book of Isaiah portrays...is difficult to correlate precisely with actual historical events’ (Melugin 1996b: 72), and one can ask ‘whether the result of a historian’s research is more a picture painted by the historian than a reproduction of the past as it really was’ (p. 64). ‘Melugin therefore suggests a “performative hermeneutic” that focuses not on “description of reality”, but rather on “transformational purposes”, including the legitimacy of the various reading communities’ (Kim 2008: 140).

In summation, Kim notes: ‘Approaches that pay attention to history continue to appear, but approaches that consider Isaiah as text *vis-a-vis* (ancient and/or modern) readers have also proliferated’ (p. 140). Kim argues that both sides contain methodological shortcomings. Kim mentions Gitay’s quote (1997b: 64) of Julia Kristeva, who questions the ‘interpretive obsession that tries so desperately to make the Holy Text say what it does not know it is saying’. On the other side, Kim quotes Tate’s scathing reaction: ‘When this kind of reading is done by a scholar...it can be interesting and evocative, but I cringe to think about the results of such reading by most laity and preachers in the churches’ (1996: 49). Kim’s final observation, looking to the future, is trenchant: ‘[T]he major works discussed in this article will become better shaped and refined through a community or communities of scholars with varying agendas’ (Kim 2008: 141).

D. Roy Melugin: *‘Isaiah 40–66 in Recent Research: The “Unity” Movement’* (2008).

Melugin traces roots of the ‘unity movement’ for the study of Isaiah to the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, indicating that by the 90s the hermeneutical issue about the relationship of synchronic and diachronic approaches to the study of Isaiah had become paramount. It had long been assumed that much of the material in Isaiah arose as oral speech, and that over time these short pieces were placed together with other oral speeches and with (usually later) written material, to form larger literary complexes, with scholarly tools such as form criticism and redaction-historical analysis serving to analyze the text and uncover its multi-stage history of growth. While ‘such approaches to the study of the book of Isaiah have by no means come to an end...a remarkable interest in reading the book of Isaiah holistically in one way or another has emerged in recent years’ (Melugin 2008: 142–43).

Especially important in the beginnings of the holistic approach is Muilenburg’s commentary on Isaiah 40–66 in the *Interpreter’s Bible* (1956). Melugin notes that, according to Muilenburg, ‘Although remnants of traditional oral genres can be found in Isaiah 40–66, they exist only as material that the prophetic *writer* used and reshaped creatively to form relatively lengthy units of literature... Isaiah 40–66 exhibits a progression of the prophet’s thought,

so that these chapters may be read holistically' (Melugin 2008: 143). While Westermann (1964) agrees with Muilenburg that literary units in Deutero-Isaiah are longer than earlier form critics had recognized, he 'disagrees with Muilenburg's contention that traditional genres played only a small role in the shaping of units of speech... Lengthy units in Deutero-Isaiah were not almost exclusively the product of the artistic freedom of the poet, but rather a complex interweaving of genres, sometimes with the structure of *one* genre functioning as the basis for the interweaving of several genres into a longer poem' (Melugin 2008: 143). Westermann agrees that Isaiah 40–55 has structural unity.

In his own work on the formation of Isaiah 40–55, Melugin contends 'that the smallest units of speech could be isolated by form critical method (here I disagree with Muilenburg)' but Melugin also 'argue[s] *with* Muilenburg that these smaller "genre-units" are juxtaposed in such a way as to enable Isaiah 40–55 to be read as an artistic whole' (Melugin 2008: 143–44; cf. 1976: 77–82, 86–89). Melugin avoids any attempt to reconstruct the history of the redaction, arguing that 'in its final form the collection has deliberately eradicated any indicators of the process of growth' (1976: 175).

While not denying the various stages involved in the assembling of the book of Isaiah, Ackroyd and Clements argue that it makes sense to read the book as a unified whole. In his study of Isaiah 1–12, Ackroyd (1978) claims 'that Isaiah 1–12 was structured by the redactors of the book to present the prophet in a way that would connect with other parts of the book' (Melugin 2008: 144). Ackroyd's 1982 essay on Isaiah 36–39 again focuses on the literary presentation, exploring the relationships of chapters 36–39 with Isaiah 40–66, and with the book of Isaiah as a whole. Clements, in his 1982 article on the unity of the book of Isaiah, demonstrates a substantial interest in understanding the history of the growth of the book, focusing on the thematic grouping of prophecies. Chapters 36–39, derived from 2 Kings 18–20, were, at a late redactional stage, placed right before Isaiah 40, in order to help the reader move from the Assyrian to the Babylonian sections of the book. Clements lists numerous passages in Isaiah 1–35 that anticipate chs. 40–66 (for example, 11.12–16; 19.23; 27.12–13). He also lists thematic links, such as the metaphors of blindness and deafness, and the theme of judgment. 'What is of significance about Clements' work is that, while he makes abundant use of source theory and redaction-historical approaches in his discussion of the formation of the book of Isaiah as a whole (1985: 95–97), he also asks questions about the synchronic relationships that various parts of the book came to have as the book took shape in the context of the exile and even later' (Melugin 2008: 146).

In his 1984 article, Rendtorff identifies verbal repetitions that are important in reading the book holistically, such as the many passages focusing on divine comfort, which occur in all three parts of the book. 'There are

also thematic and theological relationships, Rendtorff argues, which move beyond individual passages' (Melugin 2008: 147; see Rendtorff 1993b: 155). An example is the theme of Zion/Jerusalem, which is found in abundance throughout the book. Assessing this 1993b essay by Rendtorff, Melugin notes:

Particularly noteworthy is his contention that chs. 40–55 play a dominant role in the book as a whole, and that the compositional activity in chs. 1–39 and 56–66 'takes its bearings' from 40–55 (Rendtorff 1993b: 167). Yet, I am struck by the fact that in his essay, synchronic relationships across the entire book of Isaiah are at least as important as Rendtorff's theories about composition history. (Melugin 2008: 147)

In his 1993c article on Isaiah 56.1 as a key to the formation of the book, Rendtorff says that there is no independent First Isaiah, which is rather 'an extremely complex collection of materials of diverse origins, *and* that 56–66 do not represent an "independent literary unit"' (Melugin 2008: 148; Rendtorff 1993c: 185). Rendtorff is clearly at this point reading the entire book synchronically, and his 1993d article on Isaiah 6 is moving in the same direction. In this 1996 article, he again gives priority to synchronic method: 'In general, I believe that a changing view on the book of Isaiah should allow, and even require, studies on topics, themes, expressions, and even ideas characteristic of the book as a whole or considerable parts of it, without at the same time discussing questions of redaction or composition' (p. 44).

Three works by Sweeney (1988, 1996a, 1996b) are particularly important, in that they treat the structure of Isaiah 1–66 in a synchronic way, while also working to reconstruct the redaction history of the book by means of diachronic methods. Sweeney envisions the prophet himself contributing to the earliest literature at the core of the book, with utterances from the prophet that date to various periods of his career. Subsequently, late 7th century redactors modified and incorporated these texts to shape chs. 5–12; 14–23; 27; 28–32; and 36–37, all in support of Josiah's reform. A late 6th century redaction included Deutero-Isaiah (chs. 40–55), but also developed and included several additional blocks of text, such as chapters 60–62. The activity was connected to the building of the second temple. A 5th century redaction gave final form to the book, in close connection with the program of Ezra. Clearly, on the dating of the final redaction of the book, Sweeney differs significantly from Blenkinsopp, who dates the final form of the book to the Hellenistic era (see above, p. 13).

Despite this diachronic analysis, Sweeney sees the present text of Isaiah to be a synchronic whole, containing two large structural units: '(1) YHWH's plans for worldwide sovereignty at Zion (Isa. 2–33 [1996b: 39–40]) and (2) realization of YHWH's worldwide sovereignty at Zion (Isa. 34–66 [1996b: 39–40])' (Melugin 2008: 149–50). Sweeney sees the need to understand

passages in 1–39 in light of their function in the book as a whole, rather than simply as ‘pre-Deutero-Isaianic texts’ (1988: 5–6). For Sweeney, as Melugin notes, ‘everything in Isaiah 1–39... [as well as] any other part of the book of Isaiah... has ultimately received its present form, its place in the book, and its theology and function in relation to the final form of the book of Isaiah as a whole’ (Melugin 2008: 150).

However, Sweeney’s strong interest in redaction criticism leads him, once he has analyzed the structure of the book as a whole, to reconstruct the *process* by which the book arrived in its present form. Crucial to Sweeney’s analysis is his argument that the final stage of the book’s redaction took place in the Persian Empire during the post-exilic period (see esp. 1996b: 51–55). At this time, the Davidic covenant was redefined (Sweeney 1997b: 47): ‘the Davidic king is no longer the primary recipient of YHWH’s steadfast love, but the people who accept the covenant are now the recipients of that relationship instead’. Finally, Sweeney notes (1997a: 455) that scholars have often seen close lexical ties between Isaiah 1 and Isaiah 65–66. Sweeney observes, however, that little has been done to discuss links between Isaiah 65–66 and all of First Isaiah. He rectifies that in his 1997b article.

Seitz’s work on Isaiah has been discussed in some detail in Sweeney’s 1993 article (see p. 5 above), but Melugin adds additional perspectives. Seitz agrees that the book of Isaiah underwent growth, but there are organic relationships among the various portions of the book, suggesting that earlier parts were added to, rather than being independent and separate blocks of text. Seeing his approach as ‘canonical criticism’, Seitz notes (1988: 113): ‘In Isaiah 1 the entire literary, historical, and theological sweep of the whole book of Isaiah is reviewed... We do not have to wait to cross 2 and 3 Isaiah to know the whole story’. Seitz’s 1996 essay concerns itself not only with the unity of the book of Isaiah, but also ‘with exploring how Isaiah 40–66 represents a larger “canon consciousness” in the relationship of the last part of the book of Isaiah with other texts as a biblical canon was beginning to take shape’ (Melugin 2008: 156).

Clifford’s 1993 article raises an interesting issue. He notes that three themes in Deutero-Isaiah seem to stand outside the Isaiah tradition prior to Deutero-Isaiah: the themes of exodus and conquest; creation; and Cyrus as YHWH’s king, rather than the Davidic king featured in Proto-Isaiah. As Melugin indicates, Clifford responds to the first theme by saying that ‘Second Isaiah turns Zion into the *destination* of the exodus journey (pp. 3–5). Clifford appears to contend that the Proto-Isaianic theme of Zion as the dwelling of YHWH and Israel is joined with the exodus language of Deutero-Isaiah by making Zion the goal of Israel’s journey from Babylon’ (Melugin 2008: 157). Regarding the second theme, Melugin points to considerable problems in the definition of creation theology and creation myth

as evidenced in the ancient Near East, and suggests linking creation with redemption as a way of demonstrating linkage between Deutero-Isaiah and the rest of the book. One might add that it is not unreasonable to suppose that those composing the Deutero-Isaian materials may have added major themes only minimally present in the previous Isaian traditions. Their doing so would hardly be surprising. Regarding the third theme, Clifford notes that the Davidic king, in himself, is not of primary importance in Proto-Isaiah. Rather, the king is judged 'by his trust in God's power to protect Zion (Isa. 7)' (Melugin 2008: 158). In Isaiah 40–55, the Davidic king's task is transferred to Israel. Clifford sees a threefold portrayal of Israel's history: a period of Israel's sinful behavior; a time of punishment, by Assyria and Babylon; and a time of restoration, especially under Cyrus. Trito-Isaiah's creation language differs from Deutero-Isaiah's. 'Creation occurred, for Deutero-Isaiah, when YHWH defeated Babylon through Cyrus and brought Israel through the desert to Zion; whereas in Trito-Isaiah, creation is seen in terms of Zion's transformation, when YHWH upholds the righteous and judges the unrighteous' (Melugin 2008: 158).

Williamson's *The Book Called Isaiah* (1994) 'explores the question of the "unity" of the book of Isaiah by reconstructing the history of the growth of the book' (Melugin 2008: 159). According to Williamson, the eighth century prophet intended to record his message prior to the events of which they spoke, hoping that having this written document deposited among his disciples would prepare for a more positive future, after the judgment had passed. Williamson closely studies Isa. 8.1-4, 8.16-18, and 30.8-9, concluding that 'All three presuppose the rejection of the prophet's words by the people in Isaiah's time, and the consequent writing down of his words to function as a witness "in future, more hopeful days"' (Melugin 2008: 160; Williamson 1994: 106). 'As the period of divine judgment by means of the exile wore on, it may be proposed that *now* was the time of which Isaiah had written when the sealed document was to be opened and a *new* message of salvation, to which the earlier prophet had alluded, was to be proclaimed' (Williamson 1994: 107; emphasis Melugin's). Deutero-Isaiah met these conditions. Williamson sees a number of passages in Isaiah 1–39 as coming from Deutero-Isaiah: for example, Isaiah 12, which has much in common with the eschatological hymns of praise in Deutero-Isaiah; and Isa. 11.11-16, which parallels 49.22 in describing God's summoning of the nations. Thus, according to Williamson, Deutero-Isaiah was substantially influenced by the deposited works of Isaiah of Jerusalem, saw the time of salvation which Isaiah had foreseen to be his own, and combined this earlier material 'with his own literary contribution, and edited them in a way that produced a single work—even though part of what Deutero-Isaiah contributed to the new text was sometimes pre-Deutero-Isaianic materials that were later than the time of Isaiah' (Melugin 2008: 162). While Williamson's

work is diachronic throughout, it approaches Isaiah 1–55 as a thoroughly-interwoven unit, and not as a composition containing two separate works.

Melugin notes that two of Beuken's works (1990, 1991) are important in their discussion of the unity of the book of Isaiah. In studying the 'Servant(s) of YHWH passages' in Deutero-Isaiah (DI) and Trito-Isaiah (TI), Beuken notes that, in DI, the servant is almost always spoken of in the singular, whereas in TI the servants are presented as persons 'who honor the sabbath and hold on to the covenant, and who will therefore be gathered by God on his holy mountain and in his house of prayer' (Beuken 1990: 68–69). Here, 'Beuken the literary historian shows how Trito-Isaiah both builds upon Deutero-Isaiah and yet goes beyond Deutero-Isaiah' (Melugin 2008: 163). In his 1991 article, Beuken asserts that the unity of the book of Isaiah is achieved as 'the result of a complicated process in which extensive *Vorlagen* of the current three major parts [PI, DI, and TI] have been joined together by means of fundamental editing' (Beuken 1991a: 204). Since this study is focused primarily on Isaiah 65–66, Beuken concludes that these two chapters close both Trito-Isaiah and the book of Isaiah as a whole (Isa. 66.15–21 concluding TI, and Isa. 66.22–23 closing the entire book of Isaiah). Like Williamson, Beuken, though using a diachronic approach, focuses on the final form of the book and the way in which the various parts of the book relate to one another in synchronic fashion.

Tomasino (1993) discusses the relationship between the beginning (1.1–2.4) and ending (chs. 63–66) of the book of Isaiah, and the light that this can shed on the formation of the book. He focuses on similar themes presented in the same order, on shared vocabulary, and on similarity of structure between 1.2–31 and 66.1–24. For example, he discusses: the mentioning of the heavens and the earth in 1.2 and 66.1; the condemning of cultic practices unaccompanied by justice in 1.10–20, with its parallel in 66.1–6; and the portrayal of Zion as a woman/harlot in 1.21–26, with its parallel in 66.7–13 presenting the woman who gives birth without the pangs of labor. Closely developing these and other arguments, Tomasino reasons that: the author of Isaiah 1, the beginning of Proto-Isaiah, did not know Deutero-Isaiah; the composer of Isaiah 63–66 knew both Deutero-Isaiah and Isaiah 1; and 'the structural parallelism between 1.2–2.4 and 63.7–66.24 suggests that the closing chapters of Isaiah were based on the opening of Proto-Isaiah' (Melugin 2008: 168; see Tomasino 1993: 95). Melugin concludes: 'Tomasino's historical-reconstructive hypothesis is not aimed primarily at disassembling the final form of the text. Rather, it is a redaction-historical essay whose primary concern, like that of Sweeney, Williamson, and Beuken, is for the "unity" of the book of Isaiah as a whole' (Melugin 2008: 168–69).

Watts presents a two-volume commentary on Isaiah (1985, 1987), which, as Sweeney previously noted, divides the book into 1–33 and 34–66, rather than along traditional scholarly lines. Watts sees the book of Isaiah as a

drama divided into twelve acts, running from the mid-8th century to the mid-5th century BCE. 'Although many passages in the book of Isaiah do not represent *explicitly* the historical reality about which they speak, Watts believes that it is possible for biblical scholars to clarify historical realities to which particular texts in Isaiah point' (Melugin 2008: 169). Miscall (1993), who shares Watts's assumption about Isaiah being formed in the 5th century as a unified whole, is skeptical about Watts's conviction that we can reconstruct historical information from these texts. Yet, Watts's discussion of his twelve acts is well-done and interesting.

Miscall (1993) is clearly holistic and synchronic in his methodology. His commentary on Isaiah 1–66 sees it as a unified, post-exilic work from probably the 5th century. Although Miscall admits that much of the material is likely quite early, even from the 8th century, 'he does not try to isolate it or identify whatever setting(s) it might have had prior to its usage in Isaiah 1–66 as a whole' (Melugin 2008: 171). For example, Isaiah '1–39 is a post-exilic portrayal of the pre-exilic period... which, in its presentation of pre-exilic times, informs us more about "the fears and the hopes" of communities in the post-exilic period than about the events and the people of the eighth and seventh centuries' (Melugin 2008: 171; see Miscall 1993: 12). 'Miscall steadfastly refuses to make "the world as it really was" the object of his attention; his eye is fixed instead on the world that the text of the present form of the book imagines' (Melugin 2008: 171). The specific people Israel are treated in Isaiah 40–66 as part of the 'larger story of all peoples in the entire world' (Miscall 1993: 101). Melugin notes that Miscall's discussions of the servant songs 'show how strongly inclined he is toward reading the book of Isaiah in terms of plurality of meaning' (Melugin 2008: 172).

O'Connell (1994) takes a thoroughly synchronic approach to the book of Isaiah, interpreting the entire book as a 'covenant disputation' composed of seven large rhetorical units. Each unit has a central 'axis', surrounded by several blocks of text (tiers) arranged concentrically. O'Connell argues that 'the similarity of structure among the seven units is a major constitutive element of our being able to see Isaiah as a unified book' (Melugin 2008: 172). Whether O'Connell has found an extremely complex structure in the book of Isaiah, or has imposed one on it, is a matter over which scholars may debate extensively. Melugin (2008: 173 and 174) provides two examples of O'Connell's patterns.

Polan's 1986 book on Isaiah 56–59 interprets the text synchronically, using rhetorical criticism as practiced by Muilenburg to focus on word repetition, and to divide the text into strophes. Polan conducts a 'close reading' of each strophe, looking for elements such as 'various techniques of assonance, various kinds of parallelism, patterns of repetition, metric stability or change, and other poetic devices as will work together to deepen the interpretation already begun in the establishment of the strophes' (p. 37). For a

reading of the larger unit, Polan looks for patterns developed by devices such as: concentric designs, balanced parallelism, chiasm, imagery, antithesis, wordplay, etc. (p. 39). As Melugin notes: 'Polan's overview of 56.1-8, his close readings of this literary unit and of the other units in Isaiah 56-59, and his application of literary devices to any of these texts all hold further treats for readers' (Melugin 2008: 175). Webster presents rhetorical studies of Isaiah 66 (1986) and Isaiah 63-65 (1990), which 'deal with the text synchronically as a rhetorical unity—both within each of the texts he interprets and also in connection with the larger book of Isaiah' (Melugin 2008: 176). Webster's articles present literary analyses that are sophisticated and complex.

Biddle (1996) examines the ways in which Isa. 47.1-15 and 57.6-13 are interrelated, focusing on synchronic interconnections. Franke (1994, 1996) also follows in the rhetorical critical tradition of Muilenburg. She works on a close study of the Isianic text, focusing on lines and strophes, taking note both of patterns and of the unusual, and looking closely at both microstructure and macrostructure. Melugin notes that form criticism in its classical form, and redaction criticism as practiced in the work of Polan, Webster, Franke, etc., appear to 'move in directions that seem to be in large measure incompatible' (Melugin 2008: 177). He wonders, however, whether a reconceptualized form criticism, focusing on the text as it presently exists, rather than on the origin of separate units, 'could make common cause with rhetorical criticism by exploring the interrelationship of typicalities of speech and unique aspects of literary expression *within* entire texts in their present literary form' (p. 177).

Melugin next turns to those who approach the book of Isaiah by means of reader response criticism. Conrad, in *Reading Isaiah* (1991), applies to the book of Isaiah reader response criticism as advocated by Stanley Fish (1980). According to Fish, readers do not initially read texts, and then apply strategies for interpretation. Rather, 'interpretive strategy is already at work the moment one begins reading' (Melugin 2008: 178). Consequently, whatever reading strategy the reader brings to the text dramatically affects the way in which the text is understood. For example, 'the influence of 19th-century Romanticism on biblical studies has significantly shaped interpreter's beliefs that prophets were speakers rather than writers, and also has influenced scholarly convictions that prophetic utterances were the result of ecstatic experiences' (Melugin 2008: 178). Thus readers, shaped by the perspective of a particular community of interpretation, coauthor or complete a text in their act of reading it. Previously, biblical scholarship's equation of 'the meaning of the text with authorial intentions' and with 'the historical situations in which the author wrote' (Conrad 1991: 84) resulted in scholars reading the book of Isaiah as a composite text. As a consequence, the text's implied audience was devalued, as was the final form

of the text, overpowered by 'stressing the primary importance of recovering earlier components of the text' (Conrad 1991: 85). Conrad makes a deliberate choice to read the final form of the text as literature, working thereby to engage 'in a process in which we, as contemporary readers, are active participants' (p. 87).

Turning to Isaiah, Conrad notes that narrative texts are completely absent in the first five chapters of Isaiah, and after ch. 39. Conrad therefore 'argues that at the beginning of the book and toward its end...there appears to be an implied audience of "survivors" that speaks of itself in the first person plural' (Melugin 2008: 179). 'The implied community of survivors (see 66.18-21) is portrayed as presently waiting for the future, i.e., "the final manifestation of the Lord's plan to establish peace in all the world and to restore Zion to its promised glory" ([Conrad 1991] p. 102)' (Melugin 2008: 179). Clearly, Conrad as reader has consciously played a significant role in saying what the book of Isaiah means, but he would surely say that this is true of all readers. Conrad has chosen to take the received text seriously, rather than focusing on the redactions and historical circumstances that lie behind various forms and pieces of the text. Conrad would certainly contend that his approach is no less subjective than that of an interpreter operating with a historical-critical methodology. Melugin refers to Conrad's important 1996 essay dealing with perspectives through which readers choose to understand a text.

K. Darr's reader-response approach is influenced by Iser (1972), Booth (1961), and J. Darr (1987), her husband. Darr makes four key points about what readers do: (1) readers anticipate, and reflect on what they have read, reassessing earlier expectations and judgments; (2) readers build consistency as they interpret; (3) readers sometimes identify with what they read, and sometimes remain detached; and (4) readers come to perceive in new ways that with which they are familiar (Melugin 2008: 180). While the reader is thus in some sense the 'co-creator' of the text's meaning, this is not completely arbitrary, since the text guides the reader. Darr decides to 'construct her imaginary reader of Isaiah as a 4th-century, BCE, reader' (Melugin 2008: 180), imagining him to be a scribe or religious leader. As Melugin notes, this 'gives plausibility to the sophisticated readings of the text that K. Darr assigns to her fictive reader' (Melugin 2008: 180). Darr sees her reader to be one who reads sequentially, approaching the book holistically, making connections between pieces of text that appear in different portions of the book. He is also one who 'focuses on figurative language' (Melugin 2008: 181). Darr chooses to limit her work to how the reader looks at two specific forms of figurative language in the book of Isaiah as a whole: child imagery, and imagery about women.

Carr notes that the unity of Isaiah can be conceptualized in different ways. One can see the unity in thematic and intertextual terms. Alternatively, one

can see the book as a literary unity with a common macrostructure into which all parts fit. For example, Carr sees Isa. 40.1-8 as 'a macrostructural marker that reaches back to certain themes of chs. 1-39, but also reaches forward' (Melugin 2008: 182; see Carr 1993: 65-71). Furthermore, Carr notes that, while Isaiah 1 and 65-66 are often seen as an *inclusio*, these chapters fail 'to anticipate or summarize...much of the intervening material' (Carr 1993: 73). Given lack of integration in various parts of the book, Carr argues that several redactors 'have introduced their macrostructural conceptions into the book of Isaiah' and, while some early redactors 'seem to have systematically rearranged earlier materials', later redactors 'did not completely integrate their materials into their overall macrostructural conception' (p. 77). Clearly, Carr is focusing on some diachronic issues, but they are issues directly related to what Carr perceives to be lack of thematic and structural cohesiveness throughout the book as a whole. Carr's 1996 essay on the unity of Isaiah raises some interesting points. He 'argues that different readers can make use of the diverse rhetorical aims of Isaiah 1 and Isaiah 65-66 (see his 1993 essay) construing the book as a "whole" in different ways' (Melugin 2008: 182-83; see Carr 1996: 214-18). There are numerous possibilities here, since the book of Isaiah contains 'multiple and often paradoxical connections' (Carr 1996: 215). In addition, 'ancient readers would surely read Isaiah differently from modern readers. Reading it from a scroll suggests a lesser likelihood for seeking unity than reading it from a codex (Carr 1996: 193-97)' (Melugin 2008: 183). Furthermore, ancient readers were less likely to read the text alone and in silence. Finally, 'ancient readers would also have been more likely to read Isaiah as a part of the entirety of Scripture, and less likely than we moderns to read it as an individual book ([Carr 1996:] 194)' (Melugin 2008: 183).

Presenting his own work, 'The Book of Isaiah and the Construction of Meaning' (1997), Melugin argues that 'all historical reconstructions of origin and usage of Isaianic traditions are "pictures of the past painted by scholars"' (p. 40). 'Whether or to what extent they actually correspond to the past "as it actually was"...is virtually impossible to ascertain' (p. 41). There is the issue of what material to include and what not to include, which is intertwined with the issue of the credibility one is willing to place on the various sources, and the standards used to determine that credibility. There is the matter of filling in the gaps where the sources are too sparse. There is also the issue of probability.

Melugin then turns to several historical-critical scholars whom he considers to fit into the 'unity school', and notes that 'their historical reconstructions are to a significant extent the result of what they bring *to* their scholarly enterprise' (Melugin 2008: 183). For example, Clements argues that the survivors of the tragedy of 587 BCE 'used earlier Isaianic themes to interpret the catastrophe that had been visited upon them,' and Melugin responds that 'it

[is] impossible to know whether these later redactors felt exactly the needs ascribed to them by Clements' (Melugin 2008: 183-84). Citing Clements's links to 20th century assumptions and perspectives, Melugin notes that there are similar problems with the historical arguments made by Seitz, Williamson, and Sweeney. Melugin argues that the synchronic arguments of Rendtorff and Sweeney, as well as the reader response interpretations of Darr and Carr, are also tied closely to the constructs used by the interpreter.

Since all interpretations are significantly influenced by what the reader brings to the text, Melugin asks how one is to judge which interpretations are viable. His answer is that they must 'fit' the text. For example:

If exilic authors, in developing new horizons of understanding, did indeed give older Isaianic texts new meaning in a later context, are there any senses in which we can say those new meanings 'fit'? If so, we might ask whether still later interpretations, e.g., in Jewish rabbinical or liturgical texts, or in Christian texts, up to and including the present, can be said to be 'fitting' interpretations for responsible usage... [M]ay 'fitness' in interpretation be seen in terms of a continuum—from exilic and post-exilic reinterpretations of 'proto-Isaianic' texts all the way down to reinterpretations done in our own time? (2008: 184)

Noting that 'the use of texts as Scripture necessarily entails their interpretation and use in contexts far different from those in which the texts were produced' (Melugin 2008: 185), Melugin turns to studies by three scholars, Childs, Seitz, and Oswalt, whose work in viewing Isaiah as Scripture presents an unmistakably holistic approach.

Looking at Isaiah, Childs argues that the meaning of the text is not to be found primarily within the original meanings of units in their original context. For example, in looking at Second Isaiah, Childs argues that 'the canonical editors of this tradition employed the material in such a way as to eliminate almost entirely those [earlier] concrete features and to subordinate the original message to a new role within the canon' (Childs 1979: 325). Thus, Second Isaiah can 'no longer be understood as a specific commentary on the needs of exiled Israel, but its message relates to the redemptive plan of God for all of history' (p. 326). While Childs does not completely accept modern synchronic analysis, he also questions the reconstruction of 'a succession of redactional layers, each with its own agenda, which are never heard in concert as a whole' (Childs 2001: 4). Along these lines, Childs sees Isaiah 65–66 as having played a significant editorial role in shaping 'the entire book of Isaiah into a coherent whole by a reuse, reordering, and reinterpretation of Second and Third Isaiah' (2001: 542-43). Childs also notes that there are 'quite fitting...intertextual relationships between Isaianic texts and the New Testament, as well as theological uses of Isaianic texts in Christian theology' (Melugin 2008: 187; see Childs 2001: 420-23). Returning to historical-critical analysis, Childs notes that, while historical

criticism can describe the differences between Isaiah 53 in its context and in its reinterpretation by New Testament writers, such study should not contribute to the ‘confusion of categories that misunderstands the distinction between treating the text as an objective source of information... [and] as a kerygmatic testimony to a divine reality’ (Childs 2001: 421–22). In Christian usage, ‘an analogy was drawn between the redemptive activity of the Isaianic servant and the passion and death of Jesus Christ’ (p. 423). Thus, canon criticism ‘expands dramatically the horizons for what is fitting in the enterprise of interpretation’ (Melugin 2008: 187).

Seitz, in his commentary on Isaiah 40–66 in the *New Interpreter's Bible* (2001), sets out to do a new type of form criticism that, unlike earlier form criticism's focus on the *Sitz im Leben* of short passages, focuses instead on the synchronic form of these chapters of Isaiah, understanding them as a whole. Seitz intentionally follows the lead of Westermann (1969) and Melugin (1976). Seitz views Isaiah 40–66 as a unity, due to its carefully planned structure, which is: [1] chapters 40–48; [2] 49.1–52.12; [3] 52.13–53.12; and [4] chapters 54–66. Seitz ‘sees Isaiah 40–48 as introducing a message about a time of “new things” which is to be contrasted with the time of the “former things” ’ (Melugin 2008: 188). In Isa. 52.13–53.12, there is a poem which ‘represents the culmination of all that precedes and constitutes the decisive boundary line in the larger discourse (chaps 40–66), as the text moves from the achievement of the servant (40.1–52.11) to the work of the servants (54.1–66.24), which is an elaboration and ramification of that prior legacy’ (Seitz 2001: 460). Seitz clearly views Isaiah, as Scripture, holistically. ‘[I]n his observations (called “Reflections”)...he often discusses Isaianic texts in relation to the New Testament and Christian theology’ (Melugin 2008: 189).

Oswalt's two-volume commentary on the book of Isaiah (1986, 1998) fits within the context of conservative evangelical Christianity. Melugin characterizes Oswalt's commentary as a careful work, which takes into account a wide range of scholarship, including historical-critical research. While he certainly does, like Childs, interpret Isaiah as canonical Scripture, Oswalt differs from Childs by asserting that the eighth century prophet produced the entire 66-chapter book (1986: 23–28). Oswalt sees the book of Isaiah to resemble ‘what we call an anthology, a collection of sermons, sayings, thoughts, and writings of Isaiah, all arranged according to the theological scheme outlined in the previous section’ (p. 26). Oswalt often carefully nudges the discussion in the direction of a Christian understanding of a passage, as with the messianic texts in Isaiah 7–11, and the servant passages. Melugin notes:

Criticism of Oswalt's Christian bias in his reading of the book of Isaiah is in no way a part of my intent here. In our time, we are aware that *all* interpreters have biases. Even historical critical interpreters who were

sometimes thought to be neutral are now widely recognized as having very definite biases... Likewise, to read Isaiah as Scripture also involves bias, even though not all readers of Isaiah as Scripture have identical biases. I include Oswalt in this discussion, because he is a well-read and articulate scholar, but also because perspectives such as his should not be marginalized. (2008: 191)

Sheppard (1996b) observes that, despite the claims of many scholars to be 'objective' in their interpretation, Derrida 'relentlessly exposes the various moments of "aporia" or "gaps" that require decisions between two equally valid possibilities' (p. 259). While it is possible to rationally defend different structures that one 'finds' in the text, whatever defines the central, focal point of an interpretation ultimately is derived from a necessarily subjective conception of 'presence, intention, intrinsic bond between reality and language, historical reference, symbolic system or whatever' (p. 259; Melugin 2008: 191; see also Norris 1982: 50). The fact that all readers have these centers or focal points of interpretation, which 'are produced by readers' biases suggests that we be fully aware of the limitations to their objectivity' (Melugin 2008: 191; Sheppard 1996b: 261). As Melugin goes on to note (2008: 191), 'Sheppard argues also against an absolutizing of the reader that exists in some forms of reader response criticism'.

Sheppard then discusses several monographs on Isaiah. Sweeney (1988) envisions 'a text that has a structure consisting of various "blocks of material" and interrelated "sub-units" within these blocks. Often... what Sweeney calls "the structure" is heavily influenced by "signs of thematization" rather than clear syntactical connections' (Melugin 2008: 191-92; rephrasing Sheppard 1996b: 263). According to Sheppard, we have in Sweeney's perspective 'a temporal series of changing structures of new texts that build upon earlier textual conceptions, each with its own "reinterpretation" of prior stages, structures, and units of tradition' (Sheppard 1996b: 263). Sheppard sees Conrad's approach to Isaiah as one that 'looks for a text's "aesthetic momentum", i.e. its "repetition in vocabulary, motif, theme, narrative sequence, and rhetorical questions, and forms of address", as well as interests in "implied reader" and "implied audience"' (Melugin 2008: 192; summarizing and quoting Conrad 1991: 30-31). To give one other example of Sheppard's assessment of Isaiah scholarship, Sheppard considers Seitz's (1991, 1993) 'center' or 'vision' for interpreting Isaiah to be based on an 'integration of redactional levels of composition' (Sheppard 1996b: 267). 'Focusing primarily on various redactors' responses to a particular theological problem will not, however, necessarily envision Isaiah "fully as a book of Jewish Scripture or describe adequately the book's participation within a larger intertext of biblical books"' (Melugin 2008: 192; summarizing and quoting Sheppard 1996b: 267).

Sheppard concludes with two proposals. Asking whether the book does indeed 'highlight a single message above others in the presentation of the

prophet Isaiah', Sheppard responds by focusing on the theme 'fear not', which Sheppard argues is not so much a theme as 'a historical message unleashed upon generation after generation of audiences', which 'becomes distinctive of the message of Isaiah at every level of the biblical text' (Melugin 2008: 192-93; summarizing and quoting Sheppard 1996b: 274). Sheppard's second proposal is to 'wonder if Isaiah *as a book of Jewish Scripture* might not have the Torah as its principal subject matter' (Sheppard 1996b: 275). Having argued this point, Sheppard notes that Isaiah's inclusion within the collection of prophetic books 'invites an interpretation in terms of promise/judgment and fulfillment... [I]t is precisely this multi-valent nature of the text as a scriptural text that allowed Christians...to give preference often to the prophetic and sapiential reading of the text over its role as a guide to the law' (p. 280).

Concluding his discussion, Melugin notes that those scholars who find a 'unity' in the book of Isaiah are indeed a diverse group. 'Yet, despite the variety of approaches, all the scholars discussed above represent a new movement, in the sense that all are interested in looking at the book of Isaiah holistically' (Melugin 2008: 194).

II. *Jeremiah*

A. Robert Carroll: '*Surplus Meaning and the Conflict of Interpretations: A Decade of Jeremiah Studies (1984-95)*'. CR:BS 4 (1996), 115-59.

As Carroll notes in this first article on Jeremiah, the years from 1984 to 1995 saw a major growth in interest in the book of Jeremiah, and in the prophet who gives his name to the book, even while considerable disagreement was brewing concerning the nature and character of the prophet, the degree to which we can learn about the 'historical' prophet from what is said in the book, the internal consistency or lack of internal consistency in the book, and the impact of subsequent reading communities on the way in which the book was read and developed. In short, as Carroll notes, there 'has been a turmoil of competing reading strategies for understanding the book associated with the prophet Jeremiah' (Carroll 1996: 195). Fueling these controversies and competing reading strategies were a number of commentaries that began appearing in the 1980s. Among them are commentaries of greater length, including: Holladay's two volumes in the Hermeneia series (1986, 1989); McKane's two volumes in the International Critical Commentary series (1986, 1996); Jones's commentary in the New Century Bible (1992); Carroll's commentary in the Old Testament Library (1986); and the two volumes in the Word Biblical Commentary, with volume 1 by Craigie, Kelly, and Drinkard (1991), and volume 2 by Keown, Scalise, and Smothers (1995). Other commentaries include Brueggemann's two volumes in the International Theological Commentary series (1988b, 1991b); Clements's

Interpretation commentary (1988); Davidson's two volumes in the Daily Study Bible series (1983, 1985); and the first two volumes (1986, 1990a) of Herrmann's work in the *Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament* series. As one may well imagine, the differing perspectives of the various series in which these commentaries have appeared since the mid-1980s foreshadow the growing diversity of approaches to and perspectives on both the book of Jeremiah and the person of the prophet Jeremiah.

This growing variety of approaches may also be seen in the monographs appearing during this period, including: studies on the text of Jeremiah, such as Soderlund's study of the Greek text of Jeremiah (1985); Stipp's study of the text development of Jeremiah 26, 36–43, and 45 (1992) as a way of gaining insight into factions in Judah in the 6th century BCE; Stuhlman's study of the Hebrew text underlying the prose sections of the Greek text of Jeremiah (1985), as well as his study of the text of the prose sermons of the Book of Jeremiah (1986); studies on Jeremiah 30–31, such as Bozak's literary-theological analysis (1991), and Fisher's analysis of the text, composition, and theology of these two chapters (1993); Liwak's literary-historical study of the book of Jeremiah (1987); McConville's interpretation of the book in terms of judgment and promise (1993); studies on the confessions of Jeremiah, as in Mottu's 1985 work, Diamond's 1987 treatment of the confessions as prophetic drama, O'Connor's analysis (1988) of the role of the confessions in chs. 1–25 of the book of Jeremiah, Pohlmann's 1989 discussion of the place of the confessions in the beginning of the Jeremiah traditions, and Polk's 1984 study (also listed below); Biddle's study of the redaction history of 2.1–4.2 (1990); Unterman's work on the transition in Jeremiah's thought from repentance to redemption (1987); Smith's literary and redactional analysis of Jeremiah 11–20, focusing on the laments of Jeremiah and their contexts (1990); Hardmeier's discussion of the relationship between 2 Kings 18–20 and Jeremiah 37–40 (1990b); Polk's *The Prophetic Persona: Jeremiah and the Language of the Self* (1984); and Seitz's *Theology in Conflict: Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah* (1989b). These are only samples, but they indicate both the diversity of works on Jeremiah, and the dramatic increase in their numbers, beginning in approximately the mid-1980s. In addition, Carroll's bibliography provides a host of articles that began to appear both on the prophet and on the book of Jeremiah during this period.

It is therefore appropriate that this revival of interest in Jeremiah led to the formation of the 'Composition of Jeremiah Consultation Group', led by O'Connor and Stulman, within the program structure of the Society of Biblical Literature. This group parallels the 'Formation of the Book of Isaiah Group', also within the Society of Biblical Literature, chaired by Sweeney and Melugin. For other surveys of recent issues and scholarship on Jeremiah, Carroll points the reader to articles in the various one-volume

commentaries and in dictionaries of the Bible, but notes that often the citations are spotty, or are not up to date.

Carroll lists several problems that have been at the core of Jeremiah studies throughout the 20th century: [1] the relationship of the poetic sections of the book of Jeremiah to the prose sections of the book; [2] the relationship of the longer Hebrew Masoretic Text to the shorter Septuagint Greek text; [3] the relationship of the historical prophet Jeremiah to the book bearing his name, especially when one considers questions about the shape and formation of the book; [4] the role of Baruch in the formation of the book; [5] the relationship of the edited book of Jeremiah to the Deuteronomistic literature and its historical perspectives; and [6] the issue of the historical period(s) during which the book was edited. These issues are, of course, interrelated. In addition, more recent questions and methodological perspectives have begun to appear in studies on Jeremiah, including: approaches from a literary, artistic, or dramatic perspective; treatments discussing the reception history of the various portions of the text of Jeremiah, and of the book as a whole; methods such as feminist criticism and reader-oriented criticism; ideological approaches; and studies which cross traditional scholarly boundaries and include diverse perspectives, as, for example, Polk's work cited above (1984). From the perspective of 1996, when Carroll wrote his first survey of Jeremiah scholarship, 'Jeremiah studies are poised somewhere between more sophisticated restatements of traditional ways of reading Jeremiah, and new approaches which will move the discussion further and further away from such conventional strategies for reading the book' (Carroll 1996: 196).

As Carroll sees it, by 1996 two dramatically different approaches to the book of Jeremiah had developed. One approach, traditionally historical-critical in its perspective, may be seen in the commentaries of Bright (*Anchor Bible*: 1965), Thompson (*New International Commentary on the Old Testament*: 1980), Holladay (1986, 1989), and Lundbom (new 3-volume Jeremiah commentary in the *Anchor Bible* series, vol. 1: 1999; volumes 2 and 3: 2004). Carroll notes that this reading strategy 'essentially attributes the work (with some allowance for minor editorial additions) to Jeremiah and Baruch as original speaker, author, editor, reviser, and producer of the book as we know it... For Holladay there are no data which counter the claim that the portrait of Jeremiah depicted in the book is reliable' (Carroll 1996: 196). Carroll further observes, 'This approach to reading Jeremiah makes Jeremiah 36 a paradigm account of the writing of the whole book and not just of the first twenty-three years of oracle production' (Carroll 1996: 197). Alternative approaches for describing the composition of the book are not considered by Holladay, such as, for example, the possibility for intertextuality between Jeremiah 7–15, Jeremiah 26 and 36, and 2 Kings 22. Jones (1992) provides a second example of this approach. According to Carroll:

While stressing the importance of the oral tradition behind the written manuscript of Jeremiah, Jones relies on the claim that the literary deposit of Jeremiah's work is to be found in chs. 1–25 ([Jones] 1992: 28). By regularly dismissing any claim for the documents' being 'photographic representations' Jones is still able to work with them as if they were similar to such items, that is, were essentially historical documents ('nucleus and deposit') giving reliable historical information about events and the history of the production of the book of Jeremiah. (Carroll 1996: 199)

McKane takes a significantly different approach. Attributing a basic core of the book of Jeremiah to the prophet, McKane 'sees the bulk of chs. 1–25 as having been built up in various ways, so that the historical Jeremiah cannot have been the author *simpliciter* of the book as we now have it' (Carroll 1996: 197). An original collection of poems from Jeremiah has been supplemented in an intertextual fashion, generating new pieces of prose and poetry that fit together into what McKane calls 'a rolling corpus'. McKane refers to 'the untidy and desultory nature of the aggregation of material which comprises the book of Jeremiah...it is not only a lack of large-scale homogeneousness...but sharp dissonances of form and content, and examples of erroneous, secondary exegesis'. McKane further argues 'that there is no comprehensive framework of literary arrangement or theological system within which the parts of 1–25 are fitted together, and...the prose does not supply such a scaffolding' (McKane 1986: xlix-l).

Carroll observes that most of the work done in the decade prior to the appearance of his 1996 survey can be fitted within either the Holladay or the McKane perspective. Holladay sees the process for the composition of the book of Jeremiah to be relatively simple and brief, with the pieces fitting together to form a neat, reasonably structured composition. Scholars taking a similar approach are Craigie *et al.* (1991), Jones (1992), Keown *et al.* (1995), and McConville (1993). McKane, on the other hand, sees a lengthy process for the development of the book, focusing on 'the untidiness and arbitrariness of much of the book' (Carroll 1996: 198), taking account of the difficult question of the disparate and often contradictory editorial voices in the book.

A third way of reading the book of Jeremiah presents yet another position on the spectrum of possible approaches to Jeremiah. This is the methodology of Carroll himself. He views himself as a post-modernist who approaches the text through ideological-critical analysis. In describing his own perspective, Carroll argues, 'it is not clear...that the redactional processes which have constructed the book of Jeremiah have preserved the original Jeremiah's words in anything like a historically reliable mode. Extensive editorial interference and recontextualization are deemed by Carroll to have transformed Jeremiah's poetry beyond its original purpose in the service of an ideology quite foreign to Jeremiah' (Carroll 1996: 198).

Carroll ‘sees the tropes and rhetoric of the book of Jeremiah as collapsing under the weight of their own internal incoherence and contradictions’, and as a consequence, Carroll’s ‘deconstructive approach does not encourage a historical reading of the book along the lines suggested by the editorial colophon of 1.1-3’ (Carroll 1996: 198). He also notes that he is ‘skeptical of traditional biblical scholarship’s claim to be able to get behind the (imagined) sources of biblical books to reconstruct the past historical situations... Reading Jeremiah as a collection of polyphonic voices reflecting the reconstruction of the Palestinian communities in the Second Temple period, Carroll plays down the role of the historical Jeremiah in the “original” production of a *traditum* reflecting that prophet’s words and deeds’ (Carroll 1996: 198; emphasis Carroll’s).

Carroll’s bibliographies in this 1996 article and in his 2000 article reflect the many scholarly positions that are articulated at varying points on the spectrum between Holladay, on the one end, and Carroll, on the other. Carroll does not, however, seek to describe the various subtle differences on the entire scholarly spectrum analyzing Jeremiah; rather, he elects to take up selected issues that have been important in studying the prophet and his book, and surveys some of the primary alternatives among approaches to these issues. Carroll also indicates ‘that a new generation of scholars is emerging which will disavow these “historicist” approaches in order to develop holistic accounts of a textualist nature for reading the book—freed from past obsessions with history and theology’ (Carroll 1996: 199-200). Having thus set the context, Carroll then turns to specific topics of importance in the study of Jeremiah.

1. *Baruch the Scribe*. Carroll notes that, for Holladay (1989: 253), as well as many other scholars, Jeremiah 36 describes the early process in the creation of the book of Jeremiah. Most scholars ‘tend to regard the role of Baruch in the book of Jeremiah as evidence which enlightens the original production of the book’ (Carroll 1996: 200). Taking a less historical approach to Jeremiah 36, Carroll notes, ‘It may well be that Jeremiah 36 depicts the reflection of a moment when the prophetic traditions were being transformed into writing, and this story of the inscribing of prophecy was recognized as being essentially the work of scribes and not of prophets’ (Carroll 1996: 200). While ‘[m]ost writers on Jeremiah prefer the reading of Jeremiah and Baruch as historical figures... Carroll prefers a reading which views Jeremiah and Baruch as writerly representations of the textual traditions’ (Carroll 1996: 200-201). Carroll notes that ‘The archaeological evidence for a Berektyahu, dated by literary reference to the book of Jeremiah...has convinced many scholars that the Baruch figure in the text reflects the historical personage rather than a literary representation of the historical figure’ (Carroll 1996: 200). Disagreeing with this approach, Carroll points to ‘the possibility (or

likelihood) that the writers of the book of Jeremiah had constructed a fictional Baruch as the writer (scribe) of Jeremiah's oracles' (Carroll 1996: 200). Pointing to the well-developed figure of Baruch as presented in various pieces of post-biblical literature, Carroll argues 'After all, the writers of the Baruch literature on the Roman destruction of Jerusalem have constructed such a Baruch, so why not the writers of Jeremiah?' (Carroll 1996: 200).

2. *The Deuteronomistic Edition of Jeremiah.* Carroll points to two significant positions, dating back to the 1970s, on 'the much disputed relationship between the book of Jeremiah and Deuteronomism, the book of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History' (Carroll 1996: 201). Weippert (1973), along with Holladay and McConville, see the deuteronomistic-like language of Jeremiah to come from the prophet's own vocabulary and speech patterns. Thus, 'Jeremiah and the Deuteronomistic History are not necessarily incompatible, since both use language dependent on Deuteronomy' (Carroll 1996: 201). However, for Thiel and, to some degree, McKane, 'such language betrays the influence of a substantial deuteronomistic editing of the book of Jeremiah' (Carroll 1996: 201). An approach such as Holladay's, tied in as it is to a historical approach to understanding Jeremiah, 'inevitably links Jeremiah to the Josianic reform and therefore to the discovery of the scroll of Deuteronomy' (Carroll 1996: 201). Holladay sees a close connection between Jeremiah and Josiah, with the young prophet serving as a propagandist for the king's agenda (cf. Lohfink 1981). Thus, for Holladay, 'the youthful prophet spoke counterproclamations against city and citizens during the septennial readings of Deuteronomy...and went on doing so at seven-year intervals until after the destruction of Jerusalem' (Carroll 1996: 201). The relationship between the book of Jeremiah and the book of Deuteronomy was thus one of mimicry. Holladay argues that the 'new covenant' passage in Jer. 31.31-34 comes from the prophet, and was spoken after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE.

Carroll calls for a fundamental reassessment of the issue of Jeremiah's relationship to the Deuteronomistic corpus. Do Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History predate the production of Jeremiah, or could it be the other way around? While 'Jeremiah has strong similarities to the Deuteronomistic corpus of literature and specifically names prophets other than the prophet after whom the book is named' (Carroll 1996: 202), there are also significant differences. The prophets named in the Deuteronomistic History are not the same ones mentioned in Jeremiah. While modern scholars (Hardmeier 1990b, Seitz 1989b, and Stipp 1992) see the last years of the Judean kingship to be ones of prophetic and partisan strife, as does the book of Jeremiah, the Deuteronomistic History does not portray the period this way. So, 'One could argue that Jeremiah addresses a blank in Kings which the redactors of Jeremiah filled in, making the

relationship between the books both intertextual and supplementational, thereby establishing a link between both blocks of literature; or, one could argue that the discourse of prophecy in Jeremiah is very different from the prophetic discourses embedded in Kings' (Carroll 1996: 202). Carroll wryly notes that, since there is a great deal of conflict present in the book of Jeremiah, perhaps it is appropriate that there is so much conflict among contemporary scholars on many issues pertaining to the interpretation of the book.

3. *The Relationship of the Masoretic Text to the Septuagint.* Study of the relationship between the Hebrew Masoretic text of Jeremiah and the text of the Septuagint translation of Jeremiah is especially important in the overall study of the book, since there are significant differences between the Hebrew and Greek textual traditions. Carroll's summary for this section of his analysis says it well: 'The acknowledgement of a greater degree of uncertainty about the origins, the evolution and the finalized forms of the text of Jeremiah would appear to be warranted from the work of the past decades of textual investigations' (Carroll 1996: 203-204). Janzen (1973) and Tov (1985) have discussed 'the complexities of the relationship between the Hebrew text of Jeremiah...and the Greek text' (Carroll 1996: 203), while Soderlund (1985) has seen things differently (see Janzen's 1989 critique). Whatever position one adopts, it is clear that the discussion of the relationship between the two major forms of the text 'constitutes part of the ongoing debate about the history of the production of the book of Jeremiah' (Carroll 1996: 203). Ziegler's 1976 volume is very helpful in any study of the various Greek versions of Jeremiah, an aspect featured in McKane's commentary (1986, 1996). Stulman's 1985 work, which reconstructs the Hebrew text underlying the LXX version of the prose sections of Jeremiah, with an English translation, 'has made available a text which allows the general reader to see how the textuality of the book may once have looked' (Carroll 1996: 203).

Carroll notes that the task of discerning earlier and later editions of the text(s) has come to be seen as much more complicated than was first thought; thus, 'the picture looks much more complex now than it did in the 1970s when the work of Janzen set the tone for the discussion (1973)' (Carroll 1996: 203). Hence, one has to look at the particulars of individual units or pieces of text, and build arguments on that basis, rather than trying to fit a particular textual unit into a broader theory about the construction of the text. If any trend in these comparative studies 'can be discerned, it is a tendency to regard the Greek text as representing a first edition of Jeremiah, with the Hebrew text representing a second edition and the Qumran material testifying to the fluidity of the textual traditions of Jeremiah' (Carroll 1996: 203).

4. *A Sampling of Work on Selected Parts of Jeremiah.* Turning to particular units of text within the book of Jeremiah, Carroll notes that, due to the massive volume of the scholarship produced in recent years, it is only possible to sample what has been done. It is clear, however, that conflicting readings on Jeremiah permeate the work that has been done in recent scholarship. Observing that '[t]he sheer volume of minor studies of words and phrases in Jeremiah indicates something of the strong interest in the language, rhetoric and tropes of the book' (Carroll 1996: 204), Carroll indicates that, due to the large number of such works, he will not attempt to discuss them.

a. *Jeremiah 1 and the Cycle of Poems in Jeremiah 2–6.* Carroll begins by noting that the way a commentator understands the colophon in 1.1-3, as well as the subsequent material in 1.4-10, provides a clear sign of the interpretive approach used by the commentator in treating the entire book. 'Conventional readings of the book of Jeremiah have opted to read the colophon as containing reliable historical information and assign Jeremiah's birth to the period 650–640 BCE and his call to be a prophet to the year 627–626' (Carroll 1996: 204-205; Carroll cites Jones 1992: 61-63 as an example). Intriguingly, Holladay (1986: 17) prefers to see 627–626 BCE as the date of Jeremiah's birth. For McKane, 'the section does not provide any historical access to the time of Jeremiah's birth or the beginnings of his ministry of the word, but is a Deuteronomistic interpretation which assigns Jeremiah's activity to the reign of Josiah (1986: 1-14)' (Carroll 1996: 205). Carroll 'finds little historical information in the text. This is consistent with his reading of Jeremiah from an *Ideologiekritik* point of view and is of a piece with the rest of his commentary. Jones [1992: 63] dismisses all such interpretive variations on the conventional reading of the text and accepts the text at face value' (Carroll 1996: 205). Pointing to the complexity of the book of Jeremiah, Carroll argues that 'some account needs to be given of how such a text was produced, or how it evolved, before reading "at face value" can be employed as an argument against alternative reading strategies' (Carroll 1996: 205).

Clearly, major issues of hermeneutical perspective are involved here, issues that cannot be taken up in a short article surveying scholarship on Jeremiah, even though such preferred reading methodologies are setting the course for contemporary interpretations of the book. Homing in on the essential differences in approach, Carroll declares: 'One side prefers to read texts at "face value", with minor adjustments and rejiggings of the text for greater symmetry. The other side prefers to read texts as if they had undergone considerable rewriting and reinterpretation, so that their current form has been modified considerably from the original' (Carroll 1996: 205).

Turning to Jeremiah 2–6, Carroll says: 'The poems which form the cycles in 2.4–4.2 and 4.5–6.27 contain a wide range of generic material

and diverse rhetorical elements, including a considerable amount of material transformed by the addition of further material and edited into “a new entity” (Biddle 1990: 228)’ (Carroll 1996: 206). According to Biddle, chs. 2–3 constitute a sweeping theological treatise on Israel’s history, covering the time from the exodus to the time of the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem in 587 BCE. The reshaping of the traditions in chs. 2–3 reflect the ‘influence of “orthodox” post-exilic prayers of confession’ (Biddle 1990: 228). Thus, as Carroll summarizes, ‘the fully edited sections constitute a grand *ideological* introduction to the Jeremiah tradition from the vantage point of the post-catastrophe period (or later)’ (Carroll 1996: 206). Liwak (1987: 303–31) provides an excellent summary showing how, in their treatment of these chapters, scholars reveal their own views concerning the relationship between history and prophecy. Carroll argues:

The grand sweep of rhetoric, using constantly changing multiple images, depicting Israel-Judah’s history from its desert ‘beginnings’ to its urban ‘end’, with confessional liturgies forming a ‘present day’ actualizing aspect of the ‘sermon’, points to a ‘fictionalizing’ mode spelling out the import of Jeremiah’s preaching for the latter-day community to whom his words are now applied by the redactors of the tradition (Carroll 1996: 206).

Placing the war poems of 4.5–6.27, which announce the coming of the ‘foe from the north’, near the beginning of the traditions, ‘the redactors have focused the work of Jeremiah on the proclamation of the destruction of Jerusalem’ (Carroll 1996: 206). In the Masoretic Text, this is nicely balanced by the section on the oracles against the nations in chs. 46–51.

Since this symmetry is absent in the text of the LXX, with its different editorial perspective and arrangement, Carroll observes:

The more dominant approach to reading Jeremiah, which attributes to the prophet and/or Baruch (and their immediate followers?) the various editions of the scroll(s) of Jeremiah within a short timespan, does not allow sufficient time for the richness and creativity of the tradition-making processes as do approaches that recognize a longer period of time and a greater degree of complexity in the production of these scrolls. (1996: 207)

Liwak argues, in his 1988 study (p. 94), ‘The process of re-discovering the text requires a creative exegesis which admits of a multi-dimensional concept of task and methodology, if the complex state of the texts and their history is to be satisfactorily studied’. McKane’s work, in Carroll’s opinion, as well as that of Meier (1992), are among those which recognize the untidiness of the Jeremiah traditions, or, more bluntly, ‘its incoherent and chaotic state’ (Carroll 1996: 207).

It is interesting that, in recent scholarship on Isaiah, the trend is to take a book that was traditionally divided into three or four separate pieces, and now talk about the intertextuality of the various parts of the book and the ways in which they have strong links to one another. Scholars want to

view the book holistically. In recent Jeremiah studies, however, the trend in scholarship, at least for those like Carroll and McKane, who see the numerous blemishes in the text and its inconcinnity, is to look to the centrifugal nature of the text as we now have it. Both books do, of course, have many scholars studying them who argue for a long process of collection, editing, and reediting before the books reach the form in which we have them today. But the views on the internal cohesiveness of the two books are, for at least some scholars, moving in opposite directions.

b. *The Laments in Jeremiah 11–20*. The laments are some of the most contested pieces in the book of Jeremiah, and have resulted in a number of recent monographs, as noted above. The presence of these psalm-like poems in the book is most unusual, for nowhere else in the Bible do biblical prophets use psalm-like poems as a means of self-expression—with the possible exception of ch. 2 of Jonah. Carroll points to Bonnard's work (1960) for a discussion of the similarity of the laments to certain poems in the book of Psalms.

Most recent writers treat the laments as pieces from the pre-exilic era, and attribute them to the prophet Jeremiah. They see in them Jeremiah's struggle with his mission, with the various social groups of his time, and the various prophets who disagreed strongly with Jeremiah. Holladay, for example, understands 12.1-5 in light of Jeremiah's struggle with his 'prophetic opponents, the optimistic prophets' (1986: 370). O'Connor sees them as pointing to 'the people's rejection of Jeremiah's preaching of the divine word' (Carroll 1996: 208). M. Smith understands the laments as 'confessions of Jeremiah' which present 'Jeremiah's special identification with Yahweh as sign and symbol of Israel's relationship with Yahweh' (1990: 64).

While Mottu (1985) sees in these 'confessions' a protestation against suffering, it should be noted that such a protest undermines, where it does not actually deconstruct, the claims in chs. 2–20 that judgment is universally warranted from 'the least to the greatest' in Jerusalem, Judah, and among the nations (cf. 25.30-38). The distinction drawn between 'the wicked' and 'the righteous' in the lament poems makes nonsense of the sweeping assertions in chs. 2–11 that everybody is wicked (cf. 5.1-6). (Carroll: 1996: 208)

Carroll also notes that 'The issue of theodicy, which is so much a feature of the book of Jeremiah (cf. Carroll 1981: 66-73), is severely challenged by the explicit injustice embodied in the laments, which protest destruction of the "righteous"' (Carroll 1996: 208).

The choice as to whether to regard these poems as laments, prayers, confessions, or complaints will substantially influence the interpretation of the poems, and that, in turn, will spill over into the issue of how one interprets the book as a whole. Furthermore, Carroll observes that 'no matter what interpretation is offered of the lament poems in the book of Jeremiah, there

is always a surplus of meaning left over from integrating any such interpretation into a coherent and consistent reading of the book as a whole. This renders all interpretations inadequate as exhaustive treatments of the text' (Carroll 1996: 208). Carroll also indicates that:

In their setting in the book of Jeremiah they sit uneasily with the poems of absolute judgment and represent a second phase of the interpretive development of the tradition. The destruction will not be (has proven not to have been!) as catastrophic as Jeremiah's words may have suggested. Reflection and recontextualization have brought about fundamental shifts in meaning and significance. After the catastrophe, survival. Hence it became necessary to introduce into the discussion a differentiating process whereby some people were recognized as 'wicked' but others had to be designated as 'righteous'... Survival underwrote righteousness. (Carroll 1996: 209)

Diamond (1987) and Polk (1984) look at the text of Jeremiah holistically, exploring the way in which the laments help present Jeremiah as an exemplary figure in the book. Diamond (pp. 177-88) finds two cycles of poems, 11.18-15.21 and 18.18-20.18, which present a dispute between Jeremiah and Yahweh over the nature of Jeremiah's prophetic mission, and a dispute between Jeremiah and the nation over what the fate of the nation will be. Polk is more interested in the 'language of the self', and presents a complex and multi-dimensional analysis of Jeremiah's understanding of himself as a prophet. In summarizing these two works, Carroll notes, 'The very sophisticated readings of the laments by Diamond and Polk help to point forward to newer strategies for reading Jeremiah which go beyond the traditional obsessions with history and the historical Jeremiah, to an understanding of the textualities of the book of Jeremiah and of the essential textuality of the Jeremiah figure represented by such textualities' (Carroll 1996: 210).

c. *Prophetic Conflict in Jeremiah*. The period surrounding the collapse of Judah and Jerusalem in 597 and 587 BCE is a time of conflicting prophetic strategies, as reflected in the books of Ezekiel and Jeremiah. Overholt (1970) presents an extensive analysis of prophetic conflict in Jeremiah. More recently, Hardmeier's 1990b work presents a redactional analysis of conflict narratives in Jeremiah 37-40 (and 2 Kings 18-20). Seitz's 1989b study also treats conflict in the book of Jeremiah, focusing on the conflict between Jeremiah, the king, and the princes. However, neither Hardmeier nor Seitz focus on conflict between Jeremiah and the other prophets (23.9-40; 27-29).

Significantly, while prophetic conflict is in the forefront in both Ezekiel and Jeremiah, the Deuteronomistic History is silent regarding prophetic conflict, and does not even mention Jeremiah (see Begg 1985). Regarding prophetic conflict in the book of Jeremiah, it is clear that, in chs. 27-29, Jeremiah is the protagonist standing against the prophets, especially Hananiah. A key issue, however, is whether the words against the prophets in 23.9-40

are directed, not only against other prophets, but also against Jeremiah. While reading the entire book of Jeremiah as the product of Jeremiah and Baruch may, perhaps, provide some grounds for excluding Jeremiah from the criticism presented in ch. 23, Carroll notes that ‘the close proximity of 23.18, 22 and 25.3-7 still represents a glaringly deconstructive moment in the Jeremiah tradition. The prophet who has condemned all the other prophets for failing to turn the nation is himself guilty of failing to turn the nation’ (Carroll 1996: 211). Jones, in contrast, argues concerning 23.9-40 that ‘Jeremiah himself shows that his quarrel was not with the prophets as an institution but with their abuse of their trust’ (Jones 1992: 303), assuming that it was a situation of Jeremiah vs. the prophets. He argues, ‘For the contemporaries of Jeremiah the prophets were the institutional prophets and their problem was to know what to make of the non-conforming, unpredictable, irrepressible Jeremiah’ (Jones 1992: 303).

Carroll also notes the substantial difference ‘between the LXX’s representation of Jeremiah as a prophet and the MT’s much increased focus on him as such (cf. Auld 1983, 1984; Carroll 1986: 55-63)’ (Carroll 1996: 211). Given the tendency of biblical writers to want to make each major figure in the Bible into a prophet, Carroll sees ‘a *prima facie* case for asking the question, “was the original Jeremiah a prophet, or have the redactors created a Jeremiah in the image of a prophet?”’ (Carroll 1996: 212). Most scholars have not been willing to look at the text of Jeremiah this radically. Carroll notes ‘the extreme difficulty of demonstrating that there is anything of a historically reliable nature in the book of Jeremiah’ (Carroll 1996: 212). Jones argues that ‘The historical figure of Jeremiah is necessary to the facts. To dispense with him is to leave the tradition without its inspiration or its explanation, and it is gratuitous to do so’ (Jones 1992: 62-63). Carroll’s rejoinder is ‘Perhaps it would have saved a great deal of puzzled exegesis in the twentieth century if the Deuteronomistic Historian(s) had shown even the slightest knowledge of and interest in a prophet named Jeremiah who was active in the closing decades of the Judean kingdom’ (Carroll 1996: 213).

d. *Jeremiah 30–31*. Carroll discusses Jeremiah 30–31 as a passage exemplifying the considerable divergence among scholars in their interpretations of the book. These chapters ‘polarize commentators in that some of them read the poems as coming from Jeremiah’s youthful period (cf. Lohfink 1981) and others read them as being post-Jeremianic (formal analysis in Holladay 1989: 155-71). Jeremiah 30–31 may also be read in conjunction with chs. 2–3, so that intertextual connections can be made between the two pericopae as the framing of the Jeremiah tradition’ (Carroll 1996: 213). Carroll also observes that, if one postulates a different redaction than that represented in the MT and LXX, one might see chs. 2–3 and chs. 30–31 as an *inclusio* surrounding a large body of Jeremianic material. Or, one might

dwell on the similarities between the tropes in Isaiah 40–55 and the rhetoric of Jeremiah 30–31, and understand both as literature produced by the post-exilic community.

One could also focus on the feminist images and metaphors employed in these chapters. Bozak (1991: 155–72) shows how the text fluctuates ‘between masculine and feminine forms of address’ (Carroll 1996: 213). In chs. 2–3 ‘Jerusalem’s destruction is represented rhetorically...as a savage attack on a woman that is quite justified and as the violation of a whore [cp. Hosea 1–3; and Ezek. 16 and 23]... whereas in ch. 31 there is a switch to the language of tenderness and renewal’ (Carroll 1996: 213). Bozak sees Israelite women living in exile coming to realize the greater role women could play in society: ‘It would be hard to imagine that Israelite women, living side by side with the Babylonian/Mesopotamian, could have escaped the influence of these ideas of greater autonomy and a wider role in society’ (1991: 164–65).

e. *Feminine Imagery in Jeremiah and the Ethics of Interpretation.* According to Carroll, ‘there is in Jeremiah...a considerable degree of obscene language (what Carroll [1986: 134] has called “religious pornography”) especially in relation to negative feminine images’ (1996: 214). A number of feminist interpreters of Jeremiah have expressed serious concern over the presence of such language in a document considered sacred by so many religious communities (cf. Exum 1995). As Carroll says, passages such as Hosea 1 and 3, Ezek. 16 and 23, and Jer. 2–3, 5.7–8, and 13.21–27 ‘raise many questions of interpretation as well as requiring an *Ideologiekritik* approach which will come to terms with the ideology underlying the text. Feminist interests...are concerned with the deforming effects of reading the Bible in modern society’ (Carroll 1996: 214). Carroll adds that ‘It is...the theological commentators, who insist on reading the book of Jeremiah as if it were the word of God for our time (cf. Craigie *et al.* 1991: xxxi), who must answer directly for the problematic things in Jeremiah and who must explain how they should be read in contemporary society’ (1996: 215).

5. *Conclusion.* In summing up the state of scholarship in 1996, Carroll concludes that there has been a ‘surplus of meaning’. Different approaches to the text, with a wide variety of assumptions and methodologies, have led to a considerable variety in the manner in which each specific text may be understood. There has been serious conflict and disagreement among the various readers of the text. Noting that it was unpleasant for him to encounter the degree of conflict present in contemporary studies on the book of Jeremiah, Carroll argues that this is amplified by the ‘disjointed, untidy, and difficult’ nature of the book of Jeremiah (1996: 216). Due to the manner in which interpretations of Jeremiah are splaying in all directions, Carroll concludes, again from the perspective of 1996, that he ‘would

not expect to encounter again as magnificent or as comprehensive accounts of the book of Jeremiah as have been produced by the commentaries of Holladay and McKane' (1996: 216). Finally, he observes that: 'The rise of feminism, reader-response interpretation and other postmodern approaches to the Bible will take Jeremiah studies off in many new, exciting and unpredictable directions' (1996: 216).

B. Robert Carroll: 'Century's End: Jeremiah Studies at the Beginning of the Third Millennium'. CR:BS 8 (2000), 18-58.

Carroll begins his second article by calling the reader's attention to the 24-page bibliography it contains, thereby greatly expanding the 20-page bibliography Carroll had presented in his first article. The amount of recent scholarship on Jeremiah is enormous.

In Carroll's opinion, 'the great age of *innovation* in Jeremiah studies represented by the last two decades of the twentieth century probably has now come to an end' (Carroll 2000: 217). Although Carroll's assessment here may be premature, he does indicate that he hopes 'for some further broadening out of newer approaches to and developments of radical rethinking about the book of Jeremiah' (Carroll 2000: 218). He then outlines what he sees to be the broad spectrum of scholarly options available for the study of the book of Jeremiah at the close of the 20th century. He lists the commentaries of Holladay (1986, 1989) and McKane (1986, 1996b) as poles near opposite ends of the spectrum, with many other studies scattered near and between these two poles. Brueggemann's 1998 commentary is described 'as *theologically* the most acceptable form of exegeted reading of the book of Jeremiah' (Carroll 2000: 218), alongside Holladay's two-volume commentary. The evangelical point of view is represented by Thompson's 1980 commentary, as well as the two-volume Word Biblical Commentary on Jeremiah (1991, 1995), authored by six writers. Bright's 1965 commentary has been, of course, very influential, even though, at 40 plus years of age, it is becoming obsolete. Carroll places himself near the McKane end of the spectrum, while noting, as will be seen below, that there are some significant differences between McKane and Carroll, even as Carroll indicates that his own position has changed significantly since the publication of his 1986 commentary. Summing up the situation in Jeremiah studies as the new century begins, Carroll observes that 'the situation of Jeremiah studies may fairly be described as being in a most interesting state, constituted by a dialectic of conservative reinterpretation and radical rethinking' (Carroll 2000: 218).

Carroll sees the more conservative approach, represented by scholars like Holladay and Lundbom, along with Brueggemann, who represents 'some sort of theological affirmation of the text *as stated*', to be, in America, the approach likely to be 'the dominant voice in Jeremiah studies in the twenty-

first century'. McKane, however, with his strong emphasis on the inconcinnity of the various textual units in Jeremiah, 'will be a powerful antidote to their voice' (Carroll 2000: 218). Other voices will accompany McKane's critique, such as Biddle's 1996 work on the polyphony to be found in Jeremiah, and a number of the articles published in the 1999 volume edited by Diamond, O'Connor, and Stulman. In comparison to the United States, Carroll sees the environment in Europe to be quite different. '[T]he radical critique of the Bible, started in the Enlightenment, will continue at a sharper pace and deeper level than has been the case in the United States' (Carroll 2000: 219).

Carroll then points to the SBL Consultation on 'The Composition of the Book of Jeremiah' as:

a great admixture of conservative and radical voices vying with each other to advance the discussion on Jeremiah in various different directions. No sense of consensus was ever produced, and the disparity of the distinctive voices arguing very different readings of the text, its context and reception was, for me, the most important and distinctive feature of the Consultation. (Carroll 2000: 219)

Some of these areas of sharp disagreement will continue well into the 21st century. There is the issue of McKane's arguments for inconcinnity and rolling corpus in the book of Jeremiah, countered by the traditional reading of the text as a work of concinnity (McConville 1993; see Stulman 1998). Adding to the argument for inconcinnity will be postmodernist approaches, which go beyond older ways of reading the Bible, as Pippin observes in her comment that 'ideological criticism sounds a necessary warning that the previous enclosure of biblical studies is crumbling' (Pippin 1996: 68). As Carroll notes, 'If this claim is in any sense true...then holistic claims about the book of Jeremiah, including all the canonical criticism approaches which have a tendency toward holism, will become subject to dismantling under postmodernist terms' (Carroll 2000: 220). Carroll believes that these postmodernist approaches will move Jeremiah studies in the direction of the inconcinnity pole of the spectrum.

While Jeremiah studies as they have been practiced for decades have clearly not yet crumbled, as evidenced by the revival, renovation, and bolstering of the conservative, historicist end of the spectrum of Jeremiah studies by scholars such as Holladay, Brueggemann, Clements, Jones, McConville, and Lundbom, Carroll argues that cracks in the superstructure are clearly present. Carroll (2000: 221) cites McConville's words (1993: 181), adding his own emphasis:

The full story of the growth of the book is *probably* impossible to tell... I would suggest, however, that it occurred in the context of the prophet's ongoing ministry, and in his latter years, *possibly* in the context of repeated communications with the exiles. Quite how, and whether, he could have

continued to do this from Egypt *is hard to know*... The view which we have taken in this book, however, is that the MT, *or at least the substance of it, may be* the latest stage in the prophet's own manifesto of hope for the exilic community.

Pointing to the many instances of 'ignorance or agnosticism' in that quote, Carroll argues that McConville's own words

are sufficient to help to support the case (made by others) that *there is much which is not known* about how the book of Jeremiah came into being. The belief that the book represents Jeremiah's 'own manifesto' is quite clearly asserted by McConville, but it remains only a belief. There is not evidence for it—whether archaeological, historical or rational argument... Such levels of agnosticism will certainly allow for the provision of foundations, however shaky (but clearly no shakier than conventional beliefs about Jeremiah), for alternative accounts of the origins, growth and reception of the book of Jeremiah in Jeremiah studies in the twenty-first century. (Carroll 2000: 221)

Noting that the second volume of McKane's ICC Commentary (1996) did not appear until after his own, initial article on Jeremiah studies appeared in *Currents* in 1996, Carroll presents an assessment of McKane's second volume. He notes:

It is a thoroughly historicist reading of Jeremiah, but also an intensely argued dissection of the text of Jeremiah in terms of what may 'safely' be attributed to the historical Jeremiah, and what should be assigned to the developing tradition of the words of Jeremiah. McKane does, however, directly dissociate himself from any approach which would seem to entirely expunge any biographical value from the material in chs. 26–29, and chs. 34–45 (McKane 1996b: cxxxiv); so perhaps a considerable gap should be placed between him and Carroll on this particular point. (Carroll 2000: 222)

Nevertheless, pointing to their treatments of particular passages, such as Jeremiah 44, Carroll notes that, while there are differences between him and McKane, those differences are small in comparison to the major differences between McKane and Carroll, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, much of the scholarship described earlier by such scholars as Holladay, Brueggemann, Clements, Jones, McConville, etc.

In further discussing McKane's two volumes, Carroll speaks highly of 'the opportunity taken by McKane to make an infinite number of fine discriminations and distinctions in the exegesis of the Hebrew text of Jeremiah and the versions associated with it' (Carroll 2000: 223–24). He also notes:

In all the recent scholarly discussions about the biblical prophets as inspired intermediaries between this world and the other world...only McKane seems to have stated the obvious... 'God does not speak Hebrew' (McKane 1998: 23)... As a general point of principle for reading biblical prophecy,

McKane's premise that 'All language is human language and God does not speak' (McKane 1986: xcix) should make a good starting-point for serious discussion about the book of Jeremiah in the twenty-first century. (Carroll 2000: 224)

Turning to Stulman's *Order amid Chaos: Jeremiah as Symbolic Tapestry* (1998), Carroll notes that, while it is written along the lines of approaches such as those of Holladay and Brueggemann, it nevertheless does an excellent job of exploring the disparate threads that form the tapestry of the current text. 'Taking up the elements of inconcinnities and concinnities in the book of Jeremiah, Stulman provides a very good discussion of the different ways of treating the chaos element detected by so many contemporary readers of Jeremiah, and offers a way of incorporating both notions of chaos and order in an account of the book's structure' (Carroll 2000: 225). Carroll quotes Stulman:

Jeremiah perhaps more than any other prophetic book in the Bible is thematically discordant and fraught with contradictions and conflictual tensions. Its literary environment is harsh and strange, defying unifying strategies of any kind. Nevertheless, in the extant architecture of Jeremiah, the discordant voices of the text are contained and reconfigured within a framework of 'judgment and deliverance'. And so, Jeremiah 1–25 and Jeremiah 26–52 hang together as a liturgical 'call and response'. (1998: 118)

Stulman sees the first scroll to contain the anguished cries which appeared during the troubled times surrounding 587 BCE, while the second scroll contains words of hope and a vision for the future lying beyond the ripping apart of the Kingdom of Judah.

Carroll characterizes Stulman's book as well written, and based on decades of previous solid scholarship by Stulman. 'Readers who want resolutions to problems, the tidying up of the untidy and the ordering of disorder, so that order is brought forth from chaos, will benefit greatly from reading Stulman on Jeremiah' (Carroll 2000: 225). While he views Stulman as being overly optimistic about the possibility of bringing order out of chaos in the text of Jeremiah, Carroll nevertheless recognizes that Stulman's fine work will appeal to many readers, especially those of ecclesiastical or theological orientation. He notes, however, that theologians have a lot of work to do before they can relate the words of Jeremiah to the 21st century. The connections between then and now are neither direct nor obvious, and a too-facile oversimplification of the complex problems in the text of Jeremiah only makes more difficult our attempts to bridge this huge time gap. '*In my judgment*, the biblical theologians will need to do a lot more work on their readings of the biblical text of Jeremiah and on their own theology before they can produce anything even remotely approaching a satisfactory account of both in relation to each other for these dark days or, indeed, for the coming millennium' (Carroll 2000: 226).

1. *Reception History*. Reception history has recently begun to receive considerable attention among biblical scholars (as, for example, with the recent inauguration of the Blackwell Bible Commentaries, edited by Sawyer, Gunn, Rowland, and Kovacs). In his 1999d article (pp. 434-35) on the future of Jeremiah studies, Carroll briefly discusses the role he anticipates reception history will play in Jeremiah studies in the early 21st century, and he expands on that discussion in his second article in *Currents* treating contemporary Jeremiah studies (Carroll 2000: 226-29). He considers the task 'colossal', with an enormous amount of data needing analysis, and he points to the solid beginnings in *The Book of Jeremiah and Its Reception*, edited by Curtis and Romer (1997). Carroll notes that 'the book of Jeremiah has been profoundly influential in the shaping of much human thought since the Bible became part of Western culture (also perhaps part of global culture)' (Carroll 2000: 227). He points to the many 'lines [that] could be drawn from the aesthetic, artistic, intellectual, literary and religious traditions of many nations and centuries', and asks, 'ought not all such lines of connectedness between the biblical past and our own very different present...be more fully investigated in a proper reception-history of Jeremiah than they have been hitherto?' (Carroll 2000: 227).

According to Carroll, 'The more I investigate the history of the reception of Jeremiah (book, character, imagery, thought and tropes) directly and indirectly, the more I find reflections on and transformations of Jeremiah constituting the content of another world of thick description and dense analysis relating to the Bible and the history of human experience and reflection' (Carroll 2000: 228). Pointing to the writings discussing Jeremiah by Martin Luther King, Jr., and Dietrich Bonhoeffer as examples, Carroll observes: 'Modern writers who think of themselves in relation to the biblical prophets enroll themselves in the reception history of the prophets, even if only in terms of the vexed discussion about the place of prophets in modern society' (Carroll 2000: 228). Especially interesting is Carroll's discussion of the links being drawn by contemporary writers between the death camps of the Nazis and reflections based on some of the more troubling passages (such as the laments) in the book of Jeremiah. 'For example, Seybold writes about Jeremiah as the Paul Celan of the prophets: "the zone of death is his territory... Jeremiah was the Celan of the prophets" (1993: 169, 203; cf. Felstiner 1995: 236-38)' (Carroll 2000: 228). Celan, a major poet of our time, writes in the shadow of his experiences in the death camps of Hitler, and there is a strong connection between his work and that of Jeremiah, 'one of the great elegiac, lament-writing poets of the Bible' (Carroll 2000: 228).

Carroll also points to the frequency with which he sees connections between Jeremiah and the world in which we live. For example, referring to a description of Noam Chomsky's book *Fateful Triangle* (1999)

as ‘a jeremiad in the prophetic tradition’ (back cover of Chomsky’s book), Carroll observes ‘The allusion to Jeremiah inherent in the English technical word “jeremiad” (meaning: “a long mournful lamentation or complaint”) renders the ancient prophet part and parcel of our everyday language. At the same time, the implied identification of Chomsky as a kind of “modern Jeremiah” is a highly suggestive and appropriate linking of a very fine critical contemporary voice with that of an ancient prophetic critical voice of comparable status’ (Carroll 2000: 229).

Concluding his discussion of reception history and the book of Jeremiah, Carroll observes ‘The task of writing this kind of reception history of Jeremiah is only in its infancy, but I firmly believe that the twenty-first century will have to make a very serious attempt to write such a comprehensive reception history of the book of Jeremiah’ (Carroll 2000: 229). He notes that some scholarly purists will no doubt object to mixing ‘pure’ scholarship with the wide range of analogies likely to be conjured up by such a reception history, analogies which will cover the spectrum from intellectual history to popular works, but he then asks ‘in these postmodern times, what other kind of reception history would be worth writing?’ (Carroll 2000: 229).

2. *Feminist Readings of Jeremiah.* Pointing to the work of Bauer as an example, Carroll notes the continuing flow of important works on Jeremiah from feminist critics. He observes ‘The dominant tropes used in the early chapters of the book of Jeremiah (esp. chs. 2–5) are so focused on sexual and erotic discourses that it is inevitable that late twentieth-century feminist and other scrutinies should attend to the text in the most searching and critical way... [this] material ... provides huge resources for feminist and intertextual analyses’ (Carroll 2000: 229). Carroll also points to N. Lee’s treatment of the Cain and Abel story (1999) as a power subtext for Jeremiah 2.1–9. Carroll also cites Weems, who claims that ‘2.2–3 sets the tone for the rest of the book in that the prophet allows the romanticization of Israel’s past to conjure up a range of emotions, attitudes, and values that had to do with marriage, family, and romance against which all subsequent images, scenes, and counterarguments in the book would be weighed’ (1995: 94). Carroll argues that these factors have caused significant interpretive and ethical problems for modern scholars, especially when one looks at the ‘notions of the erotic relationship between Israel and YHWH’ (Carroll 2000: 230).

3. *Conclusion.* Carroll concludes that the ‘radical and far reaching innovations in Jeremiah studies’, which feminist criticism has brought forth in the past few years, along with Biddle’s notion of ‘Jeremiah as hypertext’, have the potential to contribute significantly to a creative rethinking of how the book of Jeremiah is understood (Carroll 2000: 230). As Carroll sees it, ‘the book of Jeremiah still has a “capacity to surprise” (Hill 1999b: 218),

especially since ‘elements in the sub-discipline of Jeremiah studies are still venturing out into the uncharted waters of new reading strategies and theoretical appropriations of the text’ (Carroll 2000: 230-31).

C. Pete (A. R.) Diamond: *‘The Jeremiah Guild in the Twenty-first Century: Variety Reigns Supreme’* (2008).

Beginning his article bringing Jeremiah studies up to the present date, Diamond notes the impact that Carroll and McKane have had on Jeremiah studies. While numerous scholars, to be discussed below, continue to construct histories of Jeremiah and his times on the presumption that the text of the book can be treated as a historical source, Carroll and McKane have clearly and forcefully raised an issue that is difficult to ignore: the (at times) radical incongruities in the text of Jeremiah, its inconcinnities, which present multiple problems in reconstructing the text of the book and its redactional stages, and in reconstructing a historical core of Jeremiah’s life. Describing Carroll, Diamond notes (p. 233), ‘Carroll...fundamentally questioned all-too-easy assumptions about the historicity of the *Jeremianic* [the scroll of the book] traditions. He argued instead for a fictional prophetic figure, largely the symbolic construct of conflicting ideological interests in the production of the scroll’. According to Diamond, Carroll anticipated McKane’s emphasis on ‘inconcinnity and non-systematic composition’. Diamond describes McKane (1986, 1996) as one who ‘stressed in his concept of a “rolling corpus” a compositional process characterized by extreme inconcinnity, lacking in any overarching, systematic editorial rationale’ (Diamond 2008: 233). In varying degrees, these two scholars have influenced a good deal of recent Jeremiah scholarship.

1. *Historical-Biographical Romances*. Diamond points to a number of recent works (such as Chisholm 2002; Glatt-Gilad 2000; Hoffmann 2001b, 2001c; Holladay 2003; Lundbom 1999, 2004a, 2004b) for whose authors ‘the meaning of *Jeremiah* continues to lie in fable—i.e., the continued exposition of the life and times of Jeremiah ben Hilkiah (henceforth, JEREMIAH), with the scroll a safe crucible in which to concoct biographical and historical romance’ (Diamond 2008: 233). However, Diamond notes that ‘If you have not already been convinced about the substantial historical reliability of the prophet portrayed in *Jeremiah* and also of a substantial JEREMIAH/BARUCH [JEREMIAH ben Hilkiah and his scribe] agency for the existing scroll, it is not likely that any of the current reiterations of this position will prove convincing—no matter how ably written’ (Diamond 2008: 233).

Why is this so? The first factor is that no significant new historical information or evidence about JEREMIAH the prophet has become available to support or flesh out our picture of JEREMIAH. The second is that ‘no new argument in favor of this way of reading is offered in current reiterations

of JEREMIAH's romance... Reconstruction is still no better than slightly modified paraphrase of what the scroll offers' (Diamond 2008: 233-34). Although, in Diamond's opinion, the text of *Jeremiah* is filled with many inconcinnities, for numerous scholars 'a represented, fictional Jeremiah remains too incredible to contemplate' (p. 234). Diamond notes that many

biographically oriented readers [have] ... a too infrequently stated assumption—namely, that positing a historical Jeremiah ben Hilkiyah as instigating impetus best accounts for the creation of so expansive a tradition in all its interests, obsessions and developments (Clements 2004). The existence of the tradition demands the existence of a JEREMIAH as historical catalyst to account for its production. (p. 234)

That might not be an unreasonable assumption, were it not for the fact that the book often deconstructs itself, and deconstructs this assumption, even as scholars study it closely in their attempts to recover history from its highly complicated and problematic text.

The variations in the LXX and the MT add weight to Diamond's point. Using the oracular tradition in ch. 27 as an example, Diamond notes:

What represents JEREMIAH's authentic oracular speech in the LXXV (Hebrew precursor to the Septuagint [LXX]) becomes in the MT (Masoretic Text) false prophecy in the mouths of his opponents (v. 14). What was JEREMIANIC unconditional announcement of doom upon what remains of the Jerusalem community and cult in the LXXV becomes in the MT alternative preaching that envisions an assured restoration, differing from JEREMIAH's opponents only in the time-table assumed (vv. 17-21). More than one prophet lays claim to JEREMIAH in *Jeremiah*... [H]ow are we to recognize JEREMIAH and award his crown to the various characters portrayed in the scroll? (pp. 234-35)

Clearly, the fluidity of these oracular traditions as they are conveyed through time is disconcerting, and similar problems are encountered throughout the book. As Diamond notes, 'Signs of re-contextualization, alteration, and invention of tradition repeatedly deconstruct confidence in our ability to leap from textually embodied figure to historical personage. These transactions are pervasive in *Jeremiah*' (Diamond 2008: 235). As an example, Diamond points to oracles inviting Judah to national repentance, which stand in contrast to oracles of irrevocable doom (cp. 4.3-4, 14 and 6.8, 16-17 with 4.11-12, 18, 23-26, 28; 6.11-12, 18-19). When one adds to this the 'highly intertextual character among different parts of the scroll, and with other prophetic collections...[t]he motility of oracular attribution to specific prophetic agency and/or occasion is on clear display, and deconstructs our desire for stable authorial agency, ownership, and identity (p. 235).

Arguing that a particular historical personage is the best explanation for the production of *Jeremiah* (Fretheim 2002: 11-16; Lundbom 1999: 106-120; Sharp 2003: 1-27; Carroll 2004; Clements 2004; DeMoor 2002; Barstad 2002)

thus appears to be ill-advised. ‘The assumption underestimates the inventiveness and creativity of human culture’ and limits the ‘catalyzing event... to a romantic vision of the great historical personality as the only plausible rationale for the creation of “biography” ’ (Diamond 2008: 235). Pointing to ‘folkloristic processes’ in both the ancient and the modern world, Diamond notes that these processes ‘are as capable of serving up historicized fictional characters, as they are of fictionalizing historical figures’ (p. 235).

Diamond uses the *Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter (1902) to present a tongue-in-cheek critique of those who would argue that we must presume a historical JEREMIAH as the most reasonable explanation for the production of the book of *Jeremiah*. He mentions Moby Dick and Tom Sawyer and imagines a figure centuries from now trying to deal with the issue of the historical veracity of these figures, ‘with all their richness of cultural detail and verisimilitude. Absent sufficient contemporary external resources, how will they distinguish artistic cunning from historical representation?’ (Diamond 2008: 236-37). Modulating to Jeremiah, Diamond asks, ‘If all the second temple traditions about JEREMIAH and BARUCH were telescoped and contained within *Jeremiah*, what reliable critical criteria would we be able to deploy to effectively sift the fictional, legendary elaboration from the supposed historical—so that we could convincingly claim we know something of JEREMIAH?’ (p. 237).

In light of all this, Diamond asks why ‘Carrollesque hypotheses about the fictionality of Jeremiah-portrayed [should] be considered so incredible...in light...of postmodern sensitivity to the textuality of history, and to the complexity of textual representation—even of realism’s variety...and in light of the textual complexity, variety and cunning on display within *Jeremiah* and literatures of the ancient world’ (Diamond 2008: 237). Nevertheless, Diamond does not

claim to disprove Jeremiah’s historicity, nor even argue to that end. Nor do I argue that nothing of JEREMIAH, or oracles stemming from JEREMIAH, are to be found in the scroll. Instead, I argue that the creativity of cultural memory, the complexity of causes for symbolic processes, and the inventiveness of vested ideological engagement renders verisimilitude a poor bridge from the textual world to the ‘mirror-world’ to which we hope it refers. Thus, to argue for easy knowledge of JEREMIAH from the scroll alone does not instill much confidence... [R]ecent portrayals (Lundbom 1999: 107-20) of the life of JEREMIAH engage in a level of invention that they, ironically, so strenuously abject (Kristeva 1982), or deny to our beloved scroll. (Diamond 2008: 237)

2. *Fables of Compositional History*. Since for many scholars the scroll of *Jeremiah* and its inconcinnity complicates, and perhaps also frustrates, attempts to read and understand the text as we have it, ‘the guild must seek to concoct a second fable—the life and times of *Jeremiah* (the oracular

scroll)' (Diamond 2008: 237). After Thiel's extensive, two-volume study of the deuteronomic redaction of the book (1973, 1981), more recent works turn 'to an increasing proliferation of literary agents to account for the inconcinnity of *Jeremiah*' (Diamond 2008: 238; see Gosse 1999; J. Hill 2002; Parke-Taylor 2000; W. Schmidt 2003a; Sharp 2003; Stipp 2000). The often unspoken assumption appears to be that the confusing and conflicted shape of the book is best explained by multiple redactional agents, rather than by 'a single, profoundly confused or incoherent writer' (p. 238). This approach renders the text of *Jeremiah* a subject for many different dissections. Items such as the varying recensions suggested by the texts of the LXX and the MT certainly encourage the consideration of such multiple sources. While various redactional proposals differ in details, 'they share a common solution-type: ideologically conflicted, plural elite scribal agency, geographically (Jerusalem, Babylon, Egypt) and temporally (Neo-Babylonian, Persian, Hellenistic) distributed, engaging with the *Jeremianic* tradition and productive of it. Socio-political party strife best accounts for the inconcinnity of the scroll (M. Smith 1987c)' (Diamond 2008: 238).

Scholarly opinions about the redactional process vary from, on the one hand, Thiel (1973, 1981), who argues that 'editorial engagement has been systematically executed with coherent principles and thematic foci' (Diamond 2008: 238), to McKane (1986, 1996), who sees 'piecemeal, haphazard engagements limited to local contexts within the scroll' (Diamond 2008: 238). Sharp (2003) and Parke-Taylor (2000) prefer a 'piecemeal "rolling corpus"' (Diamond 2008: 238). Diamond (2003b) and Stulman (2005) discuss these ranges of redactional perspectives.

Diamond praises Parke-Taylor's *The Formation of the Book of Jeremiah: Doublets and Recurring Phrases* (2000) for its 'rich comparative catalogue of *Jeremiah*'s topographical features so germane to the development of any editorial theory for *Jeremiah*' (Diamond 2008: 238). He mentions Sharp (2003), who builds on Pohlman's pro-Babylonian proposal (1978) that sections of the third-person prose narratives in *Jeremiah* reflect the ideological perspectives of the elite Judeans deported to Babylon (as opposed to the perspectives of those who fled to Egypt, or remained in Palestine). While Sharp questions 'the criteria used to characterize so much of *Jeremianic* prose tradition as Deuteronomic' ...she 'attempts to re-characterize prose traditions in *Jeremiah* as Deutero-Jeremianic, more thoroughly and extensively affected...by the ideological conflicts already adumbrated in Pohlman's earlier thesis' (Diamond 2008: 239). Diamond questions Sharp's position, on the grounds of 'her failure to sketch out a politically and sociologically realistic portrait for the ideological opponents to the agenda of the Babylonian gola (community of Judeans deported to Babylon)'. Consequently, Sharp does not present 'a clear or credible picture of concrete political objectives beyond opposition' (Diamond 2008: 239).

While Stulman (2005) and Diamond (2003b) agree that varying, and often conflicting, scribal perspectives are contained in the traditions, they address differently the issue of the ‘readability’ of the final form of the text. Stulman ‘move[s] beyond the inconcinnity on display in the textual battle-field to find symbolic coherence in spite of it (Stulman 2005)’; whereas Diamond (2003b) ‘embrace[s] inconcinnity as a deliberate artistic strategy, as productive of meaning in the scribal artifact as it is destructive of it’ (Diamond 2008: 239).

Diamond sees two problems emerging from the use of the redaction critical model for understanding *Jeremiah*. The first is that the increase in the number of editorial agents, each with the editor’s own agenda, diverts us from studying the final form of the text. ‘We restructure reading *Jeremiah* as an engagement with serial editorial presentation and re-presentation’. We thereby ‘demonstrate an inability to conceive of composition and literary production in cultural terms different from our own. We do not understand the canons of beauty and intellectual pleasure—the aesthetic—that could produce a scroll like *Jeremiah*’ (Diamond 2008: 239).

Pointing to our tendency to ‘map out hypotheses of a conflicted scribal process’ and a ‘complex scribal artifact’, Diamond trenchantly asks, ‘What level of precision and detail, given the thinness of external controls, can we hope credibly to achieve by populating the ancient world with more and more anonymous scribal agents, by inference from and in response to every ideological twist and turn in *Jeremiah*? Does this approach offer a culturally and sociologically realistic model for literary production, dissemination and consumption within the first millennium BCE?’ (Diamond 2008: 239-40). Diamond goes on to ask: ‘Did vested parties trade shot and counter-shot, draft and re-draft? How did these conflicted parties know what each other’s *Jeremiah* was like? How did they get access to each other’s productions in order to introduce the literary and ideological inconcinnity that troubles the guild of *Jeremiah* so?’ (Diamond 2008: 240). ‘[D]o we have an adequate theory of literary production and the sociology of reading in the first millennium that can help us imagine how the scroll of *Jeremiah*—with its complex literary topography intact—might have been visible in the ancient world...as an artifact for reading in its own right’ (p. 240). Diamond asks whether broader social-scientific analysis of Jerusalem during the period of the late monarchy, and of colonial Yehud, would help us in pursuing these editorial reconstructions. Right now, the empirical data are scant.

The second problem Diamond sees emerging from the use of the redaction critical model to understand *Jeremiah* is closely tied to our modern perspectives on what constitutes literary conjunction and literary disjunction, on what constitutes evidence for different sources, and what constitutes evidence of a single compositional editor. As Diamond notes:

notions of literary coherence, unity, and their opposites, implicate us all in the problems, weaknesses, and strengths of ethnocentric readings. One culture's, one person's, one guild member's editorial seam or literary inelegancy is another's art. . . . We do not yet have criteria (and analyses for that matter) that are adequately sophisticated to aid in our debates over literary discernment. . . . Absence of disjunction is no argument for absence of editorial activity. Unity of composition can be a mask for compositional artistry. The semblance of textual innocence offers a point of seduction for redaction critical naïveté. . . . [H]ow do we judge when the critic is over-reading disunity and disjunction or vice versa? Absent a windfall of new comparative historical literary data, I see no help in this regard except by recourse to more sophisticated use of contemporary literary theory. (Diamond 2008: 240-41)

3. *Theological Substitutions*

Theologically oriented works on *Jeremiah* attempt to take the words and symbols in *Jeremiah* and make them palatable, understandable, and relevant to our contemporary times. As Diamond notes, this is always a treacherous enterprise, since it is tempting to (re)present the words, ideas, and teachings in *Jeremiah* in ways that are more ours than *Jeremiah's*. Thus, there is a fine line between appropriating *Jeremiah* and modulating it to address our modern situation, and making *Jeremiah* into a mirror which does little more than reflect our own ideas, needs, and solutions back to us. In describing theology, properly conceived, Diamond notes, 'Theological readings must take symbolic possession of *Jeremiah's* Yahweh so that the latter's voice echoes the divine voice of local communal conviction and becomes useful to local ways of world-making' (Diamond 2008: 241). Two recent theological readings, by Fretheim (2002) and Stulman (2004a; 2005)

are as creative, rich, suggestive and rewarding as anything produced by the old masters (Eichrodt 1961; von Rad 2001, etc.). But the increasing pluralism of method and literary theory brought to bear on reading *Jeremiah* complicates evaluation of such theological performances—not to mention the plurality of both parochial (religious, faith-community), and non-parochial contexts of theological performance and audience reception. . . . (Diamond 2008: 241)

Since all reading is done from the perspective of some community identity, producing a new rendering meaningful to that community, 'contemporary theological engagements commit symbolic transformations of *Jeremiah* with hermeneutical arts not unlike the symbolic, cultural processes generative of the ancient scroll in the first place' (p. 242). In this enterprise, caution is in order, for '[t]heological readings have a penchant for creating a sense of innocence about *Jeremiah* for the theologian's audience—confessional or otherwise—even as we project our own issues of cultural power into *Jeremiah's* poetics' (p. 242). Diamond calls for scholars to become more sophisticated in their analysis of their own assumptions and needs as

readers, and to assess carefully their own (re)presentations of the symbols in *Jeremiah*. 'I do not protest that we find reservoirs of meaning (Ricoeur; see Hahn 1995) in *Jeremiah*'s figuration of the divine symbol. Rather, I argue, we all too often evade incisive evaluation of our theological transactions' (Diamond 2008: 242).

In treating Fretheim's 2002 work, Diamond notes that Fretheim's 'frequent unmasking in the midst of his theological performance... is a salutary beginning, for it wakes critical distance even as desire hungers for Yahwistic meaningfulness. It also renders the interpretive point of view polyphonic' (Diamond 2008: 242). Seeing this as 'a fitting increase of sophistication in theological readings that masquerade god in *Jeremiah*'s discourse', Diamond goes on to ask 'How can future theological readings proceed beyond simple unmasking to perform their constructive theological work, and yet leave visible the political agencies, the poetics of power at work in the scroll's many voices, as well as their own?' (p. 242).

Noting that reductionism is always both a danger and a temptation to those who would domesticate and make palatable to the modern reader the many voices in *Jeremiah*, Diamond argues that 'theological performance must foreground some features of *Jeremiah*'s discourse, background others, and flatly deny still others when all else fails, in order to produce the Yahweh of its desire' (Diamond 2008: 242). Diamond notes that Fretheim pulls back from a punitive deity (2002: 31-33), Stulman (2005: 21-27) from a vindictive deity, even as both discuss 'a theology of divine passion', while Brueggemann (1998: 4-6) resists a god 'that suffers and inflicts suffering for the sake of love' (Diamond 2008: 243). Diamond then notes that '[i]nvoking the passion of god to mark a divinity capable of suffering alongside a suffering humanity... is too much an attempt to domesticate the myth of the Israelite deity for the sake of modern sensibilities and needs... It loses the psychological complexity, even the passionate pathological dangers of the deity represented by the tradition... [and] masks metaphorical representation deeply indebted to ancient Near Eastern mythic-symbolic processes' (Diamond 2008: 243).

Diamond emphasizes an obvious but often ignored truth: '*Jeremiah*'s Yahweh is an ancient Near Eastern deity' (2008: 243), and therefore a very different god than modern theologians are likely to find palatable. Furthermore, 'Yahweh is the *central* contested symbol among the voices staged within the scroll, for more than one deity lays claim to the name "Yahweh" (Diamond 2002)' (Diamond 2008: 243). Pointing to the creativity of contemporary theologians when they discuss the presentation of god in *Jeremiah*, Diamond concludes this section by asking, 'How are contemporary theological performances of *Jeremiah* to continue, and yet take more seriously than ever before the mythic, symbolic, and social processes at play in the creation of *Jeremiah*'s complex divine persona(e)?' (p. 243).

4. *Art of the Final Form*. Due to the tenuous and fluctuating nature of the results of redaction critical analysis, a number of scholars are turning their attention to the final form of the text of *Jeremiah*. Diamond mentions O'Connor's 2001 work, Stulman's 2005 work, the volume edited by Kessler, *Reading the Book of Jeremiah: A Search for Coherence* (2004), as well as his own (Diamond 2003b). Diamond (2008: 244) then lists several points that are coalescing among scholars searching for ways to interpret the book as one that has an overall plan:

- a. Key chapters present previews or summaries of major themes treated in the texts they 'encircle', e.g., 1, 25, 45, 50–51;
- b. Some of these themes are 'foundational', creating clusters of texts and 'trajectories' that run throughout the text (such as 'foe from the north', 'to tear down and uproot // to build and to plant', 'prophet to the nations');
- c. The 'figure of the prophet serves to bind together the complexity of the traditions'; and,
- d. The prose sermons (chs. 7, 11, 25) 'supply structural guides for reading the less ordered poetic oracles'.

Having said this, Diamond asserts that these points in no way push aside the basic inconcinnity of *Jeremiah*, and scholars must remember the foundational inconcinnity of the book even as they strive to find concinnity. Diamond also notes that 'a good deal of these readings of the "final" form exhibit a limited repertoire of strategies for teasing out the poetics of the scroll' (2008: 244).

Thus, two opposites often are at work here. On the one hand, 'Complexity of authorial agency and inconcinnity as features in the scroll may be acknowledged, but such features are backgrounded, in practice, in the effort to demonstrate a larger space for coherence in the scroll than would normally be acknowledged by McKanesque or Carrollesque readers' (Diamond 2008: 245). Rhetorical critical works, such as those of Lundbom (1999, 2004a, 2004b) and M. Kessler (2003) can make valuable contributions here, but can also limit the search for concinnity to a search for art. On the other hand, 'the experience of high inconcinnity within macro units fights against the perception of coherence... [and] inconcinnity in the scroll prevents meaningfulness' (Diamond 2008: 245).

Though these readers...of the 'final' *Jeremiah* disagree with McKane's claim of the absence of an overarching plan and symbolic coherence for the scroll, yet in practice they *leave out* the inconcinnity, so manifest, as an object of interpretation. Rhetorical critical assumptions and practices for discerning literary unity, structure, and coherence are ill-equipped to deal with inconcinnity in literary composition... [and] their proposals remain vulnerable to deconstruction by the very inconcinnity they seek to overcome' (p. 245).

‘The method [of rhetorical criticism] applied to *Jeremiah* is more persuasive when deployed to local literary contexts (B. Becking 2004), but less convincing, too selective, often appearing arbitrary when it turns to macro-structural analysis of the scroll’ (Diamond 2008: 245). Consequently, scholars need to be careful about moving from discussions of intertextual coherence among specific sub-units within *Jeremiah* to claims about broader, compositional coherence among major sections of the book, or claims about the compositional development of the book. While Diamond finds Kessler’s argument persuasive that *Jeremiah* 1, 25, 45, and 50–51 form ‘key structural scaffolding for the scroll (M. Kessler 2004: 66), the LXX still exists to deconstruct the literary exertions of the MT. Thus, LXXV donates its own dissonant voice into the polyphony *Jeremiah* offers’ (Diamond 2008: 246). In short, the polyphony of the scroll can effectively deconstruct attempts to find overarching concinnity. Diamond urges rhetorical critics to delve more deeply into contemporary, ongoing literary-theoretical debates, encouraging *Jeremiah* scholars to turn ‘to modern and post-modern theories of communication, including the study of propaganda, along with social-scientific theories about the construction of social reality and authority, in our quest to wring meanings from the scroll’. Thus, scholars of *Jeremiah* need to engage ‘with the giants of literary and social theory in the (post-)modern world’ (pp. 246–47).

5. *Benediction & Alchemical Desires*. In looking to the future, Diamond raises the possibility of *Jeremiah*’s inconcinnity being ‘dissonant art’ and mentions essays by Smelik (2004a and 2004b), who ‘discovers a complex artistic strategy in the clash between pro-/anti-Babylonian oracular postures’, and by Carroll (2004), ‘who surveys the rich polyphony of *Jeremiah* to deconstructive artistic effect’ (Diamond 2008: 247). He points to the theory and critical practices of Julia Kristeva (1982), and refers to ‘Hill’s (2004) exploration of the symbolic world created by... *Jeremiah*’s art of coherence and art of dissonance’ (Diamond 2008: 247). Diamond also lauds ‘modern approaches to metaphor, symbol and myth’, noting positively the study of metaphor in two recent SBL working groups led by Holt. He concludes that, since such reading strategies rely ‘as they must upon voices of modern literary theory and critical practice’, a key question ‘is whether such experiments at reading the “final” *Jeremiah* beyond current routines constitute anachronistic acts transfiguring the scroll into a “form” of modern or post-modern literature’ (p. 248).

III. *Ezekiel*

A. *Katheryn Pfisterer Darr: ‘Ezekiel Among the Critics’*.

CR:BS 2 (1994), 9–24.

As is the case with Isaiah and Jeremiah, scholarly analyses of the book of Ezekiel have varied widely, ranging from scholars who argue for unity of

structure and authorship for the volume, to scholars who see very little of the prophet in the book, and find diverse voices and incompatible perspectives. In 1880, Smend argued that the book of Ezekiel has a ‘well thought out...quite schematic plan. We cannot remove any part without disturbing the whole structure’ (Smend 1880: xxi; translated in Zimmerli 1979: 3). In 1913, Driver saw no critical question regarding the unity of the book, ‘the whole from beginning to end bearing unmistakably the stamp of a single mind’ (Driver 1913: 279). In 1983, Greenberg reiterated this view of an Ezekiel-authored text with a unified structure and design, ‘contemporary with the 6th-century prophet and decisively shaped by him, if not [actually] the very words of Ezekiel himself’ (Greenberg 1983: 27).

A number of dissenting voices have, however, appeared to challenge this position. Holscher, in three successive works (1914, 1922, and 1924), argued that Ezekiel’s authentic oracles were highly ecstatic, while the words of subsequent redactors were not, and often altered and obscured the true nature of Ezekiel’s prophetic words. Under Holscher’s scholarly scrutiny, the authentic words of Ezekiel were reduced to 144 of the book’s 1273 verses (Zimmerli 1979: 5), primarily found scattered in bits and pieces among the first 32 chapters of the book, minus chs. 6–7, 10, 12–14, 18, 20, and 25–26 (Darr 1994: 250). Hertrich, a decade later (1933), argued that Ezekiel’s prophetic career took place in Jerusalem, and not among the exiles taken to Babylon in 597 BCE. Ezekiel’s subsequent exile silenced him, and a 597 deportee edited Ezekiel’s words, promoting the idea that true prophecy had traveled into exile in 597 with that elite group of deportees. According to Hertrich, this editor’s work is contained in chs. 40–48, as well as in material scattered throughout the earlier chapters (Darr 1994: 250).

The matter of the locale of Ezekiel’s work has been a hot issue. Fischer accepted the idea of Ezekiel’s deportation in 587 BCE, but argued for a return to Jerusalem, followed by another trip into exile (1939). Matthews (1939), in contrast, argued that Ezekiel’s ministry took place in Palestine, with his words reworked by an editor exiled in Babylon, followed by another revision by an apocalyptic school.

In 1936, Cooke spoke of a dramatic transformation in the study of Ezekiel: ‘In recent years the study of Ezekiel has undergone something of a revolution... It is no longer possible to treat the Book as the product of a single mind and a single age’ (p. v). Cooke could hardly state otherwise, in light of claims such as Torrey’s (1936) ‘that Ezekiel’s book was in fact a pseudo-epigraph, penned in the Hellenistic period (c. 230 BCE)’ (Darr 1994: 251). In 1931, J. Smith argued that Ezekiel’s prophetic career actually took place in the Northern Kingdom, with the prophet speaking ‘to the Northern Kingdom’s demise while at home, and later among the diaspora (734 BCE), only to return to Palestine in 691 and resume prophesying there’ (Darr 1994: 251). A later redactor changed this prophet’s context into that of a Judean exile.

In 1953, Rowley assessed Ezekiel studies up to that time. Noting the amazing variety of scholarly positions concerning the book's unity, as well as the location and date of the prophet's work, Rowley nevertheless asserted that, while the book no doubt contained some secondary elements, these did not constitute a major portion of the book. He also argued that the prophet's gift as a poet did not mean that he could not also have written prose passages, and he saw no reason to discount the book's claim about the location and time frame of the prophet's work. He also cautioned against resorting to 'psychological explanations of Ezekiel's behaviors and words' (Darr 1994: 251), since these could be best understood by consideration of the literary genre. Rowley's assessment to a large degree indicated the direction that subsequent Ezekiel studies would take, and coordinated nicely with Fohrer's 1952 commentary. Fohrer 'called for a return to a serious reckoning with the scroll's own assertions concerning *situ* and source' (Darr 1994: 251). Zimmerli notes that Fohrer 'came to the conclusion that we can certainly no longer speak in the old manner of the complete unity of the book of Ezekiel but [also] that the work on this book has first to start from its own claims as to the time and place of Ezekiel's activity' (1979: 8). Many critics today take seriously the calls of Rowley and Fohrer to begin with the scroll's own statements about its author and origins.

Darr discusses two recent major commentaries on Ezekiel, those of Zimmerli and Greenberg, which helped define the range of more recent Ezekiel studies. Zimmerli's two volume commentary appeared in German in 1969, and came out in English in 1979 and 1983 as part of the *Hermeneia* commentary series. Taking an approach between the extreme positions of Smend and Driver, on the one hand, and Holscher and Herntrich, on the other, Zimmerli 'placed Ezekiel's ministry solely within Babylon, attributed the scroll to the prophet and his "school", postulated that Ezekiel himself returned to and updated earlier oracles, and located the book's composition largely within the exilic period' (Darr 1994: 252). One strong aspect of Zimmerli's commentary is his close and discerning study of the text of the book, based upon the MT and the various versions. Darr mentions several other scholars who did a close study of the text, including, most recently, Wevers (1982), whose commentary on Ezekiel extensively relies on the LXX.

Darr describes Zimmerli's skills in form and tradition-historical criticism, which he used to get back to the 'original' form of certain passages. However, he also 'did not shirk the task of tracing the diachronic processes whereby earlier versions of text attained their final forms' (Darr 1994: 252). Darr argues that, throughout his commentary, Zimmerli 'remained remarkably attuned to Ezekiel's literary artistry, rhetorical strategies, and theological objectives. His knowledge was encyclopaedic, his insights innumerable' (Darr 1994: 252-53).

Problems that Darr sees in Zimmerli's work, problems about which others have expressed concern, include: his frequent reliance upon the LXX to resolve problems in the MT; the difficulty of seeing the final unity and dynamic of the text as we have it, since his methodology deals with 'primary' units before discussing 'secondary accretions;' and the issue of whether Zimmerli's 'purified' passages, which read smoothly, are 'congruent with Ezekiel's actual literary style' (Darr 1994: 253). For example, Carley (1975) and Boadt (1978) 'argue that repetitions and redundancy characterize Ezekiel's literary technique' (Darr 1994: 253). Despite these concerns, Zimmerli's work has made a monumental contribution to Ezekiel studies.

Greenberg's 1983 commentary in the Anchor Bible series, which treats Ezekiel 1–20, differs considerably from Zimmerli's work. While Zimmerli strives to remove the editorial accretions and work back toward the original Ezekiel corpus, Greenberg works to make sense of the book as it has been received. This includes both making sense of the structure of the book as it has come to us, and using the MT as it is, rather than resorting, as Zimmerli does, to substantial emendations based on the LXX. Greenberg presents a close study of 'biblical and early postbiblical Hebrew usage', and takes seriously the discussions of the problems in the text and the proposed solutions presented by 'premodern Jewish commentators' (Darr 1994: 253). He prefers a holistic approach to understanding the text, claiming that literary criteria employed in search of the original Ezekiel 'are simply *a priori*, an array of unproved [and unprovable] modern assumptions and conventions that confirm themselves through the results obtained by forcing them on the text and altering, reducing, and reordering it accordingly' (Greenberg 1983: 20). Holding a deep respect for what the texts themselves can reveal to us when studied thoroughly and patiently, Greenberg argues that such study uncovers a vision of the prophet's sixth-century world, shaped by him, if not the actual words of the prophet himself (pp. 26–27).

Comparing Greenberg to Zimmerli, Levenson notes (1984: 213): 'Whereas Zimmerli sees the book of Ezekiel as a puzzle which the exegete must put into an intelligible order, Moshe Greenberg sees it as a subtle work of art and the exegete's task as the demonstration of its intelligibility. Where Zimmerli is a plastic surgeon, Greenberg is a midwife, carefully uncovering ever more order and symmetry in a text before which he stands in obvious reverence'.

Darr asks whether there might not be a middle ground between Zimmerli and Greenberg, one that would preserve the benefits of each scholar's approach. Levinson notes that 'the redactors may have had more literary skill than either Zimmerli or Greenberg recognizes' (1984: 217).

Zimmerli sees a process whereby Ezekiel's words were transformed from oral to written form, 'from plain pronouncement to subsequent reflection,

from the prophet to his “school” ’ (Darr 1994: 254). Davis challenges the orality of Ezekiel’s words, as well as Zimmerli’s form-critical methodology:

The goal of his analysis is to isolate the self-contained speeches which he assumes to lie at the base of the present text. Yet it is telling that Zimmerli cannot answer the form critic’s fundamental question about how these speeches functioned in their original oral settings. Instead of trying to coordinate the speech forms with social practice in classical form critical manner, he traces their development through a purely literary process... Rather than anchoring the prophet’s language in the forms of community life, Zimmerli argues for its place in Ezekiel’s overall rhetorical and theological purpose. (1989: 16)

Thus, Davis questions the usefulness of form criticism as a means of explicating the text of Ezekiel. Darr notes that ‘For Davis, Zimmerli’s portrait of Ezekiel as an orator using straightforward speech forms to proclaim divine oracles fails to consider his signal role in moving prophecy from oral proclamation to literary work’ (1994: 254).

If Davis sees Ezekiel’s work more as scholarly activity than prophetic utterance, Davis thereby presents a position that had been anticipated by Ewald in 1868, when he said that Ezekiel ‘was more an author than a prophet, and his great book arose almost entirely out of literary effort’ (p. 207, translated in Zimmerli 1979: 3). Smend (1880) similarly noted that Ezekiel ‘wrote down in the eventide of his life his whole view of the current position of Israel, as well as its past and future’ (p. xvi, translated in Zimmerli 1979: 3). Reuss (1877) went so far as to deny that Ezekiel even had an oral ministry: ‘Ezekiel was not an orator; he was a writer’ (p. 10, translated in Zimmerli 1979: 4). Davis is unwilling to deny orality to Ezekiel. As Darr notes, ‘written composition need not rule out public proclamation of texts’ (1994: 255). Davis observes that ‘the shift to writing represents an attempt to deal with new problems faced by the first prophet of the exile and sets new conditions for the reception of the prophet and his message by the community’ (1989: 23). According to Darr, ‘For Davis, Ezekiel’s literary mode both permitted him to play the roles of social critic and visionary in his own day, and set the course for transforming prophecy from current word to written record... [*L*]iterary prophecy ultimately replaced oral proclamation as a permanent source of authority within reading, reflecting communities’ (1994: 255).

Some critics fault Davis for being too quick to abandon oral delivery as a primary mode of expression for Ezekiel and, as Darr notes, Davis is not always clear on exactly where she stands on the issue of oral versus written modes of expression for Ezekiel. Darr further observes, ‘Her interpretation of Ezekiel’s sign acts as literary devices, rather than actual performances, has a hollow ring, particularly when the text suggests that what Ezekiel *said* and *did* on given occasions provoked immediate audience response (cf. Ezek. 24.18-24)’ (1994: 256). Nevertheless, ‘critics applaud Davis’s return to early

insights concerning the literary quality of Ezekiel's book, braced now by contemporary theories of written discourse. She has helped balance emphasis on oral speech forms on the one hand with the composition and subsequent growth of *literary* texts on the other, highlighting the scroll's role in the transition from oral pronouncement to written prophecy' (1994: 256).

1. *The Text of Ezekiel*. While text critics agree that Ezekiel is written in difficult Hebrew, they disagree concerning the reliability of the MT. It does appear, however, that the LXX has a significant role to play in understanding the text of Ezekiel. 'Close analysis of the LXX suggests that the translation practices and theological agendas of the Greeks hold important clues to the book's compositional history' (Darr 1994: 256). An interesting feature of the text is the presence of 130 *hapax legomena* (words used only once in the Tanak; counted by Zimmerli 1979: 23). As one might imagine, numerous studies have been spawned in an attempt to clarify these unique words. Darr provides several examples.

2. *Ezekiel's Redactional History*. Several recent works continue this redactional quest, including those of Hossfeld (1983) and Bettenzoli (1979). Garscha (1974) proposes that only approximately 30 verses in Ezekiel derive from the prophet himself (17.2-10; 23.2-25). The basic structure and unity of the book were produced, Garscha argues, by a redactor who worked between 485 and 460 BCE. An additional redactional layer, which Garscha calls 'Deutero-Ezekiel', dates from 400–350 BCE, and is 'characterized both by acrimony against those never exiled and by various forms of the phrase "You shall know that I am Yahweh"' (Darr 1994: 257). A subsequent 'sacral law stratum' added the book's priestly caste. With some additional features, the book was completed by about 200 BCE.

Surveying the long history of attempts to discern the redactional history of the book of Ezekiel, Darr provides some trenchant comments:

[T]he very factors that have long led critics to speak of Ezekielian unity signal the need for caution as one assesses the reliability of minute criteria for distinguishing between redactional strata. Likewise, the widely differing results of investigations using such criteria suggest the need for serious reconsideration of the text's own claims regarding both authorship and literary unity. Inconsistencies cannot always be taken as clear-cut signs of redactors at work, since Ezekiel himself could have argued in different ways on different occasions, having different purposes in mind. (1994: 257)

3. *Ezekiel Among the Cognoscenti*. Pointing to the fact that the deportees from Judea in 587 BCE were taken from the highest levels of Judean society, Darr considers it hardly surprising that 'the book of Ezekiel reveals an author of unusual intellect, sophistication, knowledge and literary gifts, and

we should assume that his audience, Judah's cognoscenti, was equipped to understand him. Together, Ezekiel and his audience shared a complex web of cultural, social, political, economic, military, and social knowledge' (1994: 257). Ezekiel's skill and sophistication may be seen in: 'technical vocabularies, political commentary...and glistening, two-edged tropes' (p. 257). He knew of events and social conventions in societies distant from his own, and possessed considerable literary skill. He knew how to use a well-turned phrase to wield great power, as Newsom observes (1984) in her study of Ezekiel's oracles against Tyre. Even though not many scholars have paid close attention to the use of metaphor in biblical literature, Galambush's recent study (1992) explores in detail Ezekiel's use of the metaphor of Jerusalem as the wife of Yahweh. As Darr notes, Galambush's work has 'demonstrated the rewards of patiently probing a selected metaphor's ancient associations...its meanings and functions within a given literary context and against a larger backdrop of biblical and extrabiblical literary usage. Galambush explores how, through the image of sexual impurity, Ezekiel presents the pollution of Jerusalem and its temple' (1994: 258). Her trenchant analysis is most useful in helping us understand Ezekiel 16 and 23.

4. *Influences on Ezekiel and his Book.* Ezekiel and other biblical literatures have a good deal in common, such as 'priestly vocabulary and concepts (including priestly case law) and Deuteronomistic elements'. The final form of the book 'appears to be in a polemical dialogue with aspects of the Isaianic tradition' (Darr 1994: 258). Affinities with Deuteronomic vocabulary and thought seem clear, so Ezekiel may well have been influenced by the Deuteronomists. The priestly elements in Ezekiel are more complicated. One could argue that Ezekiel, a prophet/priest, introduced them, with perhaps later expansion by redactors. Or, the priestly factors derive completely from subsequent redaction (Garscha 1974). Where one sits on this issue can have a significant impact on our understanding of those passages in Ezekiel sharing traits with the Holiness Code in Leviticus, and of Ezekiel 40–48, which focuses on the temple and its cultic practices. Some, such as Greenberg (1983), see 40–48 as a unified piece, while others, such as Zimmerli (1983: see above) and Tuell (1992) see Ezekielian elements in 40–48 that were combined with later redactional accretions.

5. *Conclusion.* Darr is critical of the recent 'polarization' of scholarship on Ezekiel. She notes that some 'critics continue mining what the scroll can reveal about Israel's history, including its own redactional history', while other 'scholars choose to analyze the text in its present form as literature' (1994: 259), at times with no interest in any historical situation other than the critic's own. Often, advocates of one methodology see little value in the

other. Darr argues for an approach that values both methodologies, insisting that leaving one out can

diminish the potential of Ezekielian scholarship. After all, biblical scholarship yields historical and diachronic data that can shed light not just on a dimension behind the text but also on the text itself. And literary criticism need not (indeed, I would argue, should not) be an ahistorical enterprise. To the contrary, the study of ancient literary texts...discloses an important aspect of ancient Israel's history, its *literary* history (p. 259).

In Darr's opinion, future scholarship on Ezekiel must pay attention to both historical and literary approaches to the book.

B. Risa Levitt Kohn: 'Ezekiel at the Turn of the Century'. CBR 2.1 (2003), 9-31.

Near the beginning of her article, Levitt Kohn quotes Boadt regarding the lower level of interest in Ezekiel during previous generations of biblical scholarship: '[R]eaders and commentators alike were struck by Isaiah's soaring visions and Jeremiah's deep anguish...and were often a little embarrassed that Ezekiel seemed more a victim of hallucinations and fantasy than sound theology' (Boadt 1999: 4). Possible reasons for this lower level of scholarly attention include: the exilic setting of the prophet's work; the bizarre behavior of the prophet as recorded in the text; or even the clash between the priestly persona and the prophetic persona within Ezekiel himself (Sweeney 2001: 2-3). Whatever the reasons, this low level of interest changed dramatically when Zimmerli's two-volume commentary appeared in 1969, as Darr has already noted, and when the first volume of Greenberg's *Anchor Bible Commentary* appeared in 1983. More recently, Ezekielian studies have been energized by advances made in the study of the historical circumstances surrounding the Israelite Exile, by archaeological finds, and by sociological and anthropological analyses focused on this era.

Levitt Kohn mentions several commentaries published in the 1990s. Allen, who had completed Brownlee's commentary on Ezekiel 1-19 (1986) after Brownlee's death, subsequently published his own commentary on Ezekiel 20-48 (1990b), and then his own work on Ezekiel 1-19 (1994), expanding upon and replacing Brownlee's work. All three volumes appeared within the *Word Biblical Commentary* series. Allen, writing from an Evangelical perspective, adopts a mediating position between Zimmerli and Greenberg (see Darr's discussion above, pp. 60-67), arguing that 'the oral and literary work of the prophet provides the substance' of the book of Ezekiel, although the book as received 'shows evidence of much editorial activity undertaken by Ezekiel and his successors' (Allen 1994: xxvi). Block has also published a two-volume commentary on Ezekiel (1997, 1998) within an Evangelical series, the *New International Commentary*. As Levitt Kohn notes, 'Block interprets the text with careful attention paid to the emerging

new fields of rhetorical analysis, literary design and inner-biblical exegesis. Ultimately, Block views the book as evincing a meticulously unified and well-planned agenda, reflecting the historical setting of the prophet himself, with virtually no text dating to any later than 539 BCE' (2003: 262). Clearly, Greenberg (1983) and Davis (1989; see Darr above) have influenced Block's work. Levitt Kohn also mentions Clements's Westminster Bible Companion volume (1996), which is aimed primarily at laypersons. It emphasizes the link between Israelite thought and later Judaism and Christianity.

The second volume of Greenberg's Anchor Bible commentary, treating Ezekiel 21–37, appeared in 1997. Greenberg's holistic perspective on the book leads him to argue 'for the integrity of the received Masoretic version of the book as the product of "an individual authorial mind and hand"' (p. 396). Greenberg's analysis 'evinces what Greenberg views as the prophet's utter and complete familiarity with "almost every genre of Israelite literature known from the Bible"' (p. 395), as well as his familiarity with ancient Near Eastern culture and literature' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 262). An interesting feature of Greenberg's work is his 'use of premodern and medieval Jewish commentators to help elucidate the prophetic text' (p. 262).

Pohlmann's 1996 commentary on Ezekiel 1–19 provides a striking contrast to Greenberg's work. Writing under 'the influence of the radical Marburg school of *Literarkritik*... Pohlmann asserts that the book attained much of its present shape in Babylonia in the hands of generation upon generation of exiles, leaving but a hint of Ezekiel's original message' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 262).

1. *Literary Issues*. Since Graf (1866) and Wellhausen (1878), it has been recognized that 'the language and content of Ezekiel bear striking resemblance to that of the Priestly Source (P) of the Torah, and especially to the laws found in Leviticus 17–26, the Holiness Code (H)' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 262–63). Scholars continue to debate the extent and the direction of the relationship between these two. The argument was often focused on the issue of which one was dependent on the other. Hurvitz (1982: 20–23) was the first to refocus the debate 'by recognizing that biblical Hebrew underwent grammatical and lexical changes over time, and that it was possible to distinguish between classical biblical Hebrew (pre-exilic) and late biblical Hebrew (post-exilic)' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 263). This debate about the type of Hebrew found in Ezekiel continued until the late 1980s, after which it declined. Since then, Rooker has presented the only work continuing this debate (1990a; 1990b). Considering Ezekiel 'the best representative of the mediating link between pre-exilic and postexilic Hebrew and hence the exemplar of Biblical Hebrew in transition' (1990a: 186), Rooker aligns his position with that of Hurvitz.

Another factor refocusing the discussions on the relationship of Ezekiel to the Priestly traditions was the appearance of inner-biblical exegesis (see Fishbane 1985: 7-17). This type of exegesis focuses on 'the dynamic interplay among the various traditions of the Bible, particularly between the prophetic books and the Pentateuch' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 263). Fishbane's work on Ezekiel 'helped to shift the focus from the issue of simple chronological priority to an examination of the way in which authoritative biblical texts were reinterpreted in the face of new historical circumstances' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 263). As Fishbane notes: 'when divine words had apparently gone unfulfilled as originally proclaimed...or when new moral or spiritual meanings were applied to texts which had long since lost their vitality' (1985: 14), reinterpretation and reapplication became a necessity.

The work of Fishbane and Greenberg has spawned a good deal of new research into the way Ezekiel employs, and often reformulates, earlier biblical traditions. Greenberg notes that, in the many cases in which Ezekiel alludes to the characters and stories found in other parts of the Hebrew Bible, 'there is almost always a divergence large enough to raise the question, whether the prophet has purposely skewed the traditional material, or merely represents a version of it different from extant records' (1983: 29).

'What has emerged from these new investigations is a new-found appreciation for Ezekiel as a creative author and a shaper of Israelite traditions' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 264). Patton (1999) and Levitt Kohn (2002) have argued that Ezekiel creatively shaped the Israelite traditions he received, including those typically labeled 'Deuteronomistic', thereby addressing the new and challenging circumstances of Israel after the trauma of 597 and 587 BCE. Thus, matters are far more complicated than simply viewing Ezekiel as a book influenced by and/or edited in light of Deuteronomistic perspectives.

The relationship between materials in Ezekiel, such as chapter 20, which discusses the exodus experience (see Allen 1992; Eslinger 1998), and the pentateuchal traditions about the exodus experience, has come to the forefront in recent years. McKeating (1994) analyzes the close relationship between the traditions about Ezekiel and the traditions about Moses, examining elements such as: visionary experiences atop a mountain, visions of the sanctuary and the glory of God, and the reception of regulations concerning temple worship. As McKeating notes: 'The shaping of the Ezekiel traditions and the shaping of the pentateuchal traditions about Moses were going on in tandem, and probably in the same or related circles...the elaborators of the Ezekiel traditions were not drawing on the pentateuchal traditions in the form in which they are familiar to us' (1994: 108-109). Thus, the form of the traditions in the book of Ezekiel date from very early in the exilic period, before the material in the pentateuchal traditions had reached its final form.

Patton (1996) claims that, in formulating Ezekiel 20, Ezekiel used exodus traditions earlier than the ones now found in the Pentateuch to structure his reaction to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to prepare his contemporaries to receive the new laws contained in Ezekiel 40–48. Ezekiel presents himself as a new Moses: ‘It is clear that the author of Ezekiel 40–48 considered himself a legitimate mediator of the law. He believed Israel’s history was still open to the possibility of the revelation of new law... The book of Ezekiel manipulates the legal and historical traditions at hand in light of the...experience of loss, defeat and abandonment’ (p. 78).

Levitt Kohn, examining terms and expressions found in Ezekiel 20 and elsewhere in Ezekiel, argues that Ezekiel’s vision of the future for Israel combines priestly and Deuteronomic concepts with many ideas that were the prophet’s own. ‘These visions, of Judah restored, amount to nothing less than a “Second Exodus”, this time not from Egypt, but from Babylonia’ (2003: 265). Ezekiel’s portrayal as a new Moses ‘is a confluence of Priestly and Deuteronomic traditions. Ezekiel functions as prophet, priest and legislator; he is a prophet by calling, a priest by birthright’ (p. 265). Thus, Ezekiel created a new theology, which was neither a composite of its sources, nor independent of them.

2. *Ancient Near Eastern Influences.* As McKeating notes (1993: 44), the current, prevailing view is that Ezekiel functioned exclusively in the Diaspora, even though he was familiar with Jerusalem and its environs. Thus, the question of a possible influence on Ezekiel by cultural and linguistic factors from the Mesopotamian world becomes crucial. Bodi (1991: 35–51) ‘provides an exhaustive review of studies suggesting Babylonian philological, iconographic and thematic influences on the book of Ezekiel’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 265). His book closely studies motifs found both in Ezekiel and in the Akkadian Poem of Erra, arguing that Ezekiel emulates the poem in a number of ways. Sharon (1996) argues that Ezekiel’s temple vision (Ezekiel 40–48) ‘bears striking structural and contextual resemblance to Sumerian temple hymns, and to the Gudea Cylinders in particular’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 266).

While these instances suggest a positive usage of Mesopotamian materials, others see instances where Ezekiel used Mesopotamian traditions to ridicule Mesopotamian religion, while promoting the supremacy of Yahweh. Kutsko (2000a, 2000b) sees Ezekiel utilizing ‘Mesopotamian traditions regarding idolatry both to denounce non-Israelite gods, and to argue for Priestly ideology, which views humans as created in God’s image’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 266). Block (2000) argues ‘that Ezekiel’s concept of Yahweh’s abandonment results in part from the prevalence of this motif in Babylonian literature and iconography’, and sees Ezekiel using ‘this imagery in order to attack Babylonian theology while arguing for the ultimate supremacy of the Israelite god’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 266).

Malamat (1997) compares three images: the power of God's hand; the stick; and prophesying by means of eating a scroll—all prominent in Ezekiel—to similar images found in prophetic letters from Mari. De Thomasson (1992) compares the sign-acts of Ezekiel 2–5 to those found in Babylonian exorcism texts. Malul (1990) argues that Ezekiel was familiar with Mesopotamian legal adoption texts, and used his knowledge in depicting 'Yahweh's adoption of personified Jerusalem in Ezek. 16' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 266).

3. *The Psychology of Ezekiel*. Ezekiel's actions and words are, by almost any standard, unconventional, even bizarre. In a 1946 study, Broome diagnosed Ezekiel as a paranoid schizophrenic. His 'sign-acts' clearly portray the peculiarity of his behavior. Broome's article did not generate much interest in this question, but, more recently, Halperin's 1993 work *Seeking Ezekiel: Text and Psychology*, has revived the issue. 'Halperin's primary interest is to re-examine and revise Broome's initial psychoanalysis through close reading of several texts, primarily Ezekiel 8.7-12' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 267). Halperin follows Broome's suggestion that the act of digging presented in this passage symbolizes sexual intercourse. '[T]he prophet imagines himself having intercourse, but once "inside", he is filled with dread and disgust'. Halperin analyzes 'female loathing' here and in chs. 16, 23, and 24, and sees in Ezekiel 'a virtual Freudian smorgasbord' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 267). According to Halperin, Ezekiel is 'very far from being a lovable person. He emerges in these pages as an extreme exemplar of morbidity that afflicts many and perhaps all of human societies. This sickness...has effected the subjugation and humiliation of the female half of our species' (1993: 5).

Smith-Christopher (1999), while recognizing the unconventional behavior of the prophet, 'faults Halperin for failing to recognize what he believes to be a more pragmatic explanation of Ezekiel's psychological state', namely, the 'sociopolitical events of his adult life' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 267). The Exile and the other traumatic circumstances of Ezekiel's adult life are major factors helping to explain the behavior of the prophet. Smith-Christopher (1999: 135-37) points to Post-traumatic Stress Disorder as the best explanation of Ezekiel's behavior. 'Many of Ezekiel's "bizarre" actions modeled the trauma of the fall of Jerusalem. This can be true whether Ezekiel was acting on personal knowledge, on the knowledge brought to him by recent refugees, or whether the texts were redacted to reflect these realities' (p. 143). Thus, according to Smith-Christopher, Halperin ignores the circumstances and trauma of the Exile, and instead blames the victim.

4. *Ezekiel's Sign-Acts*. Friebe (1999) studies Ezekiel's sign acts as a form of non-verbal communication, and describes three basic elements: 'the

rhetorical situation of the act; the strategies employed; and the effect these acts had upon their intended audience' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 268). Comparing the techniques employed by Ezekiel to those of Jeremiah, Friebe sees both prophets as "suasive" or interactive communicators who used non-verbal behavior to "communicate graphically specifiable message-contents" (Levitt Kohn 2003: 268, quoting Friebe 1999: 466).

Odell (1998) suggests that the symbolic acts of Ezekiel 3.16–5.17 are to be understood in the context of Ezekiel 1.1–3.15, the narrative of the prophet's call. These five chapters, combined, show that Ezekiel was undergoing a transition from his identity as a priest to a new identity as a prophet. Thus, the 'sign-acts in Ezek. 3.16–5.17 are part of a transitional process or a "liminal state", a concept developed by V. Turner (1969), which Odell defines as "a situation in which one has separated from one's old identity but has not yet been fully invested in a new one" (Odell 1998: 235)' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 268). There is a second phase to this 'transitional process', called 'leveling' by V. Turner. 'Once one's identity has been relinquished, recognizing one's commonality with the rest of the community follows' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 268). Hence, Ezekiel commits 'anti-priestly behavior' (Odell 1998: 247), acts which render him ritually impure, such as shaving his head, and eating impure food. This makes him a full member of the community, rather than one who, as a priest, stands apart as one ritually pure.

5. Ezekiel, Metaphor and Gender: Adulterous Jerusalem in Ezekiel 16 and 23. Ezekiel 16 and 23 portray Jerusalem as Yahweh's unfaithful wife, a metaphor Ezekiel uses to stress the defilement of both the city and its temple. The inhabitants of the city have broken their covenant with Yahweh and, like the unfaithful wife in the metaphor, will ultimately be punished. In recent times, a substantial amount of feminist scholarship has responded to these chapters, focusing especially on the prophet's metaphorical depiction of sexual abuse and violence.

Galambush (1992) extends the metaphor beyond chs. 16 and 23, applying it to the entire book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel's imagery 'is influenced by the ancient Near Eastern concept of capital cities as wives of the cities' patron gods, and by the fact that women and their sexuality were controlled by the males in their lives' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 269). If Jerusalem is presented as Yahweh's wife, in chapters 16 and 23 the Temple is her vagina and uterus. Alliances made between Jerusalem and foreign nations are therefore adulterous. According to Galambush, the metaphor 'provides a convincing vehicle by which to depict (and justify) the intensity of Yahweh's outrage against the city' (1992: 159). P. Day argues that these pornographic depictions 'titillate, enrage and unite male hearers or readers...to identify with what the text presents as Yahweh's position *vis-a-vis* an unspeakably lewd and promiscuous wife' (2000a: 286).

Van Dijk-Hemmes, studying the metaphor in Ezekiel 23, and employing Setel's treatment (1985) of similar imagery in Hosea, 'notes that in both prophetic literature and contemporary pornography, female sexuality is a symbol of evil' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 269). 'Both sexes are forced to see the shameless stupidity of their political behaviour and the absolute hopelessness of their situation' (Van Dijk-Hemmes 1993: 169). 'Patton [2000] argues that the metaphors used by Ezekiel in chs. 16 and 23 are not meant to legitimate Israelite violence against women; but rather were utilized by the prophet to shock his audience' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 269).

P. Day (2000a: 289) takes issue with the scholarly understanding that the punishments pronounced against Jerusalem in Ezekiel 23 describe actual punishments employed in ancient Israel against adultery: stripping; jury trial; stoning; dismembering of the body. Rather, according to P. Day, 'there is little biblical or extrabiblical evidence to support the theory that these features accurately depict the lawful treatment of an adulterous woman in ancient Israel' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 270). P. Day instead concludes that the punishments enumerated in Ezekiel 23 depict the consequences Israel had to pay for breaching Yahweh's covenant.

6. Ezekiel 18: Corporate or Individual Responsibility? For many years, scholars have assumed that early Israel essentially adopted the view of a corporate, rather than an individual, relationship with Yahweh, while later Israel, as exemplified in passages like Ezekiel 18, moved toward a concept of 'individual responsibility in relationship to God' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 270; see Halpern 1991: 14-15; Lindbloom 1963: 387; von Rad 1962: 392-93). The progression toward 'a more individualistic theology was in turn viewed as a progression from a simpler to a more sophisticated mode of thought' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 270). In recent years, several scholars have challenged the application of this progression to an understanding of Ezekiel 18.

Joyce (1989) argues that, in Ezekiel 18, the prophet is focusing on 'the urgent need for his audience to accept responsibility as such' (p. 187). Thus, since Israel as a whole is responsible for the calamities that fell upon them, the prophet 'is primarily concerned with Israel's national repentance and subsequent corporate fate' (pp. 42-44). Matties (1990), recognizing that some emphasis is placed on the individual, sees Ezekiel 'as promoting the concept of "social self," an individual who cannot become divorced from the moral community' (Levitt Kohn 2003: 271). Thus, the individual and the group are interdependent as they move toward future restoration (Matties 1990: 150). Kaminsky (1995) suggests, 'rather than viewing Ezekiel 18 as a superior theology that has come to displace the older corporate ideas, one can affirm the importance of both sets of ideas and come to understand how they qualify and thus complement each other' (p. 189).

7. *Ezekiel 40–48: Utopian Vision or Religious Polity?* ‘There is... little scholarly consensus as to whether the temple vision found in these chapters constitutes an apocalyptic or a utopian dream, or whether the plan represents some form of historical reality’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 271). Tuell (1992) finds two sources in these chapters. The first, the ‘core vision’, is from Ezekiel himself (40.1–43; 44.1–2; 47.1–12, and 48.30–35). The second source is a legislative layer, or Law of the Temple, ‘containing rules for: (a) worship, (b) priesthood, (c) the civil ruler, and (d) the reapportionment of land (p. 176)’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 271). The second layer was added as part of a focused redaction designed to produce ‘a religious polity for restoration Judea’ (Tuell 1992: 18). ‘The final form of the text [of Ezekiel 40–48] is built on an authentic vision of Ezekiel, chosen by our editors as the perfect statement of their society’s foundation and end’ (p. 14). This took place during the reign of the Persian Darius I (521–486 BCE).

Duguid (1994) sees 40–48, and the book of Ezekiel as a whole, to be from the pen of a single writer during the exile, and Ezekiel’s vision in 40–48 as a utopian call for a ‘total re-ordering of society, with implications for every element of the community’ (p. 133). ‘Duguid posits that the prophet’s plan for the future with respect to each leadership group is directly related to Ezekiel’s critique of their past behavior’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 272). Thus, the Zadokites, due to their past righteousness, receive increased power and prestige, while the unfaithful Levites are demoted. ‘The prophets and lay leadership are entirely excluded in Ezekiel’s future plan, as their behavior is singled out as particularly reprehensible’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 272).

Stevenson (1996) argues that the text aims to ‘create a new human geography by changing access to space’ (p. xvii). ‘Using rhetorical analysis alongside the idea of territoriality as espoused by human geographers, Stevenson suggests that...any kind of modification of spatial organization transforms the society’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 272). In Ezekiel 40–48, the prophet ‘reasserts the supremacy of Yahweh and Yahweh’s sole claim to Israel’s kingship in direct response to the spatial violations which led to the Exile’ (Levitt Kohn 2003: 272).

Levitt Kohn concludes by noting that, while many Ezekiel scholars continue to employ assumptions and a methodology located somewhere between Zimmerli and Greenberg, ‘new postmodern modes of investigation have opened new venues of research. Gender analysis, the psycho-historical approach, rhetorical criticism, anthropological studies and other methods’ have brought a new vitality and richness to the study of the book of Ezekiel as scholarship on the book has moved into the twenty-first century (Levitt Kohn 2003: 272).

C. Risa Levitt Kohn: *‘Ezekiel Update’* (2008).

In her update on Ezekiel, Levitt Kohn begins by discussing three recent commentaries. Duguid’s volume (1999) is part of the *NIV Application*

Commentary series. It focuses especially on ‘the book’s significance for a contemporary Christian audience’ (Levitt Kohn 2008: 273). Duguid views the book as the product of the prophet himself, who later in his career may have edited his own prophecies. C. Wright (2001) presents a theological analysis, treating the text of Ezekiel thematically, presuming that the prophet targeted a confessional audience. Darr (2001) presents her works on Ezekiel as part of volume VI of the *New Interpreter’s Bible*, building on her earlier works on Ezekiel.

Biblical Hebrew is often viewed as evolving in two stages, pre-exilic and post-exilic. Ezekiel, standing at the crossroads between these stages, can therefore play a vital role in the study of the development of biblical Hebrew. Rooker (1990a, 1990b) sees evidence of both periods of evolution in the book of Ezekiel. Naude (2000, 2003) takes issue with Rooker’s position, examining the text of Ezekiel ‘from the perspective of the linguistic theory of language change and diffusion’ (Levitt Kohn 2008: 274).

The relationship between Ezekiel and Jeremiah has recently drawn considerable attention. Holladay (2001) suggests that, prior to the Exile, the two prophets may have known each other. Holladay proposes this in part to tone down the popular (mis)perception of the two prophets as solitary figures. He bases his suggestion on the close relationship between the words in Jer. 15.16, ‘Your words were found, and I ate them’, and their parallel in Ezek. 2.8–3.3. Holladay suggests that, once in exile, Ezekiel ‘transformed Jeremiah’s metaphor of Yahweh’s words placed in the prophet’s mouth into phraseology of sensory stimulus’ (Levitt Kohn 2008: 274, citing Holladay 2001: 34). In contrast, Leene argues that the text of Jeremiah ‘is patterned after that of Ezekiel’ (Levitt Kohn 2008: 274). Leene makes his case on the basis of several parallel passages in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Tuell (2000) suggests that some pieces of post-exilic literature, including Daniel, Third-Isaiah, Haggai, and Zechariah were influenced by Ezekiel in a variety of ways.

Ezekiel 20.25–26 mentions statutes and ordinances that were not good, by which Israel could not live. Bergsma and Hahn (2004) conclude that Ezekiel refers to those in the book of Deuteronomy. In a number of cases, Deuteronomy appears to be out of step with the laws in the Holiness Code. These laws in Deuteronomy, as well as other items in Deuteronomy, disturbed Ezekiel, even though he recognized Deuteronomy’s authoritative status.

Odell (2003) discusses the influence of Assyrian iconography on Ezekiel’s call vision (ch. 1), finding ‘striking similarity between Ezekiel’s vision and Assyrian royal iconography’ (Levitt Kohn 2008: 275). Uehlinger and Truffaut (2001) present illustrations from Mesopotamian and Egyptian cosmological symbols to explain the imagery of Ezekiel’s call, and of Ezekiel 10.

The relationship between Ezekiel's role as a priest and his role as a prophet is a key issue for Ezekiel scholars. Was Ezekiel primarily a prophet, with influence from his priestly background? Was it possible for him to function as a priest while in exile? Fechter (2004), noting that the discussion of priesthood comes primarily in Ezekiel 40–48, argues that 'it is not until his hypothetical restoration period that Ezekiel resumes his priestly role' (Levitt Kohn 2008: 275). Duguid (2004), on the other hand, suggests that the entire book of Ezekiel presents a picture of the role of priests in exile. Duguid focuses primarily on the priestly task of instructing others in the Torah (see also Mein 2001, Sweeney 2000). 'Ezekiel foresees a time when each category of Israelite will fulfill their proper position in society. Ezekiel's role as prophet, then, is simply an expansion of his priestly job, adapted to the reality of the Exile' (Levitt Kohn 2008: 275). Patton (2004) focuses on Ezekiel's self-portrayal as a servant of God, which enables him to fulfil his role as a priest. Schwartz (2004) objects, observing that 'there is virtually no textual evidence that illustrates Ezekiel performing priestly rites in Babylonia, or earlier' (Levitt Kohn 2008: 276). Even the function of Torah instruction, as understood by Schwartz, does not point to a priestly role.

Ezekiel's use of feminine symbols and terminology to personify Jerusalem in Ezekiel 16 and 23 continues to be of interest, especially among feminist scholars. Lenchak (2000) sees these chapters as Ezekiel's 'shock treatment' for people who have behaved very badly. 'Thus, while the language follows a long-standing biblical tradition of portraying Israel as Yahweh's spouse, the harlotry and adultery are the prophet's way of provoking a deeply outraged response from his audience' (Levitt Kohn 2008: 276). P. Day (2000a) argues that scholars have mistakenly taken the metaphor of Ezekiel 16 in a literal sense, and this has skewed their interpretation of the text. Stiebert (2000, 2002) sees the imagery employed in Ezekiel 16 and 23 as addressing the turbulent times in which these passages were written, rather than as presenting the views or biases of the prophet himself.

Boccaccini (2002) 'traces the roots of rabbinic Judaism back to the post-exilic period', a time of competing priestly groups. 'The book of Ezekiel helped a nascent Zadokite movement proffer its view over and above "Enochic Judaism", and what Boccaccini refers to as "Sapiential Judaism"' (Levitt Kohn 2008: 276).

Levitt Kohn concludes by noting (p. 277), 'Ezekiel's ideas shed light on the prophetic reflections of earlier Israelite ritual and theology, the formation of the redacted Torah, and inter-textual dialogue among the prophets of the early Exile, Restoration, and beyond'.

IV. Conclusion

This survey highlights the considerable diversity in recent scholarship on the three Major Prophets. That multiplicity of viewpoints continues to

grow. There is diversity in the theories proposed for the literary origins and history(ies) of the text, and regarding the extent to which the books bearing the prophets' names reflect the character and words of the prophets themselves. There is also great diversity in the methodologies used to approach the literature in each book, and to study the prophets whose names these books bear. There is growing emphasis on the complexity of the processes by which the books were created, and on the religio-social-economic matrices lying behind these evolving stages of composition. For example, while many scholars continue to use the terms 'First Isaiah', 'Second Isaiah', and 'Third Isaiah' in discussing that prophetic book, for a growing number of these scholars it is becoming increasingly clear that there is far more intertextuality among these sections than was previously thought. This has forced a rigorous review of the previous notion that three individuals were behind the creation of these three sections of the book, and indeed of the very notion that the book may be easily divided into three sections. It is also becoming clear that the text of Jeremiah is a complex phenomenon, filled with discontinuities and disjunctions that make it increasingly difficult to view the book as a neatly-interwoven whole. While a good number of scholars continue to treat the book as a single, coherent work, attempts to ignore its inconcinnities are becoming less convincing. Ezekiel scholarship has also, in recent years, evidenced a considerable diversity of opinion, most notably in the matters of how much of the book may be attributed to the prophet himself, and how cohesive the book is as a whole.

Scholarship for all three prophets is active, energized, and widely diversified. If a prevailing scholarly view for a particular book is often mad-deningly difficult to find, the creativity driving this diversity is spawning perspectives on the prophets and their books which have not previously been voiced. It can be disconcerting to work with the ground moving under-foot, but creation is typically a process of making cosmos out of chaos. No doubt the diversity currently found in the study of the Major Prophets will in time become the fertile soil out of which a new cosmos will emerge.

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH IN RECENT RESEARCH

Marvin A. Sweeney

I.

The last fifteen years have seen a marked shift in the focus of critical research on the book of Isaiah. Based upon Duhm's identification of First, Second and Third Isaiah, scholarly research throughout most of the 20th century proceeded as if Isaiah 1–39, Isaiah 40–55 and Isaiah 56–66 (or alternatively Isaiah 40–66) comprised completely independent prophetic books. More recently, scholars have shifted their interest away from reconstructing the events and historical personages mentioned in the biblical tradition to identifying the literary work and theological perspectives of the anonymous tradents and redactors who shaped that tradition. Although historical reconstruction continues to play an important role in critical research, scholars are paying increasing attention to the literary character and setting of biblical texts, including their structure and thematic development, their redactional formation and intent, and their social and institutional matrices.

One consequence of this shift in scholarly perspective is the current focus on the final form of the book of Isaiah as a whole. Studies of the component parts of Isaiah continue to appear, but the recent focus on the final form of the book has clearly established itself as the central issue of Isaiah studies. This paper will trace the development of the current discussion of the book of Isaiah as a whole. Several important issues are emerging as discussion matures: (1) the character and role of Trito-Isaiah in the formation of the book; (2) the need to abandon traditional concepts of First and Second Isaiah when considering the structure and message of the book as a whole; and (3) the concern with the inner hermeneutical dynamics of the book.

II.

Current discussion of the book of Isaiah as a whole is rooted in earlier debate concerning the literary growth of the book and its major components. During the 1970s scholarly interest turned increasingly to the study of the redactional material in the book, including its literary character and its hermeneutical perspective. Vermeylen's important 1977–78 study raises

questions concerning the relationship between Trito- and Proto-Isaiah. He identifies seven stages of redaction in Isaiah 1–35, extending from the eighth through the third centuries. The hermeneutical perspective of his fifth stage of redaction corresponds with that of Trito-Isaiah, which suggests Trito-Isaiah's influence in the redaction of the first part of the book. In this regard, Vermeylen anticipates later discussion of the book as a whole.

Ackroyd's 1978 study of the structure of Isaiah 1–12 likewise questions the prevailing scholarly assumption that First Isaiah should be studied separately from the rest of the book by pointing to the role of later theological interpretation in these chapters. He argues that the structure of Isaiah 1–12 validates the authority of the prophet and presents him according to the perspective of the final redactors of the book. Insofar as this material combines a concern for judgment of both Israel and Assyria with salvation and promise for Jerusalem, the redactors relate the message of the 8th-century prophet Isaiah ben Amoz to the situation of post-exilic Judaism, which had already suffered the judgment and now anticipates the restoration. Ackroyd thereby maintains that the authentication of the prophetic message lies not in its original situation, but 'in the continuing process by which prophetic word and receptive hearing interact' (1978: 47). This clearly lays the basis for relating Isaiah 1–39 to the rest of the book as a component of the whole as it is shaped by the book's final redactors. Ackroyd continues such work himself in his 1982 study of Isaiah 36–39. He demonstrates that these chapters contrast the favorable image of Hezekiah with that of Ahaz in Isa. 7.1–9.6 in a similar situation of crisis; they thereby provide the transition between the two major components of the book. Whereas Ahaz's rejection of the prophet's message represents the basis for Israel's judgment in chs. 1–35, Hezekiah's faithful acceptance of the prophet's message provides the basis for Israel's salvation in chs. 40–55.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, influential works by Childs and Clements focused scholarly attention on the interrelationship of the major components of Isaiah. In his 1979 *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, Childs advocates a canon-critical approach that focuses on the analysis of biblical books in their final canonical form. With regard to Isaiah, Childs attempts to avoid the past concerns and perspectives of historical-critical analysis by pointing to the new theological context that chs. 40–66 bring to the book. The lack of historical particularity in these chapters leads to a future-oriented eschatological understanding of the entire book, in which First Isaiah's words of doom must be understood as an expression of God's continuing plan for Israel in all ages: sinful Israel receives judgment, whereas repentant Israel receives salvation. The book thereby focuses on the fulfillment of the divine word in history, referring to the 'former things' as First Isaiah's prophecies and the 'latter things' as Deutero-Isaiah's message. Childs questions whether Deutero-Isaiah

ever circulated independently and asserts that chs. 1–39 are assembled according to a clear theological pattern that is meant to anticipate Deutero-Isaiah. Childs's analysis shows some weaknesses: his treatment of First, Second and Third Isaiah as separate sections of the book demonstrates his dependence on historical considerations, and his inadequate treatment of the role of Trito-Isaiah within the book demonstrates the relatively greater importance he attaches to Deutero-Isaiah. Nevertheless, his assertion of the interdependency of First and Second Isaiah within the context of the book as a whole makes an important contribution to understanding Isaiah as a single book.

Clements's contribution grows out of his interest in the redaction of First Isaiah. His commentary on Isaiah 1–39 (1980a) emphasizes the Josianic redaction of this material, but his subsequent works focus especially on the unity of the book. His paper on Isaiah's prophecies concerning Jerusalem (1980b) points to the means by which these prophecies were understood in relation to the fall of Jerusalem in 587. His 1982 paper on 'The Unity of the Book of Isaiah' points to various connections between the first and second parts of the book which demonstrate an overall message of hope following from disaster centering around assurances of a return to Zion. His 1985 paper points to a number of fundamental themes, such as Israel's blindness and deafness and the divine election of Israel, which suggest that chs. 40–55 are intended to develop and enlarge upon sayings from Isaiah ben Amoz. His 1989 paper on Isa. 14.22–27 demonstrates the shift that takes place within the book from the anti-Assyrian message of Isaiah ben Amoz to the anti-Babylonian message of its exilic redaction and the apocalyptic character of its post-exilic redaction. Finally, his 1991 paper argues that the prophecies in 2 Kgs 19.21–34/Isa. 37.22–35 are post-587 editorial compositions that provide the basis for the fusion of the concepts 'remnant' and 'Zion' in Isaiah 40–55. Clements's work is especially noteworthy in that it is marked by an interest in inner-biblical exegesis that points to the inner dynamics of the growth of the book of Isaiah.

III.

Whereas most earlier studies tend to focus on the interrelationships between First and Second Isaiah, studies from the middle 1980s demonstrate an interest in accounting for Trito-Isaiah as well, thereby providing a more comprehensive picture of the entire book.

Brueggemann (1984) offers a corrective to the predominantly literary approaches of Childs and Clements by concentrating on the social dynamics that stand behind the final form of the text. He borrows the concept of 'social intentionality' (p. 91) from the work of Gottwald in order to focus on the creative role of the community and its concerns in formulating the text.

According to Brueggemann, First, Second and Third Isaiah each articulates 'a specific practice of social transformation' (p. 91). First Isaiah presents a radical and sustained critique of the dominant ideology of the culture, that is, he announces that YHWH intends to judge the monarchy and Judean society rather than defend it. This critique enables Second Isaiah to focus on the embrace of pain; the exile can be accepted as an act of YHWH to transform society and thereby to offer it hope. Third Isaiah reflects the results of his embrace of pain by releasing the social imagination: the community can now envision an alternative form of existence in the changed conditions of the post-exilic world. More recent studies, however, demonstrate that Isaiah supported the Davidic monarchy (for example Irvine 1990) and that Trito-Isaiah can hardly be identified with a single hand and perspective (for example Steck 1989, 1991a). Moreover, Brueggemann's work does not account for the redactional formation of the book. Nevertheless, his study directs attention to the social dynamics and hermeneutical perspectives that stand behind the book of Isaiah and motivate its growth.

Rendtorff's 1984 study treats the role of chs. 56–66 in the formation of the book as a whole. He notes a number of key terms and themes, such as *kēbôd yhwh*, *qēdôš yiśrā'ēl*, *šēdāqā*, Zion/Jerusalem, which link ch. 40 to First and Third Isaiah. On this basis, he argues that chs. 40–55 form the compositional core of the book of Isaiah and that neither First nor Third Isaiah can be understood apart from Second Isaiah. First Isaiah was composed as the précis for Second Isaiah, and Third Isaiah binds them together. Rendtorff maintains that this compositional process demonstrates the post-exilic Jewish community's attempt to interpret First Isaiah's message of judgment in relation to Second Isaiah's message of salvation. His 1989 study of Isaiah 6 draws out some of the implications of this proposal by pointing to the role that ch. 6 plays in the framework of the entire book. He focuses especially on the theme of Israel's obstinacy in Isaiah 6 which forms the basis for judgment against Israel throughout First Isaiah. But on the basis of his study of the word-field associated with this theme in ch. 6, as well as other passages in both First and Second Isaiah, he argues that Second Isaiah announces that Israel is forgiven for this sin, indicating that Isaiah 6 plays a major role in defining the theme of the entire book, not simply of First Isaiah. Thus the question concerning the duration of punishment, 'How long, O Lord?' in Isa. 6.11 presupposes the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile, but it also points to the revelation of divine 'glory' (*kābôd*) when read in the context of the book as a whole. His study of Isa. 56.1 as the key to the formation of the book of Isaiah (1991b) examines the semantic field of this verse and its influence on the formation of the book as a whole.

The first commentary that incorporates the insights of recent discussion on the book of Isaiah as a whole is the two-volume work by Watts (1985, 1987). His commentary represents a radical departure from the positions

of those who posit a lengthy literary history for the book. Watts reverses the common conception of the process of composition by placing its origins at the time of the final edition of the book rather than in the time of Isaiah ben Amoz. According to Watts, the book of Isaiah was composed during the Persian period in order to present and interpret the entire sweep of Israelite and Judean history from the time of the Assyrian invasions in the late eighth century to the fifth-century return from exile under Persian rule. Each segment in the structure of the book represents a different, but successive, period within this chronological framework. Although Watts's work has been criticized for its lack of critical control, it raises an important challenge to scholars who attempt to reconstruct a historical picture of the prophet based on the text of Isaiah. Watts takes seriously Ackroyd's contention that the book of Isaiah provides a presentation of the prophet but does not provide a transcript of the prophet's words and activities.

Steck's 1985 study of Isaiah 35 focuses on the redactional character of this chapter as a literary 'bridge' between the first and second parts of the book, but it also points to the role played by the so-called Trito-Isaiah. Steck notes the lexical and thematic connections between Isaiah 35 and Isaiah 32–34 and 40 on the one hand and between Isaiah 35 and Jeremiah 31 on the other. On the basis of these observations he argues that Isaiah 35 was never an independent text, nor did it constitute an introduction to Second Isaiah or a component of a small Isaiah apocalypse. Rather, Isaiah 35 is a redactional bridge that ties together major blocks of the 'Great Isaiah Tradition' in Isaiah 32–34 and 40–62. He traces further connections between Isaiah 35 and Isa. 11.11–16, 27.12–13, 40.1–11 and 62.10–12, which constitute components of a common redaction that presents the return to Zion in 62.10–12 as its goal. This redaction was composed during the fourth century in response to the break-up of the Persian empire and the Diadochi Wars, which serve as the context for divine action to bring about such a return. According to Steck, there is no evidence of a single prophet Trito-Isaiah, nor do we know anything concrete concerning the existence of an Isaianic school. He outlines the final composition of the book of Isaiah, which is expressed in detail in his 1989 study of Trito-Isaiah in the book of Isaiah; this and his various other studies on texts from Trito-Isaiah are collected in his *Studien zu Tritojesaja* (1991b). Isaiah 56–66 can no longer be viewed as a self-standing textual block within the book of Isaiah; rather chs. 56–66 represent a redactional continuation of the earlier Isaianic corpus. The original core of Trito-Isaiah is chs. 60–62, which continued chs. 40–55 between 515–445 BCE; chs. 56–59 and 63–66 are later texts that correspond to the final stages in the redaction of the book during the fourth and third centuries. Notably, the formation of the book of Isaiah corresponds to the formation of the book of the Twelve Prophets (cf. Steck 1991a). Although the intricacy of Steck's literary-critical arguments and the late dating of his redactional stages will

attract considerable criticism, he succeeds in demonstrating the crucial role that chs. 56–66 play in shaping Proto-Isaiah and the final form of the book. His collected studies on Deutero-Isaiah (1992) consider the role of chs. 40–55 in the formation of the book.

IV.

By the late 1980s numerous studies had appeared discussing the formation of the book of Isaiah as a whole. Some approach the issue from a redaction-critical viewpoint, others from a synthetic perspective that attempts to understand the book in its final form.

My own monograph on Isaiah 1–4 (1988a) proposes a new methodological model for the redaction-critical study of biblical literature. Fundamental to the model is Knierim's proposal (1985: 156) that redaction criticism must be the first major step in biblical exegesis in that the final redactors play a decisive role in shaping the final form of a biblical book, and thereby determine its present literary characteristics and ideas. Consequently, the overall structure, genre, setting and intention of the book in its final form must be studied in order to identify the perspectives and literary character of the final redaction. This synthetic step provides the basis for analytical work designed to identify earlier textual stages and thereby to determine the hermeneutical perspectives and influence of the text's redactors in shaping the final form of the text. My study of the final form of Isaiah argues that the book is formed as an exhortation to the fifth-century Judean community, calling upon it to recognize the past disasters as acts of YHWH designed to purify Jerusalem and the world prior to YHWH's assumption of world rule at Zion. The analytical study of chs. 1–4 argues that ch. 1, with its textual affinities to Isaiah 65–66, represents the introduction to the book formed as part of its final fifth-century redaction. Chapters 2–4, with their affinities to Isaiah 40–55, 60–62, Haggai and Zechariah 1–8, represent the redactional introduction to a sixth-century edition of the book. In both cases, the redactions make extensive use of oracles by Isaiah ben Amoz, but reinterpret them in relation to the respective concerns of the sixth- and fifth-century settings. Two other studies of mine examine the citation and reinterpretation of earlier Isaianic texts in later compositions: Isaiah 27 (1987a) and Isaiah 24–27 (1988b). A third paper will examine the use of Isa. 8.6 in Isa. 66.10–14 (1993c).

Gosse's 1988 (cf. also 1985, 1986) study of Isa. 13.1–14.23 argues that the oracle against Babylon in Isa. 13.1–14.23 stems from the final redaction of the book of Isaiah. It employs Babylon (and Edom) as a symbol of evil that must be overthrown in the course of establishing a divinely-planned just order in the world. Gosse maintains that the prophetic oracles against the nations in the Hebrew Bible must be understood in relation to

other ancient Near Eastern examples of the genre. The Egyptian execration texts provide similar condemnations of Egypt's enemies in order to establish universal order. The Behistun inscription of the Persian monarch Darius I likewise portrays the suppression of revolts as the king's attempt to establish world order. According to Gosse, the Behistun inscription is influential in the composition of the oracles against the nations in Isaiah in that they portray YHWH's projected punishment of Babylon and the nations as an attempt like that of the Persian monarch to establish universal order. He further argues that Isa. 13.1–14.23 has literary affinities with Jeremiah 50–51, Ezekiel 32 and Zechariah 2, and with Isaiah 21, 34, 60–62 and 63, which establish the relationship of this text to the final redaction of the book of Isaiah. His subsequent studies (1990a, 1990b, 1991, 1992a, 1992b) treat the relation of various texts in Isaiah to the redaction of the book. His study of Isaiah 34–35 (1990b) is particularly important, arguing that these chapters serve as the introduction to Second and Third Isaiah, and that they appear to be inspired by Isaiah 59–63. In this regard, his emphasis on the role of Trito-Isaiah in the redaction of the book appears to build upon the work of Vermeylen and Steck.

Two 1988 papers take a more synthetic approach to the study of the book of Isaiah as a whole. Anderson (1988a) notes the presence of major apocalyptic text blocks in the final form of the book, including Trito-Isaiah and small apocalypses in chs. 24–27 and 34–35. He examines these traditions to demonstrate 'how the Isaianic tradition was finally reinterpreted in the theological style known as apocalyptic, which should be understood as prophecy in a new idiom' (p. 18). His examination focuses on four major themes: 'the cosmic king of Zion', 'the mystery of God's kingdom', 'the triumph of the divine warrior' and 'waiting for God'. In each case, he relates these themes from the apocalyptic texts to passages from First and Second Isaiah to demonstrate how they grew out of and reinterpreted the earlier passages. Anderson's essay demonstrates the universality and dynamism inherent in the final form of Isaiah. Furthermore, his discussion lends itself to a redaction-critical assessment of the role of Trito-Isaiah in the final formation of the book.

Evans's 1988 study takes up an old suggestion by Brownlee (1964) that the book of Isaiah is consciously edited as a two-volume work consisting of chs. 1–33 as the first volume and chs. 34–66 as the second (cf. Gosse 1990b). Evidence for this thesis includes the division between Isaiah 1–33 and Isaiah 34–66 in the Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran (1QIsa^a) and Torrey's arguments (1928) that Isaiah 34–35 was composed by Second Isaiah. Evans attempts to support Brownlee's contention that the halves of the book share a parallel structure by pointing to lexical and thematic correspondences between the parallel sub-sections of each half as defined by Brownlee. Unfortunately, this paper suffers from several major problems. Its

exclusive reliance on lexical and thematic criteria highlights the lack of an adequate methodology for assessing the structure of the text. The evidence from 1 QIsa^a is irrelevant in that it demonstrates only that the Qumran scribe viewed the book in this manner. Furthermore, Torrey's assessment of Isaiah 34–35 depends on his view that all of Isaiah 34–35 and 40–66 is the product of Second Isaiah. Although insightful, it has been substantially modified by subsequent research into the literary character of chs. 34–35 and 56–66. Nevertheless, Steck's (1985, 1989) and especially Gosse's (1990b) studies demonstrate the possibility of a two-part edition of the book of Isaiah, albeit on completely different grounds.

The publication of the proceedings of the 1987 Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense on the book of Isaiah (Vermeylen [ed.] 1989) demonstrates the dominant role that consideration of Isaiah as a whole has come to play. Many of the papers published in this volume take up issues pertaining to the unity of the book. Papers from this volume by Clements (1989), Rendtorff (1989) and Steck (1989) are discussed above, but several others also require attention.

Vermeylen begins his introductory essay (1989) on the unity of Isaiah by asking how one accounts for both the individual characters of the three major parts of the book and for its unity, or how the diverse collections are unified in the same book under the authority of the same prophet. His thorough discussion of previous research points to two major compositional models: Isaiah is the product of late redaction; or, Isaiah is the product of successive rereadings of the Isaianic core. He maintains that the diversity of views represented in the book can be explained only by reliance on a model of ongoing redactional activity. Developing the proposal of his 1977–78 study, he argues that the many interrelationships between the various parts of the book indicate successive rereadings of the tradition in light of later historical circumstances. He questions whether the great book of Isaiah was composed at the time of Cyrus (Clements 1980a) or at the beginning of the Hellenistic period (Steck 1985); he further asks whether it is composed of two fundamental sections in chs. 1–39 and 40–55 that are juxtaposed by a redactor, or if chs. 56–66 indicate a more fluid view in which the book as a whole was shaped by later re-readings (Vermeylen 1989: 27).

Vermeylen's own attempt at a solution proposes that an independent eschatological edition of Proto-Isaiah was composed c. 480 after Xerxes destroyed Babylon (482 BCE). This argument depends on his finding in Isaiah 1–39 a tripartite pattern which he maintains is typical of prophetic books: judgment for Jerusalem and Judah (Isa. 1–12), judgment against the nations (Isa. 13–27) and promises (Isa. 28–35), followed by the narrative concerning deliverance from Sennacherib's siege in Isaiah 36–39. The early Deutero-Isaiah block in chs. 40–55 was composed in the sixth century, but it was edited to support the Persians as indicated by the addition of the Cyrus

oracles throughout the block. After 480, the two blocks were combined so that Deutero-Isaiah provides the counterpoint of promise against the threats of Proto-Isaiah. There is no independent Trito-Isaiah, but the various texts in chs. 56–66 respond to statements in Proto-Isaiah and facilitate the joining of chs. 1–39 with 40–55. The Great Book of Isaiah therefore was produced in relation to the reforms of Nehemiah, which mark a major turning point for Jerusalem. Several later rereadings extend the process of formation as late as the third century. Although his proposal is suggestive due to the attention he gives to the hermeneutical process of rereading texts in relation to later periods, it is based on weak premises. The so-called typical tripartite model for prophetic books relies on Zephaniah as a major example, but Zephaniah does not follow this pattern. Furthermore, the application of the model to Isaiah 1–39 skews the interpretation of these chapters in that promises and threats for Jerusalem and Judah are mixed in both chs. 1–12 and 28–35. Finally, Vermeylen's juxtaposition of text blocks in chs. 1–39 and 40–55 is much too mechanical in that it does not account fully for the interrelationship between Proto- and Deutero- Isaiah.

G. Davies (1989) surveys the role of the nations throughout the book, noting that the nations play a prominent and positive role in the framework of the book both at the beginning (Isa. 2.2-4) and at the end (Isa. 66.18-24) that defines their portrayal throughout the body of the book. His survey demonstrates that the theme of the nations contributes to the unity of the book. But the variety of themes, motifs and perspectives concerning the nations indicates that the unity produced 'is not a unity of unanimity or even of total consistency' (p. 106); one finds conflicting viewpoints even within the same section of Isaiah. From his survey of current discussion of Isaiah, Davies concludes that none of the major redaction- or literary-critical models adequately explains the unity of the book. He is drawn especially to Beuken's works on Trito-Isaiah, which emphasize Trito-Isaiah's inner-biblical exegesis of earlier passages from Isaiah 1–55. Davies therefore suggests that the growth of the book took place not in major redactional or literary stages, but in the rereading of earlier texts by later writers. He notes that Isa. 1.2–2.4 and 65–66 appear to function as a prologue and epilogue that shape the book with regard to the centrality of the temple, but he also notes the liturgical motifs in the book and suggests that the focus of unity may be found in 'the tradition which underlies it...the Jerusalem cult tradition with its cosmic and universal perspective' (p. 119). Thus the book of Isaiah represents a prophetic reinterpretation of the Jerusalem cult tradition. Although Davies's reservations about the literary growth of the book appear to be unfounded, his thematic arguments represent an important advance in understanding the overall perspective of the book.

Beuken's study of Isaiah 61 as an interpretation of Isaiah 40–55 (1989) is grounded on his prior studies of Trito-Isaiah as an interpreter of earlier

Isaianic texts (1986, 1987). In his 1986 study of Isa. 56.9–57.13, Beuken argues that Trito-Isaiah ‘links up with the heritage’ of First and Second Isaiah (p. 48), and he maintains that ‘the book of Isaiah forms the primary context for whichever passage in this book’ (p. 49). Consequently, Trito-Isaiah provides examples of the inner-biblical exegesis by which later traditions interpreted and developed the earlier Isaiah tradition into the present form of the book. Beuken argues that both Isa. 56.9–57.13 and Isa. 56.1–8 constitute commentaries on Isaiah 55 which draw upon texts and concepts from First and Second Isaiah. They develop the motifs of the ‘Holy Mountain’ accessible to all the peoples and the perversion of God’s repast which undermines the divine intention to make the holy mountain a place of salvation. In like manner, Beuken’s 1989 study of Isaiah 61 focuses on the chapter’s references to Isaiah 40–55, which demonstrate that in the eyes of Trito-Isaiah the message of Deutero-Isaiah is still valid, although the realization of the earlier prophet’s promises will be changed because they apply to a new age. Beuken links the message developed in Isaiah 61 to its structure according to the following motifs: the self-presentation of the prophet as the offspring of the Servant sent by YHWH (vv. 1–3a); the blessed life brought by the ministry of the prophet (vv. 3b–7); the divine warrant for the preaching of the prophet (vv. 8–9); and the rejoicing of the prophet (vv. 10–11). This study is particularly important because it points to Trito-Isaiah’s method in interpreting earlier texts by way of free adaptation of texts rather than by quotation. It also points to Trito-Isaiah’s redactional role in the formation of the book as a whole. Beuken’s 1990 paper presents his overall perspective that the ‘servants of YHWH’ constitutes the main theme of Trito-Isaiah in that the oppressed of Zion are the offspring of the Servant of YHWH announced in Deutero-Isaiah. His plenary address before the XIIIth Congress of the IOSOT (1991a) argues that Isaiah 65–66 serves a threefold function as the closure of the book of Isaiah as a whole, as well as of both Deutero-Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah. The epilogue to Trito-Isaiah (Isa. 65.1–66.14) focuses on the theme of ‘the servants of YHWH’; the epilogue to Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 66.15–21) focuses on the theophany of YHWH; and the epilogue to the book as a whole (Isa. 66.22–24) integrates the two preceding themes and ties them to Isaiah 1. His study of Isaiah 33 as a ‘mirror text’ (1991b) demonstrates how this chapter reflects other texts from throughout the book of Isaiah and therefore serves as a key transitional text within the structure of the whole.

Finally, Albertz’s contribution to the Rendtorff Festschrift (1990) builds upon Rendtorff’s observation that although Isaiah 40–55 is clearly written by a prophet other than the author of chs. 1–39, no clearly definable person appears within these chapters. In an attempt to address the problem of why this body of prophetic writings should be presented anonymously as part of the book of Isaiah, he argues that the message of the writings of Deutero-

Isaiah builds upon that of First Isaiah. Due in part to the absence of its own superscription, Isa. 40.1-11 is subsumed under Isaiah's parallel vision of ch. 6. Neither Isaiah 6 nor Isaiah 40 functions as a call; rather, ch. 6 announces judgment and ch. 40 announces salvation. But in serving as the programmatic introduction to Deutero-Isaiah, Isaiah 40 takes up the question of Isa. 6.11, 'How long, O Lord?', and thereby introduces a divine plan for worldwide salvation that follows upon the judgment announced in the first part of the book. Albertz argues that Deutero-Isaiah's announcement of a divine plan for salvation presupposes and builds upon First Isaiah's divine plan for the punishment of Israel and overthrow of Assyria. In proposing such an interrelationship between the two parts of the book, he posits an Isaiah school located in the Jerusalem cult tradition of temple singers and prophets. Albertz's study raises a number of problems. His observations concerning the connections between First and Second Isaiah are essentially thematic and show little in the way of a deliberate attempt by Second Isaiah to build upon the message of the first part of the book. Evidence for an Isaiah school has proven to be elusive, and he does not account for chs. 56-66. Nevertheless, his study shows that in the present form of Isaiah, chs. 40-55 can hardly be considered an independent prophetic book.

V.

By the early 1990s a number of scholars have recognized the need to abandon past paradigms of a separate First, Second and Third Isaiah when considering the book as a whole. They argue that these models provide an inadequate basis for discerning the structure of the book as a whole, and they obscure its message. The Society of Biblical Literature has therefore authorized a new program unit entitled 'The Formation of the Book of Isaiah' to study the literary character of Isaiah as a single book. Established initially as an experimental Consultation (1990-1991) and then as a Seminar (1992-1996) chaired by Melugin and Sweeney, 'The Formation of the Book of Isaiah' meets in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. A number of recent publications demonstrate the interests of the seminar.

Conrad's 1991 monograph deliberately avoids the historical questions posited by earlier scholarship in favor of a 'reader-response' approach that focuses on the implied reader of a text to locate its meaning in the process of reading. Consequently, he seeks to understand Isaiah strictly as a piece of literature, and views attempts to reconstruct its prior literary history and the original intention of its author(s) as inherently subjective and irrelevant to understanding the final form of the book. He builds upon his earlier studies of the '*al tira*' ('do not fear') pericopes in Isaiah and the rest of the Hebrew Bible (for example 1985b) which argue that the form does not represent

the oracle of salvation, but a type of war oracle that promises victory and comfort to a king. Two other studies employ this conclusion to prepare for an integrated reading of Isaiah. The first (1985a) argues that the community functioned as king in Second Isaiah, insofar as the '*al tira*' form is employed to promise comfort to the community of Israel in a context in which the Davidic promises had been transferred from the king to the people. The second (1988) focuses on the '*al tira*' materials in Isa. 7.4-9 and 37.6-7 to argue that the images of Ahaz and Hezekiah are deliberately contrasted to provide the basis for the structure of the entire book (cf. Ackroyd 1982). Although Hezekiah is presented as an ideal figure in chs. 36-39, not all of Isaiah's promises are fulfilled in this narrative. Consequently, the war oracles in chs. 41, 43 and 44 point to the fulfillment of Isaiah's word at a later stage in the book. Conrad's full reading of Isaiah (1991) points to these contrasting portrayals of Ahaz and Hezekiah to argue that chs. 6-39 form 'a book within a book', which presents the rarely mentioned historical Isaiah as the first 'survivor' who serves as the paradigm for the community of survivors that constitutes the implied audience of the book. According to Conrad, this community of survivors is promised salvation by the '*al tira*' pericopes of the book. By reading the materials pertaining to the historical Isaiah, it will recognize the analogy between Assyria and Babylon presented in the book and conclude that the promised salvation will come to it as the heir to the Davidic covenant. Conrad's study suffers from his eschewal of historical questions; he does not pursue the hermeneutics which led to the identification of various Assyrian monarchs with the Babylonians in the final form of the book. Furthermore, his implied audience appears to represent the surviving Jewish community of the early Persian period. Nevertheless, his study represents an important attempt to read Isaiah as a coherent piece of literature.

Seitz's studies of the book attempt to achieve a synthesis that addresses Isaiah's self-presentation as a single book without abandoning literary-historical perspective. His 1988 paper on reading the whole of the book notes that an external decision by the book's editors led to its present unity, but that the ensuing historical deconstruction of modern scholarship threatens to obscure essential internal features of Isaiah as a whole. He therefore challenges three major tenets of historical analysis: (1) that the final shape of the book is accidental or the product of successive supplementation; (2) that the book moves in geographical terms from Judah to Babylon and back to Judah and in temporal terms from the eighth through the sixth centuries BCE; and (3) that there are internal divisions between a clear proto-Isaiah prophet, a Babylonian prophet and a Persian period prophet. Three essential features of the book point to its character as a single literary work: (1) it has only one superscription; (2) it has only one commissioning narrative; and (3) there are no clear literary boundaries between First, Second and Third Isaiah. In fact,

the prophetic personae play very little role in the book; the entire notion of a first Isaiah, both as a self-contained literary component of the book and as an individual persona, depends in large measure on the identification of a Second and Third Isaiah. Instead, God is the main character in the book who does most of the talking. The divine message of the entire book focuses on the judgment and restoration of Zion. This message is summarized in Isaiah 1 from a divine perspective, transcending the historical and literary boundaries of a First, Second and Third Isaiah.

Seitz works out the implications of this view in two successive publications. His 1990 paper on Isaiah 40 examines the pivotal function of this text within the book as a whole. He notes that, as in other texts that pertain to the divine council (1 Kgs 22; Zech. 1.1-17), the prophet is no longer the speaker, but the recipient of the divine word. Furthermore, Isaiah 40 does not constitute a commissioning speech, as this has already been presented in Isaiah 6, but a new address by God that calls forth an objection by Isaiah of Jerusalem. This objection should not be viewed as a case of prophetic despondency, but as a *précis* to Isaiah's proclamation from a sixth-century perspective that sees the realization of the divine message not in relation to Isaiah's or Hezekiah's lifetime, but in relation to a much later period. Isaiah 1-66 therefore constitutes a single book and a single vision. Rendtorff's 1991 Seminar Paper (1991a) points to Seitz's work as a major example of the shift in scholarly priorities from a diachronic to a synchronic reading of Isaiah. Melugin's 1991 Seminar Paper affirms Seitz's view that Isa. 40.1-8 presents a reactivation of YHWH's word for a new age rather than an individual prophetic commission. Melugin's examination of the structure of Isaiah 40-48 qualifies Seitz's position somewhat by pointing to the servant's dual commission to restore Israel and to serve as a light to the nations.

A noteworthy feature of Seitz's work is that it does not negate the historical character and growth of the book. His 1991 monograph on Isaiah 36-39 points to the transitional role of these chapters within the book and to the destiny of Zion as its major theme. On the basis of literary features of Isaiah 36-39, Seitz argues that Isaiah 36-37 constitutes an original conclusion to an early form of the book that attempted to present Hezekiah as a role model for his son and successor Manasseh in the early seventh century. According to Seitz, the positive portrayal of Hezekiah and the destiny of Zion in Isaiah 36-37 on the one hand and the correlation between the sieges of Jerusalem in 701 BCE and 587 BCE on the other provide the basis for the extension of the book from Proto-Isaiah to Deutero-Isaiah and beyond. Seitz posits a rather complicated redaction history that sees the addition of Isaiah 38 and 39 as a means to account for the movement from the Assyrian period to the Babylonian period, and that serves as the basis for the narrative in 2 Kings 18-20 that paints Hezekiah in a relatively unfavorable light. Carr's 1992 Seminar Paper challenges Seitz's contention that these narratives stem

from an early seventh-century edition of the book of Isaiah. Instead, their affinities with the Deuteronomistic History demonstrate that their original context is the book of Kings. Nevertheless, Seitz's focus on the positive message concerning the destiny of Zion in First Isaiah provides an instructive model for postulating the growth of the book into its present form.

Finally, recent research on the book of Isaiah demonstrates that the internal hermeneutical dynamics of the text must be considered in relation to discussion of its final form and the literary growth process by which it achieved that form. Sheppard's 1992 Seminar Paper addresses this issue from a canonical-critical perspective that considers the book of Isaiah as a book of Jewish and Christian Scripture. Sheppard presents a critique of recent work by Sweeney (1988a), Conrad (1991) and Seitz (1988, 1991) that presupposes the difficulties scholars face in defining a single, comprehensive and objective approach to the structure and significance of the text. Instead, Sheppard argues for a much more fluid approach, which allows for shifts in meaning relative to the context in which Isaiah is read. He notes that Isaiah functions as a book of Scripture and that it must be considered in relation to the larger corpus of books to which it belongs, but he recognizes that most of the material found within the text was not originally intended to be Scripture. This requires a semantic transformation within the book which takes place as prebiblical traditions become biblical.

Sheppard focuses on three major features of the text which illustrate this transformation. First, scholarly consensus maintains that the word-pair 'Judah and Jerusalem' found in the superscriptions of 1.1 and 2.1 refers to the post-exilic Jewish community centered in Jerusalem. Sheppard demonstrates, however, that the various references to the community found throughout the book, such as 'Jerusalem and Judah', 'Jerusalem', 'Israel' and so on, presuppose different understandings of the community as pre-exilic Jerusalem, Judah, the northern kingdom of Israel and so on. This points to 'a radical semantic modification of the previous traditions that have been taken up into the book of Isaiah' (1992: 573) in which the meaning of the text shifts according to the historical and social context in which it is read. In short, the meaning of the text functions on multiple levels; a canonical approach considers the text in relation to its late form and function as Scripture (p. 574).

Secondly, the distinctive message of the text can shift in relation to time and context. To illustrate, Sheppard focuses on the 'fear not' oracles studied by Conrad, noting that each constitutes the same message of salvation which is met with different responses throughout the book. The different responses point to the fact that no single view of authorial intent or 'of fulfillment in terms of a singular event' (Sheppard 1992: 576) governs the significance of this message; rather the message can be fulfilled in a variety of ways that do not exhaust the vitality of the prophetic word. This is especially important

in relation to Trito-Isaiah, which plays an important role in holding together chs. 1–39 and 40–55 and which is addressed to those who fear something other than God.

Finally, Sheppard points to the understanding of the word ‘Torah’ in the book of Isaiah. Although the term is employed generally in relation to various forms of instruction in the earliest levels of composition, it gains a new semantic import when Isaiah is read as a book of Jewish Scripture. In short, Torah refers to Mosaic Torah when Isaiah is read as Jewish Scripture and this understanding is carried over when Isaiah is read as Christian Scripture as well. Sheppard’s work presents problems of critical control insofar as it opens the way for the assignment of later meanings to earlier texts. But by highlighting the shifts in meaning in relation to the theological contexts and communities in which Isaiah is read, he points to a necessary and exciting hermeneutical dimension of studies concerning the means by which the book of Isaiah was interpreted, both during the process of its formation and afterwards.

VI.

In sum, the last fifteen years have witnessed a major shift in the means by which scholars approach the study of the book of Isaiah. Especially important are the consideration of the final form and message of the book apart from older models of a First, Second and Third Isaiah, and consideration of the book’s internal hermeneutics that enabled it to achieve its final form. Although the new emphasis on the book of Isaiah as a whole raises many questions concerning past scholarly approaches and conclusions, it also opens a whole new range of possibilities for considering the process by which Isaiah was produced and the interpretation of its final form. Such studies will undoubtedly have important implications for the exegesis and appropriation of the book by both historians of religion and the theological communities who read Isaiah as the word of God.

RE-EVALUATING ISAIAH 1–39 IN RECENT CRITICAL RESEARCH

Marvin A. Sweeney

I.

The field of Isaiah studies has come a long way since 1948 when Robert Pfeiffer asserted that the present book of Isaiah was formed by a scribe who, upon completing the book of First Isaiah, found that he had a great deal of extra space on the scroll and attempted to fill it by appending additional prophetic books (1948: 447-48). Of course, the superscriptions that identified the authors and historical settings of these books were lost, and they are now known only as Second and Third Isaiah. Clearly, Pfeiffer saw First, Second and Third Isaiah as entirely separate literary compositions that had nothing in common other than their arbitrary placement on the same scroll. This stands in striking contrast to current debate concerning the literary character and composition of the book of Isaiah as a whole, in that scholars are now engaged in a discussion that seeks to define the literary unity of the book (not to be confused with its compositional unity). The debate has progressed to the point that scholars may now legitimately ask whether it is possible to write a separate commentary on Isaiah 1–39 that does not account for its place in the book of Isaiah as a whole or even to consider Isaiah 1–39 as a distinct literary entity (Seitz 1993b).

Pfeiffer's comments are indicative of scholarly views concerning the character and formation of biblical literature at the time. They presuppose a view of biblical literature that identifies and defines a distinct, self-contained and coherent literary entity on the basis of its presentation of a distinct historical figure or setting. This demonstrates the extent to which historical interests dominated and determined scholarly conceptions of the character of biblical literature and the nature of the exegetical questions posed to that literature. In short, it demonstrates that, to a great extent, scholars equated historical content with literary composition. But this reverses a standard axiom of empirical historical research that the researcher must begin with what is known in order to obtain evidence and draw conclusions about what is unknown. In this case, the empirical reality of extant literature (i.e., the book of Isaiah) provides a basis for constructing scholarly views of a posited historical reality (i.e., the eighth-century prophet Isaiah) conveyed by the literature. Instead, Pfeiffer began with a presentation of historical

reality found within the extant text, identified it as his empirical criterion for coming to conclusions about the literary character of the book of Isaiah, and then employed it to reconstruct hypothetical literary entities (i.e., separate, self-contained books of First, Second and Third Isaiah) out of an actual literary entity (i.e., the book of Isaiah as a whole).

In many respects, this methodological issue plays a major role in defining scholarly discussion of Isaiah 1–39. On the one hand, the literary entity known as the book of Isaiah conveys the bulk of the information available for identifying the eighth-century historical prophet Isaiah ben Amoz. On the other hand, the posited eighth-century historical prophet Isaiah ben Amoz provides the primary impetus for identifying Isaiah 1–39 as a distinct body of biblical literature on which scholars write commentaries and draw historical and theological conclusions. But advances since World War II in both the study of literature and the reconstruction of history have refined scholarly perceptions of the issues involved in the study of both the book Isaiah and the prophet Isaiah ben Amoz (see Barton 1984; Knierim 1985; Morgan and Barton 1988). Scholars can no longer correlate the historical figure Isaiah ben Amoz with the literary entity Isaiah 1–39 as Pfeiffer does. Instead, awareness of the problems of literary formation and presentation, on the one hand, and the implications of these issues for historical reconstruction, on the other hand, have reshaped the interpretive agenda. Thus scholars now ask, ‘To what extent does the literary entity of the book of Isaiah shape our understanding of the man Isaiah ben Amoz, and to what extent does our understanding of the man Isaiah ben Amoz then shape our understanding of the book of Isaiah’.

These questions pose tremendous challenges to scholarly attempts to reconstruct the man Isaiah ben Amoz and his message. The book of Isaiah as a coherent literary whole indeed presents the eighth-century prophet Isaiah ben Amoz, but it does so in relation to a sweeping historical and ideological scenario that extends from the eighth to the fifth centuries BCE, from the period of the Assyrian invasions of Israel and Judah to the early Persian period restoration of Judah following the Babylonian exile. Clearly, the present form of the book of Isaiah does not limit itself to a historically verifiable view of the man Isaiah ben Amoz and his message, but applies an image of the man to a setting that transcends his lifetime and activities. Current Isaiah scholarship therefore recognizes this as an ideologically driven presentation that may or may not have anything to do with the historical reality of the man Isaiah ben Amoz. Because the literary character and presentation of the book of Isaiah presents tremendous difficulties for historical reconstruction, many scholars have abandoned attempts to reconstruct the ‘historical Isaiah’ and his writings or message and instead concentrate on defining the literary or textual character of the book as a whole and its ideology. Others, citing the ever burgeoning evidence concerning the

historical realities, worldviews and modes of expression from the ancient Near Eastern world assembled in the last century, continue to press on with attempts to understand the historical prophet Isaiah ben Amoz.

Many scholars view this debate as a conflict between literary and historical interests and methodologies. In fact, this distorts the true character of the issue: it is essentially a question of literary methodology. A major shift has taken place in literary methodology during the course of the twentieth century in that scholars are increasingly abandoning Gunkel's postulate that the short, self-contained literary unit constitutes an originally independent entity that must serve as the basis for biblical exegesis (1901: 42–47, especially 47). Recognizing that this postulate rested on an extremely chauvinistic view of the primitive 'child-like' mentality of the ancients, who were incapable of uttering or memorizing longer speech or text units, scholars have turned to the study of ever larger literary structures and themes in an effort to understand the character and message of biblical literature. As a result, the field has seen the development of newer forms of literary criticism, such as rhetorical criticism, structural semiotics, textual poetics, reader-response criticism, structural form criticism, and others, that can account for much larger textual units and aid in determining the means by which they present their images and messages. As scholars have developed and employed these methods, they have come to recognize that texts present historical reality according to their own perspectives and purposes, which may or may not correspond to historical reality as it actually existed. This does not mean the end of historical criticism, however, as many have asserted. The fields of archaeology, philology, social sciences, and historical perspectives have advanced considerably as well. It simply means that historical research will have to find the means by which it can incorporate new advances in the study of literature, especially the study of larger literary units, into its own interpretive agenda.

These issues have had a tremendous influence on the study of Isaiah 1–39, although scholars are still wrestling with the implications of advances in literary methodologies for the study of these chapters and, indeed, of the book as a whole. A number of surveys of earlier scholarship are available, including those by Vermeylen (1977–78), Kilian (1983) and Hardmeier (1986). But the discussion of Isaiah 1–39 has changed markedly from the late 1970s, especially under the impact of redaction-critical studies that point to the literary character of the book. Historical issues still stand at the forefront, and legitimately so, but scholars are finding it increasingly difficult to assert historical conclusions concerning the eighth-century Isaiah ben Amoz without taking account of the current discussion concerning the literary character of the entire book and its presentation of Isaiah ben Amoz. A previous essay (Sweeney 1993a) examines these problems in relation to the formation of the book of Isaiah as a whole. The balance of this essay

discusses these problems in relation to the changing character of the literary study of Isaiah 1–39. It focuses especially on the rise of redaction criticism and rhetorical criticism in relation to Isaiah 1–39 and the impact of these disciplines in shifting scholarly attention from short, self-contained units to larger literary entities. It likewise examines the implications of these disciplines for the historical study of Isaiah ben Amoz and the historical formation of the Isaiah literary tradition.

II.

Ironically enough, both the fragmentation of the book of Isaiah into its component parts and the basis for integrative study of the book as a whole appear in Duhm's groundbreaking commentary (5th edn, 1968) on Isaiah initially published in 1892. Following Duhm, a great deal of early critical research focuses on identifying the original sayings of Isaiah ben Amoz, based especially on the demarcation of short, self-contained prophetic oracles. But many early scholars, including Duhm, Procksch (1930), Mowinkel (1931, 1933, 1946), Elliger (1933), Odeberg (1931), Kissane (1941–43), and others, raise redaction-critical questions concerning the role of later hands, especially those related to Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah, in the text of Isaiah 1–39. As a result of these early studies, the mid-1950s and beyond saw the appearance of a number of studies that laid the foundation for modern redaction-critical study of Isaiah 1–39. Different emphases appear in these investigations, such as the development of linguistic and thematic criteria to demonstrate the links between the various parts of the book or the influence of post-eighth-century concerns in shaping the presentation of materials in Isaiah 1–39. In some respects, they lead to the present concern to understand the literary character of the book of Isaiah as a whole; in others, they lead to the development of new models for the literary-historical study of the Proto-Isaiah tradition.

Among the first are two articles by Liebreich (1955–56, 1956–57) which attempt to elucidate the structure of Isaiah by concentrating on catchword and phrase associations. Within Isaiah 1–39, he identifies four major subsections: 1–12; 13–27; 28–35; and 36–39. With the exception of the last, each concludes with a 'happy ending' which discusses the coming joy of Israel. Liebreich also employs catchword associations to claim that Isaiah 40–66 comprises two subsections: 40–49 and 50–66. The two parts of the book are related in that Isaiah 1–39 discusses a golden age envisioned in terms of a scion of David and Isaiah 40–66 discusses an era when Israel will be the servant and elect of G-d. The two parts of the book are intended to form a unity as indicated by the extensive catchword associations between Isaiah 1 and 65–66. This presupposes the unmistakable intention and fixed determination to make the book end in the same vein in which it begins.

In 1955, Jones published his groundbreaking study on ‘The Tradition of the Oracles of Isaiah of Jerusalem’. He presupposes the hypothesis of an Isaianic school, but argues that the purpose of this school is not merely to preserve the sayings of Isaiah, but to reapply these sayings to contemporary situations, thereby making Isaiah’s message relevant to that time. Jones claims that only with this perspective is one able to explain the present arrangement of the book. Thus, Isaiah 1–5 must be interpreted in relation to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. The ‘Day of the Lord’ oracle in 2.6–22 must be understood as having already taken place in relation to the Babylonian invasion of Judah. This explains its placement after the promise to Zion in 2.2–4, which will take place in the latter days, in that the present distress of Israel is but one part of the divine plan for Israel’s future. Thus, the original eighth-century application of the Day of the Lord oracle was superseded by a more comprehensive application to Zion’s entire history.

J. Becker’s 1968 monograph stresses the need for a new redactional interpretation of the book of Isaiah. Noting Second Isaiah’s reference to the ‘former things’, which he understands in reference to the prophecies of First Isaiah, Becker observes that the book speaks as a unity. He postulates that the Isaianic school was responsible for the present form of the book, but denies a long process of growth. Instead, he claims that the Isaianic school preserved the prophet’s oracles intact and that the redactional activity which applies Isaiah’s oracles to later circumstances took place at the specific time and situation of the Babylonian exile. The redaction employs psalms as organizational devices to demarcate the book’s sub-sections and stresses the kingship of God and the application of the Davidic covenant to all Israel in order to form a theocratic community after the Babylonian exile.

Lack’s 1973 monograph is an attempt to understand the symbolism of the book of Isaiah through a study of its structure, which he defines along standard historical-critical lines as Isaiah 1–39; 40–55; and 56–66. He claims that the final form of the book was created by a redactor concerned with eschatology at the end of the fifth century. This redactor added much of Isaiah 13–23; 24–27; 33 and 34–35 as well as the Isaianic collection in 6.1–9.6 to a previously existing book which already included Isaiah 40–66. Prior to this redaction, Lack postulates a late sixth-century redaction in which the author of Isaiah 56–66 collected 40–55 and 1.1–9.6. This redactor formed an inclusion between chs. 1 and 65–66 by adding 1.27–28 and 1.29–31, which shared themes with Isaiah 65–66.

III.

In many respects, the preceding studies lay the groundwork for current discussion concerning the structure, setting and final form of the book of Isaiah (see Sweeney 1993a). They also play a major role in motivating

the redaction-critical discussion of Isaiah 1–39 in that they point to the influence of concerns stemming from the exilic and post-exilic periods in the formation of these chapters. Other impulses come from the historical-critical study of the First Isaiah tradition. Previous work had identified a great deal of salvation-oriented material, such as Isa. 7.1–17 and 9.1–6, as well as material directed against the Assyrian empire in 10.5–32 and 14.4b–23, 24–27 (cf. Ginsberg 1968), that did not appear to derive from the exilic or post-exilic periods. Although scholars had generally identified Isaiah ben Amoz as a prophet of judgment, von Rad pointed to the influence of the Davidic/Zion tradition that posited YHWH's eternal protection of Jerusalem and the Davidic house as a primary element of Isaiah ben Amoz's message (1965: 155–75). On the basis of these concerns, and the continuing problem of the interrelationship between judgment and salvation in Isaiah 1–39, scholars began to probe the possibility that pre-exilic concerns were also operative in the formation of Isaiah 1–39. Such studies have an important impact on the formation of the entire book as well, for if the First Isaiah tradition contains elements of salvation as well as of judgment, it would help to explain why the salvation-oriented materials of Isaiah 40–66 are associated with the first part of the book.

One of the most important studies that raises this issue is Barth's 1977 study of the redaction history of the book of Isaiah. He focuses his investigation only on Isaiah 1–35, especially on those chapters which deal with Assyria. On the basis of his investigation, Barth argues for the existence of a late seventh-century BCE redaction of Isaiah that supported the political and religious reforms of King Josiah of Judah (640–609 BCE). He labels this edition the 'Assyrian redaction', and argues that it included much of Isaiah 2–32. Its purpose is to claim that the impending Assyrian downfall was part of a plan by YHWH to rebuild the old Davidic empire under Josiah and that the previous period of Assyrian vassalage was merely a temporary punishment for a sinful people prior to their restoration. Barth also offers an overview of the formation of the entire book. He rejects the view that Isaiah is formed from several previously independent collections and argues instead that the book is the product of a process of gradual growth. He postulates two complexes of material that go back to the prophet himself: Isa. 6.1–8.18 from the Syro-Ephraimitic War, and Isa. 28.17–30.17 from his later years. More material was later added by Isaiah himself or by his disciples to form Isaiah 2–11 and 28–32, which were available for the Assyrian redaction. Following the death of Josiah and the fall of Jerusalem, additional material was added, such as Isa. 1.2–20 and Isaiah 33, that attempted to understand why such calamities had taken place after such high expectations. Successive stages in the formation of the book appeared throughout the post-exilic period, culminating in the universalist perspectives of the *maššā'* oracles against the nations in Isaiah 13–23 and other materials such as Isa. 2.2–5

and Isaiah 34–35. This process led to what Barth considers to be a typical structure for prophetic books: Isaiah 1, introduction; Isaiah 2–12, threats; Isaiah 13–35, promises, prior to the addition of Isaiah 40–66.

Vermeylen's 1977–78 study of Isaiah 1–35 addresses concerns similar to those of Barth. He, too, focuses on the intentions of the various stages of the redaction of the book, claiming that older material was 'reread' in accordance with the contemporary situation of the redactor. His complex reconstruction of the literary history of these chapters comprises seven major stages, of which two are pre-exilic. The first stage is the preaching of Isaiah ben Amoz himself and the first formation of his oracles into collections. The five collections which Vermeylen identifies from this stage deal with the Syro-Ephraimitic War, the abasement of human pride and the exaltation of YHWH, the arrogance and social injustice of the leading citizens of Jerusalem, the obstinacy of Israel, and YHWH's lack of confidence in Judah's foreign relations. The second stage in the formation of the book extends from the time of Manasseh's reign to the exile. This period sees the return to mythic categories in the conception of YHWH's defense of Jerusalem and the role of the king of Judah. Two rereadings took place in this period. The first was in relation to Sennacherib's ability to destroy Jerusalem, and the second was in relation to the reign of King Josiah and his attempt to reestablish the Davidic empire. Successive stages in the exilic and post-exilic periods focus on why YHWH brought about the Babylonian exile, the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism, revenge on the impious among the post-exilic Judean community, and 'touch-up' concerns for the conversion of pagans, anti-Samaritan polemic, and the ingathering of dispersed Jews.

Vermeylen's concept of *relecture*, 'rereading', has been very influential in redaction-critical studies of Isaiah that point to the rereading of earlier Isaianic texts in relation to later times (see Clements 1980a; Sweeney 1988a). An especially noteworthy example of this approach, which does not cite Vermeylen, is Macintosh's 1980 study of Isaiah 21. Macintosh argues that this chapter is a 'palimpsest', originally composed as Isaiah's reaction to Sennacherib's late eighth- early seventh-century defeat of the Chaldean prince, Merodach Baladan, but later reread in relation to Cyrus's late sixth-century subjugation of Babylon.

Clements's commentary on Isaiah 1–39 (1980a) reflects the influence of studies by J. Becker (1968), Barth (1977) and Vermeylen (1977–78), as well as Ackroyd's 1978 study which posited post-exilic influence in the presentation of Isaiah (see Sweeney 1993a). He notes the possible connections between Isaiah 1–39 and 40–66 (and later develops this concern in subsequent publications; see Sweeney 1993a) but, due to the interests of the New Century Bible commentary series, limits his discussion to Isaiah 1–39. Clements establishes the structure for these chapters: 1, introduction; 2–12, prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem; 13–23, prophecies concerning

foreign nations; 24–27, ‘Apocalypse’ of Isaiah; 28–33, further prophecies concerning Jerusalem and Judah; 34–35, ‘Little Apocalypse’ of Isaiah; and 36–39, narrative concerning Isaiah, Hezekiah and Jerusalem. He attributes this organization in part to the subject matter and in part according to the separate collections in which the material was transmitted. Later additions were not spurious, but reflect the interests of later redaction in preserving the message of Isaiah and in interpreting it in relation to the subsequent history of Israel, Judah and Jerusalem. He rejects the thesis of oral transmission, and argues that the process of writing the material began in the prophet’s lifetime. The earliest material includes the Isaiah ‘Memoir’, 6.1–8.18; oracles threatening Judah and Jerusalem, 2.6–4.1; 28–31; and material in 5.1–14.27 into which the ‘Memoir’ was inserted. He accepts Barth’s ‘Assyrian redaction’, but labels it the ‘Josianic redaction’, arguing that it begins in Isa. 5.1 and includes Isaiah 36–37. An exilic redaction placed Isaiah 2–4 at the head of the book to explain the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem (cf. Clements 1980c), and a subsequent fifth-century redaction added apocalyptic material in Isaiah 24–27 and 34–35.

The second English edition of Kaiser’s commentary on Isaiah 1–12 (1983) was a marked departure from the first edition (1972) in that, like the 1974 edition of his commentary on Isaiah 13–39, it demonstrates considerable influence from the emerging redaction-critical perspectives of the 1970s. Whereas the first edition of his commentary on Isaiah 1–12 treats only short, self-contained, individual texts, the second edition offers a discussion of the formation of the entire book. Kaiser claims that Isaiah ben Amoz is essentially a legendary figure. Levitical circles of the Deuteronomistic movement have reworked the book so thoroughly that it is impossible to trace any material back to the prophet. He claims that the basic deposit of the book is a small collection in chs. 1 and 28–31 from the beginning of the fifth century that reflects the Deuteronomistic viewpoint with respect to the fall of the kingdom and the destruction of Jerusalem. He maintains that the book presents these tragedies as the result of the people’s sin, based upon his view that an anonymous prophet, speaking in the name of Isaiah, saw an analogy between Zedekiah’s revolt against Nebuchadrezzar and Hezekiah’s revolt against Sennacherib. The so-called ‘Memoir’ in 6.1–8.18 also reflects Deuteronomistic theology in that Ahaz’s experiences set the course for the later history of the kings until 587 BCE. The book continued to grow under the influence of later generations who looked alternatively for world judgment and salvation. By the end of the fifth century, a pseudepigraphic impulse brought about an Assyrian redaction analogous to that envisioned by Barth. Under the influence of Deutero-Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah, the book ultimately took on an eschatological character by the time of its final formation in the Hellenistic period.

Wildberger’s commentary (1972–82) likewise begins with an analysis of independent, short, self-contained units, but at the time of its completion

in 1982, he offers an overview of the formation of the book. Like Kaiser, Wildberger is heavily influenced by the redaction-critical discussions of the 1970s, but argues that a basic core of material can be traced to Isaiah ben Amoz. Wildberger's commentary is a throwback to a combination of the earlier collection and gradual growth hypotheses (cf. Duham 1968 [1892]; Procksch 1930). Two original Isaianic complexes appear in the book: Isa. 2.6–11.9 dates to 717–711 BCE, and reflects the prophet's words from his earliest period through the Syro-Ephraimitic War; and Isaiah 28–31 reflects his statements concerning Hezekiah's revolt in 705–701. A disciple added additional words in Isa 1.2–2.4 (5) as an introduction following the prophet's death. In keeping with other examples of the oracles against the nations in prophetic books, a later redactor added oracles against the nations in Isaiah 13–23 in Isaiah's name. Wildberger rejects Barth's Assyrian redaction, and argues instead that various recensions appeared during the exilic and early post-exilic periods, including a judgment recension following the fall of Jerusalem and a salvation recension in conjunction with the restoration. Final redactions saw the additions of Isaiah 12; 11.11–16; 33–35; 19.16–25; 24–27. Following the completion of the final 'book' of Isaiah 1–35 about 400 BCE, chs. 36–39 were added from 2 Kings, followed by Isaiah 40–66.

IV.

The commentaries by Kaiser and Wildberger mark a watershed in Isaiah studies in that they are the last major commentaries to view Isaiah 1–35 (36–39) as an autonomous book, separate from Isaiah 40–66, with its own history of literary growth. More importantly, they mark the end of exegetical focus on the short, self-contained form-critical text unit as the basis for literary analysis. Nevertheless, various monographs and studies on different aspects of the First Isaiah tradition continue to adopt this perspective. These include the studies by Werner on eschatological texts (1982) and the plan of YHWH in the book of Isaiah (1988), Stansell on the interrelationship between the Isaiah and Micah traditions (1988), Wagner on Isa. 6.1–11 (1989), Deck on the message of judgment in Isaiah (1991), Werlitz on Isa. 7.1–17 and 29.1–8 (1992), and several shorter pastorally-oriented commentaries, such as those by Kilian (1986) and Widyapranawa (1990). But the newly emerging emphasis on larger literary or rhetorical units rather than upon the generically defined shorter speech units (see Muilenburg 1969) prompts scholars to reexamine the literary character of the book of Isaiah. This stimulates new impulses in Isaiah scholarship that focus on the formation of the book as a whole, the interrelationship between Isaiah 40–66 and Isaiah 1–39, and the influence of Isaiah 40–66 on the redaction and presentation of Isaiah 1–39 (see Williamson 1994; for a full discussion, see Sweeney 1993a). The results of such research demonstrate that it is

impossible to maintain that Isaiah 1–39 ever constituted a self-contained book; rather, these chapters constitute components of the larger book of Isaiah whose literary divisions are found in Isaiah 1–33 and 34–66. Nevertheless, as scholars begin to experiment with research involving larger literary units, discussion concerning both the historical figure Isaiah ben Amoz and the redactional formation of the First Isaiah tradition begins to change.

This change is evident especially in the continuing discussion of the seventh-century ‘Assyrian’ or ‘Josianic’ redaction of Isaiah, in that scholars began to examine this hypothesis in relation to larger textual patterns. The first is the 1984 paper by L’Heureux on the redactional history of Isa. 5.1–10.4. Although L’Heureux accepts the redaction-critical approach articulated by Barth, Vermeylen and Clements, he challenges the fundamental literary-critical means by which Vermeylen in particular argues for his redaction-critical hypothesis for the formation of Isa. 5.1–10.4. Although Vermeylen is ultimately interested in the larger shape and literary coherence of the Isaiah corpus, he bases his redaction-critical reconstructions on analyses of individual words, phrases, and short units within the larger framework of the text at large. Vermeylen identifies four basic textual units within the larger whole (1977: 159–249): the Song of the Vineyard in Isa. 5.1–7; the Woe sayings in Isa. 5.8–23 and 10.1–4; the Outstretched Hand series in Isa. 9.7–20 and 5.24–30; and the Emmanuel (= Immanuel) booklet in Isa. 6.1–9.6. Based upon his discussion of individual words and phrases, Vermeylen argues that the Song of the Vineyard stems from an exilic Deuteronomistic hand, and that the other three text blocks comprise a core of material that ultimately stems from Isaiah ben Amoz but was continually updated or ‘reread’ by the additions of individual words and phrases throughout the exilic period. The four text blocks were combined together in their present form through the exilic and post-exilic periods. L’Heureux challenges Vermeylen’s late dating of Isa. 5.1–7, based on Vermeylen’s refusal to recognize the use of planting imagery prior to the seventh century, pointing to examples in earlier literature, such as Judg. 9.7–15; Exod. 15.17; Hos. 10.1–2; and even Isa. 3.14–15. By establishing the Isaianic authorship of the Song of the Vineyard, L’Heureux is able to call into question Vermeylen’s conclusions concerning the redactional history of Isa. 5.1–10.4, in that the scenario was frequently based upon the lexical associations between Isa. 5.1–7 and the other texts. In contrast, L’Heureux argues that the poetic structure of the larger compositional units must be taken into consideration. His analysis of Isa. 5.25–29 and 9.7–10.4 is designed to show the existence of an original six-strophe poem that is employed to encase the Emmanuel booklet in a chiasmatically constructed double *inclusio* that combines both the Outstretched Hand series (5.25–29 and 9.7–10.4) and the Woe series (5.8–24) in a text introduced by the Song of the Vineyard (5.1–7). The result is a coherent textual block that focuses on the issue of social justice and argues that the

coming punishment of Israel and Judah by Assyria is caused by the failure of the upper classes (such as King Ahaz) who oppressed the poor and failed to trust in the Davidic tradition. The continuity of this text with Isa. 10.5-34 and 14.24-27, which point to the coming fall of the Assyrian empire, demonstrates the existence of a 'Primary Redactor' who worked in association with the nationalistic reforms of either Hezekiah or Josiah.

Sheppard's 1985 paper likewise takes up the question of the 'Assyrian' redaction of First Isaiah in relation to the newly emerging discussion of context and meaning of the book of Isaiah as a whole (cf. Ackroyd 1978; Childs 1979; Clements 1982; for a full discussion, see Sweeney 1993a). His interest is to clarify the hermeneutics by which editorial changes in context produce changes in meaning for later readers of the Isaiah material. Presupposing Barth's observations on the editorial displacement of textual units in the course of forming the 'Assyrian' redaction, Sheppard focuses on the displacement of Isa. 5.15-16 from 2.6-21 and 3.13-15 from 5.1-7 and the influence of these displacements on the meaning of the oracles in Isaiah 1–39. Independently of L'Heureux, Sheppard points to the double inclusion formed by the Woe oracles in Isa. 5.8-24; 10.1-4 and the invective threats (Outstretched Hand series) in 5.25-30; 9.7-20 that encase the 'Testimony' of Isaiah in 6.1–8.18. The application of the 'outstretched arm' of YHWH against Israel, Judah and Syria in the resulting text points to 'the universal implications of G-d's wrath and anticipates the declarations of 14.24-27 and the oracles against the nations in Isaiah 13–23' (1985: 196). The exilic insertion of Isaiah 12, which articulates a message of comfort in 12.1b, provides a 'retrospective synopsis' of Isaiah 2–11 and anticipates the theme of comfort in Second and Third Isaiah, which is completely foreign to the eighth-century prophet. The displacement of Isa. 14.24-27, originally a part of the 'Outstretched Hand' section, systematizes Isaiah 2–11 and enables a later variation on the same formula to play a role in defining the structure of the later book of Isaiah. The displacement of Isa. 5.15-16 (which speaks about the 'exaltation' of YHWH in contrast to the 'humiliation' of human pride) from 2.6-22 points to a similar editorial device and wordplays (in 13.11b; 25.12; 26.5b; 29.4 and 30.18-26) that again indicate the influence of the 'Assyrian' redaction in the formation of the entire book. Likewise, the displacement of 3.13-15, which speaks about YHWH's contention against those who devour the vineyard, from Isa. 5.1-7 points to the application of the 'juridical' parable together with the contrast between the imagery of 'briers and thorns' and fruitful vintage throughout the tradition. The influence of this image on the portrayal of YHWH's care of the vineyard in Isa. 27.2-6 likewise testifies to the role of the 'Assyrian' redaction in influencing the formation of the entire book. Sheppard's analysis is particularly important in that it points to redaction as an activity that does not simply supplement and recast an earlier tradition, but does so on the basis of internal

signals and motifs from the preexisting text, so that later redaction expands, reapplies, and thereby continues the message of the earlier text.

Finally, Anderson's paper (1988) examines the editorial structure of Isaiah 5–10 (11) in an effort to clarify the theological outlook of this textual block. He notes the problems inherent in attempts to explain the current text as the product of editorial displacement of originally independent 'Woe' and 'Outstretched Hand' series in that the two are intertwined in the present form of the text. Instead, he takes up Childs's earlier (1979: 324–38) proposal to interpret the text as it stands. He therefore examines the Song of the Vineyard (5.1–7) in relation to the 'Woe' series of 5.8–25. Noting the rhetorical function of the double appearance of the word *lākēn*, 'therefore', in 5.13, 14 and elsewhere in the Isaiah tradition (30.18; 50.7; 24.6), he argues that the double 'therefore' apparent in 5.24, 25 (*lākēn* followed by '*al-kēn*, 'therefore') provides a special emphasis on the 'outstretched hand' of YHWH in 5.25 that points to G–d's summoning the Assyrian empire in 5.26–30. The summons of Assyria in 5.26–30 thereby stands as the culmination of the 'Woe' series in 5.8–24; points to G–d's 'outstretched hand' of judgment in 9.7–10.4; and is followed by the rebuke and fall of Assyria in 10.5–34. The insertion of the 'Memoirs of Isaiah' (6.1–9.6) into this framework likewise points to the judgment to be suffered by Israel and Judah (8.22), but it also points to the coming relief of a people who will see a great light following a period of darkness (9.1). The editorial structure of Isaiah 5–10 (11) therefore points to YHWH's plan/purpose to perform the 'strange work' on Mt Zion (Isa. 28.21) in which YHWH's judgment against Zion critiques the Zion tradition, but ultimately demonstrates that 'YHWH is with us'—in judgment and in mercy.

The redaction-critical perspective, especially the emphasis on some form of a seventh-century 'Josianic' or 'Assyrian' redaction, continues to play an important role in the interpretation of Isaiah 1–39. This is evident in recent theologically- or pastorally-oriented commentaries, such as those by Jensen (1984), Kilian (1986), Jacob (1987), and Stacey (1993) as well as the short commentary by Sheppard (1988).

V.

The redaction-critical approaches to Isaiah 1–39 that emerge in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s complicate the task of scholars interested in establishing the historicity of the prophet Isaiah ben Amoz and the literature attributed to him. The twentieth century has seen tremendous advances in the study of the history and archaeology of the land of Israel and indeed of the entire ancient Near Eastern world. In addition, the continuing publication and discussion of Assyriological sources provides a greater understanding of the events of the eighth and seventh centuries BCE in that the

records of the Assyrian kings provide scholars with information concerning Assyria's views of its incursions into the Syro-Israelite region during these periods. Throughout the 1980s, insights from the fields of historical, archaeological and Assyriological studies are increasingly applied to the study of the First Isaiah traditions in an effort to establish the historical character of the prophet. Furthermore, the methodological shift to the larger literary units as the basis for exegetical study begins to influence the historical study of the First Isaiah traditions in that the larger textual structures defined in redaction-critical study are increasingly identified as the work of Isaiah ben Amoz. This work also has a theological dimension in its attempt to demonstrate not only the historicity of the prophet and his message, but the characterization of Isaiah ben Amoz ultimately as a prophet who offers hope to his people and not merely judgment.

A highly influential study based upon the application of Assyriological sources to the study of First Isaiah is Machinist's 1983 paper on the image of Assyria in First Isaiah. Machinist sees his work in relation to the redaction-critical studies of Barth, Vermeylen and Clements in that he seeks to establish that the message of hope found in the First Isaiah traditions stems from Isaiah ben Amoz himself and not from a later seventh-century redaction (p. 736 n. 109). Machinist notes that the portrayal of Assyrian invincibility in Isa. 5.26b-27a, 28; 10.6b, 13b corresponds to the reality of Assyrian might during the eighth century and posits that the descriptions evident in these texts are due to Isaiah's actual observation of Assyrian military maneuvers in Syria-Israel. He notes that various motifs in First Isaiah likewise find correspondences in the Assyrian royal records from the period. The quotation of the Assyrian monarch in Isa. 37.24 / 2 Kgs 19.23 emphasizes the Assyrian monarch's felling of cedars in Lebanon and corresponds to reports of such activities by Shalmaneser III and Sennacherib. Likewise, the language employed to portray the desolate land of Judah in Isa. 1.7-8 corresponds to language in the royal inscriptions that describes the devastation wrought by the Assyrian kings. Like the Assyrian annals, First Isaiah speaks of the removal of borders (Isa. 10.13), the ruined cities (Isa. 37.26b/2 Kgs 19.25), the portrayal of the Assyrian army as raging water and the 'glory' of the Assyrian king that overwhelms his enemies (Isa. 8.7-8), the portrayal of the Assyrian monarch as a devouring lion (Isa. 5.29), and the imposition of Assyria's 'yoke' on subjugated peoples (Isa. 10.27; 14.25). Likewise, the language and propaganda techniques employed in the Rab-shakeh's speech to the defenders of Jerusalem during Sennacherib's siege of the city correspond to documented Assyrian practice and language. Furthermore, the association of these motifs and practices with language employed in Nahum demonstrates the continuing influence of Assyrian images in biblical literature throughout the period of Assyrian hegemony over Judah. Overall, the use of these images, motifs and language forms in First Isaiah demonstrates

the historicity of the tradition, in that Isaiah or his circle of followers would have encountered Assyrian practices and language at first hand.

Another very fruitful example of the use of Assyriology in relation to Isaiah is Hurowitz's 1989 study, which examines Isaiah's 'impure lips' (Isaiah 6) in relation to Mesopotamian mouth purification rituals. Such rituals apparently were employed to establish the cultic purity of a person, such as a *baru* priest, thereby enabling the person to stand before a divine tribunal. My own study of Isa. 10.27-32 (Sweeney 1994c) employs Assyrian records together with a close literary analysis of the text to argue that the approach of an invading army described in this text is neither the Syro-Ephraimitic coalition nor Sennacherib's army, but an attempt by Sargon II to intimidate Judah and thereby to keep it from joining Egypt and Philistia in hostilities against the new king during his first major campaign of 720 BCE.

During the early 1980s, J.J.M. Roberts, another Assyriologist, published a series of articles on First Isaiah that combine an interest in defining a historical perspective on the writings and outlook of First Isaiah with a redaction-critical hypothesis on the literary formation of this material. His studies have an important impact on the discussion, not only because they argue for redactional expansion and reapplication of Isaiah's oracles during the lifetime of the prophet, but because they argue that Isaiah must be understood as a prophet of salvation as well as of judgment. The first, a study on the form, syntax and redaction of Isa. 1.2-20 (1982a) challenges the prevailing views of scholars such as Wildberger (1972-82) and Kaiser (1983), who argue that this passage comprises a series of originally independent, self-contained short units. Employing a combination of form-critical, syntactical and rhetorical observations, Roberts argues that Isa. 1.2-20 constitutes a single prophetic speech, in the form of a covenant lawsuit speech, uttered by the prophet in the aftermath of 701 BCE to explain Sennacherib's devastation of the country. A second key article examines Isaiah 2 (1985a) in relation to Isaiah's message to the northern kingdom of Israel. Again, Roberts challenges prevailing scholarly views that divide the chapter into Isa. 2.2-4, an anonymous oracle from the exilic or post-exilic period, and Isa. 2.6-22, attributed primarily to Isaiah. Roberts follows upon an earlier article by Cazelles (1980), which argues that Isa. 2.2-5 is an oracle by Isaiah from the time of the Syro-Ephraimitic War and that 2.6-22 stems from Deutero-Isaiah, the redactor of the entire book. Roberts examines the use of the phrase 'House of Jacob' in vv. 5-6, and argues that it is a characteristic designation for the northern kingdom of Israel in the First Isaiah traditions (9.7; 17.4; 8.17; 10.20-21). An examination of the role of the names of Isaiah's children, especially Shear Yashub, 'a remnant shall return', demonstrates a contrasting message throughout the First Isaiah tradition of threat against the northern kingdom and assurance to Judah. Isa. 2.5-6

consequently links the two parts of the chapter together and demonstrates a coherent attempt by the prophet to persuade the northern kingdom to return to Judah and Jerusalem in the context of the Syro-Ephraimitic War. A more detailed study of the names of Isaiah's children (1985b) extends the implications of Roberts's views concerning the formation of the First Isaiah traditions. Noting that Isaiah's audience with Ahaz in Isa. 7.1–9 is intended to reassure the king that YHWH will protect Jerusalem and the Davidic house against the Syro-Ephraimitic coalition, Roberts turns to the continuing appearance of the names of Isaiah's children in the tradition. Isa. 7.14 likewise indicates that the naming of Emmanuel conveys reassurance, and the later elaboration of this name in 8.8b, 10 points to a similar effort to articulate a message of salvation. The elaboration of the name Shear Yashub in 10.20–24a points to later efforts to reassure Judah, and to the use of this name in relation to the 'remnant' theology of First Isaiah which expresses YHWH's message of judgment against the northern kingdom and salvation for the south. Roberts maintains that his observations have important implications for the redaction-critical study of First Isaiah in that they point out how the prophet reapplied the message of threat against northern Israel and reassurance for Judah from the context of the Syro-Ephraimitic War to that of the later Assyrian invasions. Equally important are Roberts's attempts to define the ideology of the Zion tradition as the basis for Isaiah's message of reassurance to Ahaz and Hezekiah. This interest is expressed in several papers from the same period, including studies of Isaiah's overall theology (1982b), his vision of the future in Isaiah 32 (1983a), and the prophetic liturgy in Isaiah 33 (1983b). A 1990 study of the term *šemaḥ h'* in Isa. 4.2 points to the elaboration of Isaiah's message of reassurance in the later expansion of the Isaiah tradition.

Wiklander's 1984 Uppsala dissertation on Isaiah 2–4 is another example of a study concerned with defining the textual coherence of the First Isaiah tradition in relation to the historical prophet. Like Roberts, Wiklander is fundamentally concerned with the fragmentation of the text of Isaiah evident in the work of Wildberger and other representatives of modern form- and literary-critical exegesis. To address this problem, Wiklander looks to the growing body of research on the linguistic, semantic and rhetorical dimensions of biblical texts in order to define the literary character of Isaiah 2–4 and to apply these dimensions in the interpretation of this text. A brief study of Isaiah 2–4 by Magonet (1982) already demonstrated the possibility of reading this text as a coherent whole by pointing to the rhetorical device of concentric structure as a means to define the coherence of this text. Magonet argues that Isaiah 2–4 portrays an ideal Zion at both the beginning (2.2–5) and end (4.1–6) of the text. Portrayals of corruption in the 'real' Jerusalem appeared in Isa. 2.6–22 and 3.16–4.1, built around a core passage that portrays the corrupt leadership of the city (3.1–15). Wiklander offers a more

sophisticated textual approach that combines study of the internal relations of the text, that is, the structure of its interrelated units of meaning, with study of its external factors, that is, its author, audience and universe. He argues that Isaiah 2–4 constitutes a ‘restoration of the covenant by means of prophetic revelation’ that was written to persuade an audience to return to the covenant of YHWH Sebaot at Mt Zion. The basic three-part structure of the text includes a prophetic vision of the future in which the nations would submit to YHWH at Zion (2.1–4); a hortatory conclusion that invites the House of Jacob to join the nations in recognizing YHWH (2.5); and the treatise which explains how Jacob’s present situation of punishment would move to a future situation of restoration (2.6–4.6). Because the text displays a coherent structure and because it fails to mention Jerusalem’s destruction, Wiklander argues that the entire text was written by a single author sometime between 734–622 BCE, that is, during the period of Assyrian hegemony over Judah. Its purpose is to persuade the audience that subjugation to Assyria is divine punishment for Judah’s apostasy and that they should return to YHWH. Unfortunately, Wiklander’s study displays methodological shortcomings in that he presupposes that the appearance of a unified structure in a text could only be the product of a single author. He does not examine the historical background and textual relationships of the concepts expressed in 2.2–4 thoroughly, nor does he examine problems in the reading of 2.5 which point to its redactional character (see Sweeney 1987). Nevertheless, Wiklander’s work is exceptionally important in that it points the way to defining the literary coherence of larger text blocks.

Another influential example of a literary approach that emphasizes the textual coherence of Isaiah’s oracles in relation to the historical reality of Isaiah ben Amoz appears in the work of Gitay. In his dissertation on Isaiah 40–48 (1981), Gitay develops a rhetorical approach that emphasizes the role of the prophet as orator in relation to an audience and applies it to the study of Second Isaiah. Like Roberts (1982a), Gitay, in his first major attempt to study First Isaiah, focuses on Isa. 1.2–20 (1983b). Form-critical scholars typically divide these verses into a series of short, previously independent oracles that are placed together to form a thematic introduction to First Isaiah. Other scholars treat the coherence of Isaiah 1 in various ways; for instance Niditch (1980), who focuses on the role of metaphor in tying the images of the passage together; J. Willis (1984), who emphasizes the covenant lawsuit genre (see also Nielsen 1979, who traces the pattern throughout Isa. 1–12); and Loretz (1984), who focuses on the colometry of the text in relation to comparative Ugaritic models. But Gitay opens an entirely new dimension of the discussion by defining Isa. 1.2–20 as an example of a unified communicative discourse that demonstrates the prophet’s interaction with an audience by pointing to its persuasive aspects. Following classical rhetorical lines, he argues that the

text includes an introduction (vv. 2-3), a statement of facts (vv. 4-9), a confirmation (vv. 10-17), and a conclusion (vv. 18-20). The text was composed by Isaiah in an effort to persuade the people that their traditional religious conceptions of security are mistaken. The prophet could point to the devastation suffered by the nation as a means to ridicule the people's views and make his point that the people's devotion to G-d is ineffective in the face of catastrophe. G-d brought about the catastrophe in the first place as a response to the people's wrongdoing. Gitay elaborates upon his methodological perspective in two additional articles that point to the interrelationship between the prophet and his audience. The first (1983a) examines various texts throughout Isaiah 2-9 in an effort to demonstrate the prophet's argumentative character, and the second (1984) examines stylistic factors in Isaiah 1 in an effort to demonstrate that vv. 21-26 play a role in the prophet's attempt to persuade the audience not to be among those judged. He thereby lays the basis for a coherent reading of Isaiah 1 and points to the possibility for such readings throughout the following material.

One side effect of the debate concerning the coherence of the Isaiah traditions is the reopening of the old debate concerning the unified authorship of the book of Isaiah. The previously noted studies by Wiklander and Gitay, for example, attack prevailing views that posit a fragmented collection of very short oracles and thereby posit a model of single authorship for the texts that they study. This opens the way for theologically conservative scholars who are interested in maintaining Isaianic authorship of the entire book of Isaiah to do so by pointing to the literary coherence of the book. Such an approach appears in the commentary by Oswalt (1986), who in addition to various aspects of literary coherence points to the issue of prophetic inspiration: Isaiah was a truly inspired prophet who could therefore predict the future specifically, such as the rule of Cyrus (Isa. 44.28; 45.1) and employ different literary styles in composing the whole of Isaiah 1-66. Motyer (1993) points to the Judean setting of chs. 56-66, and argues that the issue turns upon chs. 40-55. Because the fall of Babylon is predicted and not presupposed in these chapters, he concludes that Isaiah ben Amoz is the author of the entire book. But this discussion also has an unfortunate impact on critical scholars. The commentary on Isaiah 1-33 by Hayes and Irvine, for example (1987), maintains that all of these chapters are the product of Isaiah ben Amoz and that their present arrangement reflects the chronology of historical events during the lifetime of the prophet. They therefore expend considerable effort attempting to correlate the text of Isaiah with events from the appropriate period in the lifetime of the prophet. An example of the results of their chronological assumptions appears in the discussion of Isaiah 24-27, which they attempt to relate to the period of Hezekiah's revolt against Assyria in 705 BCE. Unfortunately, their citations of priestly material

from Genesis (for example, Gen. 9.1-6 in relation to Isa. 24.5) presuppose a much earlier date for these traditions than most scholars would accept. Likewise, they ignore links to later traditions, such as the citation in Isa. 24.17-18a of Jer. 48.43-44a (on Isa. 24-27, see Johnson 1988, who provides an integrative reading of Isa. 24-27 which dates these chapters to the late sixth century BCE). Gitay's own 1991 monograph on Isaiah 1-12 displays this problem as well. Like his teacher, Hayes, he maintains that Isaiah 1-12 portrays the prophet's speeches in chronological progression. Although he correctly points to the role of the extended rhetorical unit over against the short formally defined unit as a basis for exegesis, his equation of literary coherence with authorial coherence appears to go too far. This is indicated by his treatment of the prose material in Isaiah 7, which he presents as a literal transcript of the prophet's conversations with King Ahaz, despite its formulation in third-person narrative form. He concedes that this material may have been written by a follower of the prophet, but overall, he treats it in the same manner as the oracular and first-person prose narratives of Isaiah 1-12, that is, as the discourse of the prophet, thereby blurring the distinction between the text of Isaiah and the man Isaiah.

Despite the problems created in the study of Isaiah 1-39 by equating literary coherence with authorial unity, the renewed focus on First Isaiah traditions as literature has produced several useful studies of allegory and metaphor. Niditch's above-mentioned study of metaphor and poetic technique in Isaiah 1 (1980) enables her to tie the chapter together as a redactional unity. Likewise, Exum's 1981 study of various motifs in Isa. 30.12-14, 31.4-5 and 29.1-14 allows her to build upon her 1979 study of the literary coherence of Isaiah 28-32 and to suggest an interrelationship between 'weal' and 'woe' in Isaiah (cf. Jensen 1981). Bjørndalen's 1986 study of allegory in Amos and Isaiah points to its communicative role; that is, the vineyard imagery in Isa. 5.1-7 does presuppose the Canaanite fertility cult, but employs fertility as a premise for describing YHWH's actions against Israel and Judah. Nielsen's 1989 study of the use of 'tree' as metaphor in Isaiah is especially useful in that it points to the analogy between the natural features of tree imagery and Isaiah's depiction of the historical experience of Israel, Judah and Assyria. Talmon's 1991 study makes a similar point in relation to prophetic literature in general, but extends the imagery to include agricultural metaphors as well as those pertaining only to trees. My own study of Isaiah 31 (Sweeney 1994a) points to the metaphorical use of lions and birds of prey on the one hand, and its rhetorical features on the other, as a means to define the literary unity of the chapter as a parenetic text designed to dissuade its audience from forming an alliance with Egypt against Assyria. Finally, K. Darr's 1994 study of metaphor in Isaiah demonstrates the use of 'family' imagery, including that pertaining to children, women and childbirth, throughout the book.

VI.

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of recent discussion concerning Isaiah 1–39 is the interrelationship between ‘weal’ and ‘woe’ in First Isaiah. Although Isaiah ben Amoz is generally portrayed as a prophet of judgment insofar as promise-oriented material is usually considered secondary to the works of the eighth-century prophet (see for example Barth 1977), the recent interest in the literary character of Isaiah 1–39 raises the possibility that Isaiah spoke a message of salvation as well. This possibility has important implications for the redaction-critical study of First Isaiah. Von Rad (1965: 155–69) anticipates it by his emphasis on the role of the Zion tradition in Isaiah’s theology; more recent scholars, such as the above-mentioned Roberts, Exum, Gitay, and others, also point in this direction. The issue is likewise raised in earlier studies interested in the political character of Isaiah’s prophecy. Hoffmann (1974), for example, points to Isaiah’s intention to call the people to return to YHWH from their entanglements with foreign powers. Dietrich (1976) emphasizes the difference between the plans of YHWH and political plans of the people as a basis for the prophet’s message. Huber (1976) emphasizes the role of the nations in the preaching of the prophet as a means to define his YHWH-centered political stance. These studies presuppose a divergence between the politics of Judah and the politics of YHWH in the message of Isaiah, in that they presuppose the prophet’s rejection of Judah’s attempts to enter the political arena as a theological abandonment of YHWH. A more recent study by Høgenhaven (1988), however, examines the role of national concepts in relation to the message of First Isaiah. Høgenhaven’s examination of the name ‘Israel’ in the Isaiah tradition convinces him that the prophet understood the term as a reference to the united kingdom of Israel, including both northern Israel and southern Judah. When combined with the very clear indications of Davidic/Zion theology throughout the tradition, this defines the prophet’s political outlook as one that presupposes the right of the house of David to rule over a united kingdom of Israel and Judah. Politics could therefore no longer be isolated as antithetical to theology in the book of Isaiah; rather, Isaiah’s theology is politically oriented. The concept of ‘return’ associated with the prophet’s son, Shear Yashub, ‘a remnant shall return’, in Isa. 7.1–9 has nothing to do with religious repentance; it refers to the ultimate return of the northern kingdom to Davidic rule. The role of the Assyrian empire is to aid in establishing YHWH’s universal world order by enabling the return of Israel to Davidic rule and the recognition by the nations of YHWH’s power in Zion/Jerusalem.

The concern with Isaiah’s political outlook and relation to the Davidic tradition continues with the publication of Laato’s dissertation on Isaiah’s messianic expectations (1988). Noting the extensive discussion of the redactional

formation of the Isaiah traditions, he questions whether or not the picture of the prophet's views is correct; that is, did Isaiah expect that Assyria would attack and 'purify' Judah in anticipation of a new ideal king, or was this view articulated by the tradents of the prophet's tradition? In short, the issue turns on whether or not Isaiah is a prophet of salvation. A thorough examination of conceptions of kingship and the oracles of First Isaiah demonstrates the interrelationship between the Davidic/Zion tradition and the message of Isaiah. The prophecy concerning a future ideal monarch in Isa. 8.23–9.6 is especially important in that it contains elements of the Davidic/Zion tradition that pre-date the prophet and call for the defeat of enemies. This oracle may then be attributed to Isaiah ben Amoz. Although it demonstrates that Davidic ideology and the projected downfall of Assyria are components of Isaiah's message, it does not demonstrate that Isaiah had a specific monarch in mind. The distorted depiction of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in the Deuteronomistic History (2 Kgs 18–20) and Isaiah 36–39, which portrays the invasion as a complete victory by YHWH over Assyria, demonstrates that later tradents idealized the results of Hezekiah's capitulation and survival in order to present Hezekiah as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies. They thereby resolved the dissonance created by Isaiah's expectations and the realities of the late eighth century BCE.

Irvine's dissertation (1990) on Isaiah, Ahaz and the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis likewise examines the political character of Isaiah's message in relation to the traditions concerning the Syro-Ephraimitic War. Unfortunately, his work suffers from inadequate treatment of the literary-historical issues posed by the text. As in the commentary he co-authored with Hayes (1987), he simply assumes that chs. 7–12 are the chronologically arranged oracles of the prophet stemming from the period of the Syro-Ephraimitic War. Nevertheless, his treatment of the historical background of the period, particularly Assyria's economic and political motivations for entering the region, is especially useful in that it demonstrates Assyria's intent to control the eastern Mediterranean trade routes with Egypt. As Aram and Israel were two major obstacles to that control, they became primary targets of Assyria's military power. Irvine's examination of the portrayal of Ahaz in 2 Kings 16 demonstrates that presenting Ahaz as a foil to Hezekiah in the Deuteronomistic History is ideologically motivated. In contrast to the negative presentation of Ahaz in the Deuteronomistic History, Isaiah in fact supported Ahaz and the royal house of David against the attempt by Rezin of Aram to place a pro-Aramaean puppet on the throne of Judah as he had done in Israel. The so-called Isaianic *Denkschrift* ('Memoir') in Isaiah 7–12 (Irvine 1992), especially Isa. 7.9, demonstrates Isaiah's view that Ahaz could hold out against the Syro-Ephraimatic coalition and eventually reclaim the northern kingdom of Israel for Davidic rule once the Assyrians entered the scene. The name of Isaiah's son, Shear Yashub, 'a remnant shall return',

therefore refers not to the decimation of the kingdom of Judah, but to the eventual return of the northern kingdom to Davidic rule (1993). Likewise, Isa. 9.1-6 portrays Ahaz as the ideal monarch of the Davidic dynasty who would preside over a reunited kingdom at peace.

Wegner's dissertation (1993) also takes up the issue of royal ideology in the First Isaiah traditions. He is less interested in the political dimensions of the prophet's message, but focuses instead on the redaction-critical issues raised by Barth and Vermeylen, especially the latter's focus on the 'rereading' of Isaiah in relation to later literary and historical settings. His examination of the 'messianic' passages of First Isaiah, Isa. 7.10-17; 8.23-9.6; 11.1-9 and 32.1-8 provides a thorough study of each passage with regard to textual, literary, formal and redactional issues, but it tends to sidestep somewhat on questions of authorship in that its contention that Isaiah is the author of these passages is often based solely on the possibility that Isaiah could have been the author. Nevertheless, it contributes overall to the realignment currently taking place in scholarship that Isaiah is not exclusively a prophet of judgment, but a prophet who holds out the possibility that Judah and the House of David could triumph in the aftermath of Assyrian incursion. My own study of Isa. 8.16-9.16 (Sweeney 1994b) addresses this point as well, using the presence of the disputation genre in this passage as a basis for a philological and formal reexamination. Overall, I argue that in the passage the prophet claims that the Assyrian subjugation of Israel provides an opportunity for the House of David to reestablish its rule over Israel. The contrast between the 'former' and the 'latter' of Isa. 8.23 presents the conflicting positions of those who see the Assyrian annexation of Israel's Galilean territories as a disaster versus those who see the annexation as an opportunity for Ahaz to reestablish the Davidic claim over the northern kingdom in the wake of Assyria's decimation of Israel.

Finally, discussion of the redactional and literary role of Isaiah 36-39 plays an important part in the overall discussion of First Isaiah. Scholars traditionally treat the depiction of Sennacherib's defeat as a historical issue that demands a reconstruction of the historical events and the sources that lay behind these chapters, especially since they appear in nearly identical form in 2 Kings 18-20. Many scholars, such as Hutter (1982), Vogt (1986) and Dion (1989) continue to focus on the historical dimensions of the narrative. But as scholars increasingly examine the literary and ideological character of the book of Isaiah in general and that of Isaiah 36-39 in particular, they focus on the role that these chapters play in the overall literary formation and theological presentation of the book. The issue was opened by Clements, who in addition to his commentary on Isaiah 1-39 (1980a), published a monograph (1980b) on Isaiah 36-37 that extends Barth's 'Assyrian' redaction hypothesis to these chapters, arguing that they, too, represent the ideology of the Josianic reform in that they portray the triumph of YHWH

and Davidic/Zion-centered theology over the arrogant Assyrian monarch. This work was followed shortly by Ackroyd's (1982) which demonstrates that the portrayal of Hezekiah in these chapters is intended as a deliberate contrast with that of Ahaz in Isa. 6.1–9.6. Noting the parallels between the portrayal of Ahaz during the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis (Isa. 7.1–9.6) and Hezekiah during Sennacherib's invasion of Judah (Isa. 36–39), Ackroyd argues that Hezekiah is idealized as a righteous monarch who turns to YHWH in time of crisis, resulting in the deliverance of Jerusalem, whereas Ahaz is portrayed as an unfaithful monarch who brings about Assyrian subjugation of Judah by refusing to trust in YHWH's promises of security.

Ackroyd's observations open various new avenues in the discussion of the redaction history and ideological character of the book of Isaiah. Many scholars now recognize that Isaiah 36–39 seems to function more as an introduction to Isaiah 40–66 rather than as a conclusion to Isaiah 1–39, thereby adding fuel to the discussion of the unity of the book of Isaiah (Sweeney 1988a; Seitz 1990; cf. Melugin 1976; for full discussion, see Sweeney 1993a). Others examine the impact of the addition of Isaiah 36–39 to the shaping of the First Isaiah tradition. Gonçalves's study of Sennacherib's invasion (1986) notes the ideological character of Isaiah 36–39 in the context of an attempt to reconstruct the message of the historical prophet. He argues that the focus on Jerusalem's inviolability portrayed in these chapters is the work of a seventh-century Josianic redaction written in conjunction with Josiah's reform program. The addition of these chapters plays a role in changing the portrayal of the prophet from one who opposed social injustice and alliance with Egypt as contrary to the will of YHWH. According to the historical Isaiah, Sennacherib's invasion represented the demands made by YHWH upon Jerusalem, but the Josianic Isaiah understood YHWH to be the ultimate guarantor of Jerusalem's security.

A number of studies considering the relationship between Isaiah 36–39 and the First Isaiah tradition followed. Smelik's 1986 study, later revised and expanded in 1992, argues that the Hezekiah narratives of 2 Kings 18–20/Isaiah 36–39 were not originally composed for 2 Kings as many scholars maintain, but for Isaiah. He notes that apart from the framework materials, the narrative (2 Kgs 18.7–20.19) does not integrate well into the context of the book of 2 Kings, since it presents the only narrative that includes one of the latter prophets. Furthermore, the narrative serves as an 'editorial bridge' between First and Second Isaiah, relates to similar narrative material in Isaiah 6–9, and includes various connections to the oracles of the First Isaiah tradition, including the role of Assyria in history, the rejection of Egypt as an ally, and the concluding position of the narrative concerning the Babylonian embassy (Isa. 39/2 Kgs 20.12–19), which serves as an introduction for Isaiah 40ff. but plays no similar role in 2 Kings. He also argues against the usual source division of the narrative into B1 and B2

strands, noting that the repetitive elements of the narrative do not indicate independent sources but heighten dramatic tension. He especially stresses the connections between the portrayal of the fall of the arrogant Assyrian monarch in Isaiah 10 and the fall of Sennacherib in Isaiah 36–37 to support his argument that the narrative was written for Isaiah.

Another innovative study of the Hezekiah narratives is Hardmeier's 1990 monograph (cf. also 1991), which employs text-linguistic theory to focus on the communicative function of the Hezekiah narrative in 2 Kings 18–20 in relation to the narrative concerning the fall of Jerusalem in Jeremiah 37–40. Noting the interrelationship between the devastation of the land during the Assyrian invasions and that of the Babylonian invasions as presented in the book of Isaiah, he argues that the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in 589–587 BCE is the probable setting of the Hezekiah narrative. A major element of his argument relates to the redaction-critical study of Jeremiah in that Seitz (1985; see now 1989) claims that a redactional layer known as the Scribal Chronicle can be identified in Jeremiah. The Scribal Chronicle dates to the period 597–587 BCE, and holds out hope for Judeans still left in the land, provided they submit to YHWH and to Babylon. It is distinct from the exilic *golah* redaction, which denies legitimacy to the Judean remnant left in the land and argues that only the Babylonian exiles hold out hope for the future. According to Hardmeier, the Hezekiah narrative was composed during the course of the debate within Judah over its relationship to Babylon. In a massive polemic against Jeremiah's (and Ezekiel's) advice to submit to Babylon (Jeremiah 27–29, etc.), the Hezekiah narrative was composed to convince Zedekiah that YHWH would deliver Jerusalem from the Babylonians just as YHWH had delivered Jerusalem from Sennacherib. A brief study by Clements (1983) likewise points to the reign of Zedekiah as the setting for the composition of the narrative concerning Merodach Baladan's Babylonian embassy to Hezekiah in 2 Kgs 20.12–19 (Isaiah 39).

Seitz follows up on these studies with a 1991 monograph that points to the seventh century, especially the reign of King Manasseh, as the setting for the composition of the Hezekiah narratives and a great deal of the remaining Isaiah tradition. Like Smelik (1986, 1992), he notes that the narrative does not integrate well into Kings, but he extends the observation by arguing that the discrepancies between the Kings and Isaiah versions of the narrative indicate its origin in Isaiah and not in Kings. Whereas my own monograph (1988a) argues that the Isaiah version idealized Hezekiah by removing any hint of criticism against him, Seitz argues that the Kings narrative deliberately compromised the originally idealized portrayal of Hezekiah in Isaiah in order to account for the continued Assyrian threat to Judah during the reigns of Manasseh and Josiah. The purpose of the narrative is to warn Manasseh to conform to YHWH's will, based upon the idealized model of Hezekiah's submission to YHWH and healing from illness in Isaiah

36–39, and thereby to alleviate the Assyrian threat. Although Seitz does not account satisfactorily for the critical portrayal of Hezekiah in Isaiah 39 and the ideological portrayal of Manasseh in 2 Kings 21, he does point to the central role that the destiny of Zion plays in the book of Isaiah. Likewise, his 1989 and 1991 monographs, as well as Hardmeier's studies, point to the interrelationship with the Jeremiah tradition as an important new avenue of study.

VII.

Although discussion of the final form of the entire book of Isaiah has captured the lion's share of scholarly attention during the last decade and a half, important contributions continue to be made to the study of the First Isaiah tradition. Scholarship has probably moved beyond the point where commentaries on Isaiah 1–39 alone are advisable in that study of the book as a whole provides no evidence that these chapters ever formed a free-standing book or even a major literary division of the present book of Isaiah (Seitz 1993b). Although Isaiah may now be divided into Isaiah 1–33 and 34–66, consideration of the First Isaiah tradition in chs. 1–39 still demands attention because it reflects the literary formation and ideological outlook of the entire book. This is evident in Seitz's commentary (1993a) on Isaiah 1–39 and my own commentary on the same chapters (Sweeney 1996b), which account for the place of this material in the context of the book as a whole as well as in relation to its various historical settings. Seitz's commentary notes especially that Isaiah 1–39 presents, not the prophet Isaiah ben Amoz, but the independent authority of the word of Y^{HWH} through various historical settings, including the eighth century, the reign of Manasseh, and on into the exilic and post-exilic periods. My own commentary accounts for the form, function and outlook of the material in Isaiah 1–39 in relation to each stage of its historical and literary settings, as well as in relation to the entire book, including the eighth century, the reign of King Josiah, the late sixth century, and the fifth century (cf. also Sweeney 1993b). As current research demonstrates, the First Isaiah tradition must be considered in relation to the exilic and post-exilic settings of the formation of the book of Isaiah as a whole, but it must also be considered in relation to the pre-exilic settings which shaped the image and message of the prophet on whom the tradition is based.

Several points have been made clear in recent discussion of the First Isaiah tradition. First, scholars may no longer focus exclusively on the short, self-contained form-critical unit as the basis for interpretation; rather, they must account for such units in the context of larger literary structures and in relation to the rhetorical or communicative impact that such texts have upon their hearers and readers. Second, the historical Isaiah may no longer

be viewed exclusively as a theologically motivated prophet of judgment; rather his theological message of hope is explicitly motivated by political factors and the Davidic/Zion ideology of YHWH's support for Jerusalem and the House of David. Third, the interrelationship between the First Isaiah tradition and others must be accounted for, including those of Second and Third Isaiah as well as that of Jeremiah. There is much to be done, and the future bodes well for continued research on First Isaiah.

RECENT SCHOLARSHIP ON ISAIAH 1–39

Hyun Chul Paul Kim

Overview

This article surveys the recent scholarship on Isaiah 1–39, in particular, of the last decade. Selected scholarly works are categorized in three broad methodological orientations: composition, intertextuality, and readers. Investigations on the various redactional layers and pertinent compositional settings and messages have continued to make abundant contributions. Observations of the linguistic and thematic intertextual correlations both within the book of Isaiah and with other texts of the Hebrew Bible have flourished, providing continuous clues for the unity of Isaiah and innerbiblical interpretive insights in a broader horizon of the canon respectively. Innovative approaches to focus on metaphors and readers with experimental cases have cultivated pioneering hermeneutical possibilities. These divergent methods not only demonstrate interpretive disarrangement at the current stage but also imply dynamic progress for the future of Isaiah scholarship, just as many extended branches of the trees together can build a charming forest.

I. Introduction

Rendtorff's article (1997) addressing the validity of synchronic as well as diachronic approaches provides a major contribution in the recent Isaiah scholarship enriched with the 'unity' movement. This does not mean that such a major paradigm shift was pioneered by Rendtorff. Numerous major works have amassed their contributions on top of one another during the last two decades, if not longer (Sweeney 1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c, 1996d). The major contribution Rendtorff provides, then, is a roadmap of the 'unity' perspectives, which offers potential directions leading from this junction to the next stations. His preeminent reviews of the recent approaches help diagnose the current trends or tensions, i.e., between diachronic and synchronic orientations. Rendtorff proposes placing more weight on the latter, synchronic, orientation: 'The latter reading, with which I am sympathetic, does not mean a denial of diachronic questions but a change—and perhaps a reversal—of scholarly priorities...the priority is

now clearly given to the interpretation of the text in its given context' (p. 118). Then he offers certain suggestions, though not predictions, for future approaches that incorporate 'topics, themes, expressions, and even ideas characteristic of the book as a whole' (p. 122). These suggestions are crucial in current Isaiah scholarship, whether for extending current discussions, or for pioneering new directions. What remains is to see how such suggestions may be implemented. The objective of the current study is to review some of the scholarly works exploring these issues.

A few words of caveat or clarification may be necessary. First, this study will mainly review Isaiah scholarship of the last decade. It updates foundational works by Sweeney in 1993a, and 1996a, b, c, and d. It does not cover Isaiah 40–66 extensively; this will be done by Melugin's article in this volume. Readers are invited to consult those works for additional information. Second, numerous works have come out in Isaiah scholarship during the last decade, including major commentaries, monographs, and articles. The present study, therefore, will be selective and thus can by no means be exhaustive, given the ongoing nature of scholarship on Isaiah. Third, 'new' does not necessarily mean 'better'. If that were the case, we would not need a library. Nevertheless, in the following study, we will review newer, if not newest, scholarship. This study will collect and identify certain works in the following categories: composition; intertextuality; and readers and readings. This, therefore, may not do full justice to many works that are interdisciplinary by nature and content.

II. *Composition*

History matters—not only the history of the composition of the book of Isaiah, but also the history of modern scholars who have grappled with that issue, such as Duhm (1892), Budde (1928), Fohrer (1962–64), Westermann (1969), Kaiser (1972), Wildberger (1972), Melugin (1976), Vermeylen (1977–78), Clements (1980a), Sweeney (1988a), Seitz (1991), and many more. Over the last decade, Isaiah scholarship has intensified its emphasis on the (final) redactor(s). This shift of emphasis from the author to the redactor(s) has caused: close attention to each stage of redactional additions; and a concomitant focus on the theological outlook of each successive redactor.

In two recent articles (1996; 1997), Blum offers a paramount investigation into the 'core material' of Isaiah 1–39, namely, Isaiah 1–11, which he calls 'Testament Jesajas' ('Testament of Isaiah'). His main thesis is that the core material in Isa. 1.21–11.5 goes back to one composition, which Isaiah himself compiled toward the end of his activity, in anticipation of an immediately impending, final verdict of YHWH for Isaiah's circle of disciples (1996: 550–51). To assert this thesis, Blum reviews certain methodological

problems. For instance, recent redaction analysis presumes, in its new paradigm, that the oracles of the preexilic prophets disappear behind later redactions. Blum argues that this assumption neglects a fundamental question concerning the possibility of identifying the texts of those prophets from the 8th century BCE. If we conjecture that the book first found its present form in a long postexilic genesis, either with 'maximalist' expansion, or 'minimalist' reduction, of Isaianic materials, then how shall we explain the preservation of the short individual sayings—mostly two, three, four verses—over a long period, and the distribution of these short pieces throughout more than thirty chapters? Blum challenges the view, predominant over the last century, that preexilic texts were transmitted intact and pure, as if the text were preserved in a 'black box'! He argues that it is more plausible that the relatively bulky 'older' substance was assembled fairly early, by the prophet himself or by members of his circle; and that greater collections or compositions formed the core materials of the pertinent book in the diachronic path. This position is evidenced by the macro-structure of Isaiah 1–11, which contains a chiastic ring structure, constituted by significant details of thematic and verbal links. The delineated 'ring structure' (1996: 551–68) demonstrates a coherent literary composition of the core materials, with chs. 6–8 as the center. Moreover, this concentric composition in Isaiah 1–11 depicts the implied temporal sequence, which starts from YHWH's court verdict on Israel and Judah, followed by their rejection (chs. 5 and 9) and the subsequent 'hardening' commission (ch. 5). The concluding segment (ch. 10) then points to the historical [setting] of the composition, i.e., after the destruction of Samaria by Assyria, just prior to the siege of Jerusalem in 701 BCE (1997: 121–33).

Becker (1997) provides a redactional analysis of Isaiah 1–39. Becker does not agree that the present formation of the book corresponds to the temporal stages of Isaiah's prophetic activity. Rather, the book betrays various redactional layers and editorial stages. While maintaining that chs. 6 and 8 form the literary core, with its redactional addition in ch. 7, Becker makes the innovative claim that Isaiah was originally a 'prophet of salvation' (1997: 121–23) closely associated with the Judean dynasty. The rest of the texts in Isaiah 1–39 are then identified with further editorial stages.

With a similar attention to the manifold expansion stages, Pfaff (1996) traces five different stages in association with the 'remnant' motif throughout various independent texts of Isaiah 1–39: first, texts belonging to the 8th century BCE; second, [texts belonging to] the 7th century BCE; third, [texts belonging to the period] immediately following 587 BCE; fourth, [texts belonging to] the 5th century BCE; and fifth, [texts belonging to] the fourth–third centuries BCE (cf. J. Willis 2001: 76–77).

Barthel (1997) employs both synchronic and diachronic analyses on the composition of the book of Isaiah. In his study, he argues that Isaiah 6–8

and 28–31 contain core materials from the prophet Isaiah. In particular, Barthel proposes that ch. 7 was originally intended to convey the message of warning against the Judean dynasty, but subsequently became reinterpreted in response to changing settings and situations. Berges (1998) similarly presents a synchronic and diachronic investigation on both the composition processes and the final form of the entire book of Isaiah. Identifying the independent compositions of chs. 1–32 and chs. 40–66, Berges proposes that chs. 36–39 are the center of the entire book, with the central theme focusing on the judgment and salvation of Zion. This is in some ways reminiscent of Seitz's influential monograph (1991, esp. 193–208).

Boadt's study (2001) seeks to identify the authentic materials of Isaiah 1–39 already extant prior to the Babylonian exile. Boadt admits that, because the final editor incorporated earlier traditions or literary remains into later theological worldviews, attempts to recover the 'original' eighth-century Isaianic materials can only remain hypotheses (p. 171). From the outset, he issues a caveat regarding his historical reconstruction of the editorial process, especially the hypothetical nature of distinguishing redactional markers: 'if later authors did the rewriting well, we may never be sure of all these editorial additions' (p. 177).

Boadt is skeptical of the minimalist thesis (see Miscall 2001; Eaton 1982) that 'the final authors and editors gathered a hodge-podge of useful traditions about the older prophet to create a fifth century vision' (Boadt 2001: 176). Rather, he argues that the core structure of the unified collection may have been composed toward the end of Hezekiah's reign. Boadt identifies key themes and patterns as structural links that unify Isaiah 1–39. The motif of 'the day of YHWH' initiates the pattern, followed by judgment on the Israelite kings or foreign rulers, and concluding with 'the hope for a king who will embody the royal Zion ideology of justice' (p. 189). Therefore, these three thematic parallels provide the basic outline of a pre-exilic composition played out against three different historical backgrounds: stage one in chs. 2–12 (743–734 BCE); stage two in chs. 13–33 (715–701 BCE); and stage three in chs. 34–38 (701 BCE).

Blenkinsopp, in his recent commentary (2000a), reviews the current issues regarding the formation of the book of Isaiah. Describing chs. 34–35 as 'an appropriate finale to the first part of the book (chs. 1–33)' (2000a: 83), and at the same time seeing chs. 40–66 as strikingly different from chs. 1–39, Blenkinsopp accepts the current scholarship:

The inclusio [between chs. 1 and 66] makes the point that this is a single work with a definite beginning and end and one attributed to a single author named in the superscription. The procedure can be seen in the context of book production in the Hellenistic period, when there emerged for the first time the idea of a *book* in something like the modern sense of the term. (2000a: 85)

From this perspective, Blenkinsopp claims that the final redactional stage of the book of Isaiah was produced, not during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah in the 5th century BCE, but during the Hellenistic period—sometime between the conquests of Alexander (332 BCE) and the persecution of the Jewish community by Antiochus IV (167 BCE). The book was produced ‘at the hands of a pietistic or “hasidic” group with a well-developed apocalyptic world view’ (2000a: 86).

In another article (2000b), Blenkinsopp examines the historical components of the biography of Isaiah. Working backwards in chronological order, he presents two distinct profiles: the Isaiah of the sayings, with the notion of judgment; and the Isaiah of the narrative, with pro-governing ideology (2000b: 17). In light of the intertextual closeness between Isaiah 1–35 and the twelve Minor Prophets, Blenkinsopp identifies the portion of the sayings in Isaiah 1–39 to be closer to the twelve prophets than to Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The narrative materials are more complicated, in that the depiction of the prophet Isaiah as the social critic of the discourses is virtually absent in the narratives, particularly in the third-person description sections (likely taken from the Deuteronomistic History). Again, comparing similar patterns in Jeremiah, Amos and Micah, Blenkinsopp declares that ‘the Historian omitted mention of the prophets to whom books are attributed...because they were not in agreement with the ideology inscribed in the [Deuteronomistic] History’ (2000b: 24). The result is the reinterpretation of the Deuteronomistic Historian, who compiled the nucleus of the biography of Isaiah by causing the prophecy sections to become ‘peripheral’ to the history sections. This approach thereby engages in both synchronic and diachronic perspectives, putting more weight on the diachronic perspective as Blenkinsopp remarks:

We cannot, without willful naïveté, concede exclusive privilege to the ‘final form’ of the texts without regard for the tensions inherent in the texts and the questions which their juxtaposition and their internal relationships generate. Normativity is not a straightforward concept, for there are tensions within what counts as normative, and honesty requires that we expose them and take them seriously. This, it seems to me, is the best theoretical and theological justification for the currently much-maligned historical-critical method in its application to Isaiah, other prophetic books and the Bible in general. (2000b: 26)

In tune with the current Isaiah scholarship emphasizing the unity of the whole book, Clements addresses the literary complexities of both similar and divergent features (1997b). The complex processes can be better understood as ‘the work of a plurality of authors from a Jerusalem temple circle than by endeavouring to focus on two individuals—the presumed First and Second Isaiahs’ (1997b: 9). These authors, reacting to the pivotal historical events in 701 BCE and 587 BCE respectively, revised and sharpened the

traditional 'Zion' and 'remnant' motifs, thereby contributing to the eventual linkage between Isaiah 1–39 and Isaiah 40–66. Instead of looking at the two prophetic call experiences (chs. 6 and 40), however, Clements suggests looking at two neglected passages (i.e., 37.30–32 and 14.32) that provide historical and redactional background for the necessary connections of the entire book of Isaiah via Zion theology as a unifying theme. This thesis further leads to another conclusion, namely, that even Isaiah 40–66 must have been composed by an author who resided in Judah, not in Babylon.

In another article (2000), Clements reasserts the *Denkschrift* ('written memoir') hypothesis, outlined by Budde in 1928, that 'Isaiah did compose a written memoir and that parts of it, if not its entirety, are still to be found embedded in the text of Isaiah 6–8' (Clements 2000: 89). The core of the texts was composed or recorded by the prophet Isaiah himself, even though the 'core memoir' (pp. 93–94) must have gone through diverse redactional expansion processes. Based on the likely influence of the transition 'from orality to literacy' (pp. 89–90), Clements argues for the 'overall chronological and theological coherence in the memoir' (p. 91), which thereby suggests that the core memoir (6.1–11; 7.2–17; 8.1–8, 11–18) may have been composed within the span of only three years. The remaining passages are taken as later additions, representing different historical situations and theological outlooks that, when read together in the present form of the whole text, convey thematic tension and contradiction. This tension can be explained in the diachronic reconstruction, which suggests that the core passages closely tied to the children's names with positive and hopeful purpose became reconceptualized by the overall text focusing on the message of divine judgment, with the resultant 'rejection of the original assurances given by the prophet to the royal house of David' (2000: 91).

In a subsequent article (2002), Clements offers a cutting edge perspective on the unified core of the book of Isaiah with its congenial beginning and ending. By reworking Steck's forceful thesis on Isaiah 35 as a bridge to later chapters (1999), Clements argues that Isaiah 35 functions as a closure of Isaiah 5–35, which 'once formed a coherent unit' (2002: 120). This unity of Isaiah 5–35 is closely linked with the recent awareness, especially within the last two decades, of the transition from prophecy to apocalyptic. In light of key 'metaphors' and 'themes', the progression implies that the apocalyptic dimension is not limited to chs. 24–27 and 34–35 but rather covers the whole of chs. 5–35 (2002: 117–18). On another level, moreover, Clements reshapes Sweeney's thesis (1988a: 21–25, 196–201) on the role of Isaiah 1–4 and 63–66 as overarching inclusio: 'Once we look for traces of a structured shape to the final form of the Isaiah book, then it is primarily between chs. 59–62 that we find it' (Clements 2002: 115). These insights then lead to the conclusion that Isaiah is a book with both an ending in Isaiah 60 (or 62), and at the same time, an ending that still remains 'a visionary goal' (2002: 109–10, 123–24).

Williamson adopts but also modifies Clements's work significantly: 'While defending the authenticity to Isaiah of much of the content of Isaiah 6–9, [Williamson] regards the attempt to reconstruct an original written and independent memoir as unhelpful and unnecessary' (Clements 2000: 93). In his 2000 study, Williamson employs a diachronic reading in discussing the discrepancy between the messages of judgment and hope in Isaiah 1–39. This study builds on the framework Clements has contributed (1977), that rereading or redefining older prophecy has occurred within the rewriting processes. What Fishbane calls 'inner-biblical exegesis or allusion' (1986: 7) in the scribal transmission processes, Williamson (2000: 292) describes as 'the process of relecture' or 'reapplication' in the historical Isaiah. Williamson analyzes three passages considered to represent the authorship of the 8th-century prophet: 8.1–4; 8.16–18; 30.8–9. From these authentic Isaianic passages, he finds two seemingly discrepant ideas, i.e., judgment and hope. This contradiction is explained as evidence of 'the development in Isaiah's thinking about the nature of hope under judgement', presumably over the span of his prophetic career (Williamson 2000: 297). This understanding further leads to the observation of a similarly interconnected motif in the entire book of Isaiah, of which the authentic Isaianic passages can be seen as 'a reflection on a small scale of the design of the book as a whole, whereby the proclamation of salvation by Deutero-Isaiah was consciously modeled as a fulfilment of *what Isaiah himself had foreseen*, but not experienced' (Williamson 2000: 299; emphasis added).

In dealing with redactional issues on Isa. 1.10–17, Williamson calls for a holistic reading of the text in the whole chapter, and addresses related hermeneutical implications (2002). Redactional connections to both preceding and following subunits indicate that 1.10–17 should be read as part of the chapter 1. The hermeneutical implications then prompt our awareness of both 'the unavoidably hypothetical element which the historical enterprise entails', and the abiding desire to uncover historical aspects prior to the final form, so that 'a synchronic approach may be illuminated by a properly conducted diachronic one' (2002: 93, 96).

Gosse (1996) expands Williamson's thesis, proposed in 1993 and 1994, that Isa. 8.23b–9.6 'inspired the relations between the first and second parts of the book of Isaiah, first with the time of the darkness and then with the time of the light' (Gosse 1996: 62). By extending the linguistic and thematic correspondences, Gosse examines the redactional influence of Isa. 8.23b on Isaiah 56–66. The outcome of his study implies that 'the coming of the light, the hope in the second part of the book with reference to the first, proved none too easy on the return from the exile' (Gosse 1996: 62). This study provides an important way to apply Williamson's major contribution (1994), which does not deal extensively with the relationship between Isaiah 56–66 and the final form of the book (cf. Tate 1996: 37).

Mathews (1995) provides a cogent composition analysis of Isaiah 34–35, exemplifying synchronic and diachronic approaches. Picking up on Steck's study of Isaiah 35 (1985), Mathews examines the place of Isaiah 34–35 in the book of Isaiah, considered as a literary unit. This study analyzes both intratextual comparisons between the two chapters and intertextual readings between these chapters and Ezekiel 35–36. Furthermore, corresponding vocabularies, metaphors, and patterns demonstrate close redactional interconnection with Isaiah 63.1–6. These observations support Matthews's conclusion that the combined messages in Isaiah 34–35 of judgment on Edom, and salvation for Israel, together reveal the redactional intentions of Isaiah 40–66 in the post-exilic period, when the entire book of Isaiah was brought together.

Gitay calls for a slightly different hermeneutical approach from the various redactional studies assessed above (2001b). Highlighting the 'meta-historical' dimension of the prophetic text, Gitay pinpoints the shortcomings of Redactional Criticism's methodology. The incoherence in redactional methods and outcomes, Gitay argues, 'suggests that the scroll maintains texts, which are preserved in the form of their historical proclamation rather than reworked into a coherent book format through the pens of final editors' (1997b: 64). Hence, he calls for the return to the (old) form criticism, but with a new presupposition. Gitay's proposed 'rhetorical reading' does not appear to share identical methods with 'rhetorical criticism'. Rather, the rhetorical reading proposed by Gitay tends to emphasize the 'contextual situation' for the intended audience. Hence, while metaphors and figurative language are emphasized, historical situations implied in the rhetorical intention of the discourse remain intact. In fact, the metaphor is much more than a depiction: it becomes 'an integral part of the discourse' (1997b: 63). Gitay redefines the historical context in the 'rhetorical situation' not as 'hard facts' but rather as the 'socio-cultural context that gave birth to the text' (1997a: 65–66). In this way, the editorial superscriptions in 1.1 and 6.1 apparently signal an intention to provide the social matrix, rather than to read the texts in a historical vacuum. Accordingly, Gitay's reading strategy reaffirms the importance of history, not only in the antiquity of the text, but also in the 'contextual-historical situations' signified by the composed discourses: 'Concrete references and literary formulations provide literary codes to a contextual, historical and social reading, which contradicts a timeless elaboration of the book... The critics' task is, therefore, to shed light on the rhetorical situations of the given utterances' (1997a: 71).

To sum up, although numerous works on composition-related issues indicate plenty of different theories and positions, there seem to be reasonably similar opinions regarding the written core of *Denkschrift* ('Isaiah memoir'), especially the redactional relations and functions of Isaiah 1–12 and 28–32. Furthermore, there has been an increasing awareness of the important roles other chapters play in the formative stages of the whole book, especially

Isaiah 24–27, 34–35 and 36–39. Most scholars, following Rendtorff's lead (1996), engage in a reading that combines both synchronic and diachronic approaches. The importance of diachronic analysis has not diminished, despite the regnant 'unity' movement. In fact, besides those works mentioned above, which reconstruct the diachronic layers, other works utilize intertextual correlations (cf. Bosshard-Nepustil 1997), and even metaphors (cf. Doyle 2000), for identifying editorial hands. In addition, especially in the last decade, synchronic awareness and applications have surfaced, and constitute the main thrust of the perspectives, to which we now turn.

III. *Intertextuality*

Story matters—not only story line within the book of Isaiah, but also story perceived as the text of Isaiah in interconnection with other texts. The rich processes, features, or implications that such an interconnected web reveals have been noted and analyzed by scholars such as Beuken (2000a), Tull (Willey) (1997), and Sommer (1998), among many more. Their works have successfully brought awareness and application of the theoretical foundations laid out by pioneers such as Julia Kristeva (1980), Mikhail Bakhtin (1981), and Fishbane (1985). While its methodological clarity has been an issue of ongoing debate, having 'accumulated a bewildering variety of definitions and uses' (Polaski 1998b: 58), and while 'few agree on how best to understand and use the term' (Tull 2000a: 59), intertextuality has been and continues to be a significant component of Isaiah scholarship.

A. *Within and Beyond the Book of Isaiah*

Numerous studies have concentrated on Isaiah 40–66, which frequently echoes Isaiah 1–39. In addition, Tull (Willey)'s (1997) and Sommer's (1998) monographs on the echoes in Isaiah from Jeremiah, Lamentations, Psalms, and other books of the Hebrew Bible, are prime examples of intertextuality between Isaiah and non-Isaianic texts. Other works on intertextual relationships that focus on Isaiah 1–39, and beyond the book of Isaiah, are notable and promising. Some of these works tend to be diachronically oriented, while others are more synchronic.

Beuken (2000b) explores a relationship between Isaiah 25—a part of the so-called Isaiah Apocalypse (chs. 24–27)—and Isaiah 12, the theological conclusion of the core of Isaiah (chs. 1–12). Taking the discourses of Isa. 24.14–23 and 25.1–10 as dynamic connections placed 'within a dramatic course of events', rather than as detached segments (2000b: 144), Beuken further analyzes the intentional connections between Isaiah 25 and Isaiah 12. This close examination yields the observation that both texts exhibit consonant structures, signaling the same redactional 'understanding and vision of the prophet' (2000b: 155).

In another article (2002), Beuken probes the thematic discrepancy between Isa. 10.5–34 and 11, despite the similar tree motifs. Employing both diachronic and synchronic approaches, Beuken argues that these two texts depict the fall of Assyria and the upgrowth of the shoot as ‘a single chain of events’ placed in the temporal sequence (2002: 18). This correlative reading leads to a hermeneutical insight: ‘The combination and mutual harmonisation of the past and the future, of Assyria’s dominance and of the governance of the shoot, does not only respond to a literary canon and to the spiritual needs of the exile[;] Israel’s very concept of God [also] lies at its foundation’ (2002: 29).

Beuken’s interpretation of Isaiah 28–32 (1998) inspects key words and motifs in identifying the correlations of different oracles within these five chapters, and within the entire book of Isaiah. Within the block of Isaiah 28–32, Beuken argues not only that ‘the (post-)exilic redaction relies upon its pre-exilic predecessor’ (1998: 8), but also that each oracle is closely related to its preceding and subsequent oracles with shared terminology. By the same token, ch. 33 has ‘a summarizing function as well as a future orientation’ (1998: 6). Furthermore, within the book of Isaiah, key words, such as ‘women’ and ‘spirit’ in 3.16–4.6 and 32.9–19, as well as ‘the ox and the ass’ in 1.3 and 32.20, form a chiasmic ring structure between Isaiah 1–12 and Isaiah 28–32. Thus, Beuken’s study offers an important example of looking at the interconnections within both smaller units and larger texts, utilizing intertextual and rhetorical criticisms.

Stansell’s analysis of Isaiah 28–33 (1996) displays similar approaches, but with more synchronic consideration: ‘Far from entertaining questions of influence, borrowing, date or redactional intention and arrangement, my focus remained on a synchronic approach, imagining simply how a careful reader could perceive that major threads run throughout the book, connecting it into a larger whole’ (1996: 100). This study explicates the place of Isaiah 28–33 in terms of thematic and verbal interconnections within the book of Isaiah. Themes such as: the centrality of Zion; the exaltation of YHWH; deafness/blindness and hearing/seeing; and the instrumentality and judgment of the enemy function as key threads that tie Isaiah 28–33 to other major sections of the book. Thus, Isaiah 28–33 connects not only to the major block in Isaiah 1–12, but also to Isaiah 13–23, 24–27, and even 34–39: ‘These chapters [28–33], occurring toward the end of chs. 1–39, function not as a mere supplement to chs. 1–12, nor are they isolated from their surrounding literary context, but point both forward and backward and make significant connections to each of the major sections of the book and thus help to bind together the immense literary complexity of the work’ (1996: 100–101).

Sweeney (2001) elucidates intertextual relations between Micah 4–5 and Isaiah 2–4. Looking at each text in terms of its own literary contexts and structures, Sweeney argues that the two correlated texts display significant

differences in thematic outlooks and religio-political perspectives. The outcome succinctly points to the 'debate in Judah during the early Persian or post-exilic period concerning the future of the newly restored state centered around the Temple in Jerusalem' (p. 122). The Isaiah passage envisions the future restoration of Israel as a Persian province, whereas the Micah passage envisions the establishment of Israel as an independent state, accompanied by YHWH's punishment of the nations. The thematic scenario of Isaiah corresponds to that of Ezra and Nehemiah, whereas Micah is closer to Haggai and Zechariah. J. Willis (1997) also looks at the correlated texts, Isa. 2.2-4 and Mic. 4.1-3, especially in light of various psalms that focus on Zion traditions. Willis delineates 'nine themes which these two prophetic poems have in common with the Songs of Zion' (1997: 296). These studies offer excellent examples of an intertextual interpretation that not only compares the two texts, but also examines them with regard to history and structure. In doing so, these studies provide major insights not only for the two texts, but also for their interaction with the rest of the Hebrew Bible.

Conrad (2000), though primarily addressing Isaiah 40–66, engages in intertextual analysis linking Isaiah 40–66 with Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Conrad examines the correlated phrase 'messengers of YHWH', and motifs (e.g., 'deaf' and 'blind' in Isaiah, and 'seeing' and 'hearing' in the book of the Twelve) and provides insightful understandings of the portrayal of prophets in Persian times. This study is an exemplary praxis of Conrad's hermeneutical premise, which considers the book of Isaiah and the book of the Twelve Minor Prophets in intertextuality: 'Both the Book of Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve have a similar configuration in which explicit references to Judean and foreign kings create a division between an Assyrian and post-Babylonian or Persian era' (1997: 8). Explications of similarities and differences demonstrate that 'both the Book of Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve portray prophets as writers whose words can be read out in another time' (1997: 17).

Polaski's monograph (2001) examines Isaiah 24–27 in light of a synchronic intertextual approach. Utilizing intertextuality along with New Historicism, Polaski proposes to 'remove the boundary between text and context, examining what social work the text might do' (2001: 358). Polaski's study of ch. 24 is linked to his article (1998b), in which he reads Isaiah 24 in light of its intertextual connections with the Pentateuch legal texts of the Priestly traditions, and Ezekiel 16. The study asserts that Isaiah 24 may be read 'not as an example of "late prophecy", dependent on the presumed authority of D [Deuteronomic writings] and P [Priestly writings], but as an example of active negotiation with texts and/or their antecedent traditions which may serve to undergird those texts' authority' (1998b: 65-66). Polaski's intertextual reading of the eternal covenant (Isa. 24.5) concludes that Isaiah 24 is 'an intertextual collision point', which

signifies a negotiation of power relations in early Second Temple Judaism (1998b: 73). Polaski then presents ch. 26 ‘as a rereading of chs. 24 and 25’, in that ch. 26 ‘uses elements from Isaiah 24 and 25, refocusing their imagery onto the confrontation between the righteous and the wicked’ (2001: 219, 279). In the subsequent interconnection, ch. 27 functions to reapply the imagery of divine judgment in preceding chapters into the wider spectrum: ‘YHWH’s destruction of the world and the inauguration of his reign is now seen as the conquest of chaos by order’ (2001: 356). This stimulating reading of Isaiah 24–27 thus provides an important hermeneutical perspective in light of the following conclusion: ‘The Isaiah Apocalypse was an event in Israelite textuality, an intervention in, as well as an expression of, Yehudite culture... An intertextual approach situates the Isaiah Apocalypse in its culture, envisioning that culture as a constant interaction between texts, as well as institutions, ideologies, and social classes’ (2001: 367–68).

Bosshard-Nepustil (1997) investigates the intertextual connections between Isaiah 1–39 and the twelve Minor Prophets with regard to the similar patterns and developments of the prophetic texts. The study compares both similar parallels and diverse contents between the two corpora, yielding two distinct redactional layers, from the Babylonian and Persian periods. In some respects, these two layers are related to Barth’s (1977) Assyrian redaction theory from the time of Josiah (cf. Becker 1999b: 117–21). Here Bosshard-Nepustil refers to the two redactional stages as ‘Assur/Babel-Redaktion’ (587 BCE) and ‘Babel-Redaktion’ (within the time of the impending doom on Babylon). This redactional sequence nicely matches the similar pattern in the twelve prophets, signifying the possibility that such an order in the written form could have existed prior to its reaching the final form.

Nurmela, in a methodological study (2003), opts for a more stringent criterion, establishing intertextual allusions on the basis of the vocabulary alone. Nurmela correlates the similarities of vocabulary between Isaiah and Zechariah, and argues for the dependence of the book of Zechariah on the book of Isaiah. Although stricter criteria for the verbal similarities must be developed, the comparison of the intertextual allusions opens possibilities for further study.

Rudman (2000) explores the intertextuality between Isaiah 24–27 and Jeremiah texts (Isa. 24.6–7 and Jer. 23.10; Isa. 24.17–18 and Jer. 48.43–44; Isa. 25.4–5, and Jer. 4.5–6; cf. Sweeney 1988b). Defining intertextual citation or allusion as a form of midrash, as seen in rabbinic exegesis, Rudman demonstrates that the Isaianic texts quote Jeremiah, the older prophecy, in the process of reapplying it to the new situations. This reading shows the value of the continuing study of intertextual relationships between Isaiah and Jeremiah.

B. *Manuscript Variants and Midrash*

When we consider the texts or books to be read intertextually, we can consider not only different biblical texts or books within the Hebrew Bible, but also books beyond the Hebrew Bible. These include: variant ancient manuscripts, such as the Septuagint, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Targumim; and collections of literature such as the apocrypha, the mishnah, and the many midrashim. Textual criticism focused primarily on comparing isolated words or phrases in variant texts, seeking to determine the most critically reasonable (true) text. Recent studies have provided insight into how such variant manuscripts can function as legitimate intertexts for reciprocal readings. This interdisciplinary approach to text criticism as literary criticism shares a close relationship with canonical criticism, which examines the *Nachleben* (the succession or afterlife of text-traditions in subsequent generations, esp. in classical antiquity) and midrash of pertinent text traditions. These studies provide additional potential for the intertextual readings of Isaiah.

Van der Kooij's work is groundbreaking in this regard. His monograph (1998), which compares the Septuagint version of the 'oracle of Tyre' (Isaiah 23) with that of the MT, examines not only the verbal variants but also the larger literary contexts of the Septuagint text as a coherent unit. While the method itself is innovative in the way that literary criticism is employed in text-critical investigations, this approach also provides new insights on the thematic and historical backgrounds of the Septuagint text, and how different manuscript scribes made their textual reinterpretations in order to relate to their own environs. In another study (2002), which treats the meanings of 'new' or 'later' things, Van der Kooij analyzes pertinent passages from the Wisdom of Ben Sira (48.24-25) and the Septuagint of Isaiah (41.2-4). His analysis discusses the ways in which these manuscripts reconceptualize the meaning of 'the "coming" things, or the "later" things, to be equal to the "last" things. The terms involved appear to have become part of "eschatological" idiom, attested in sources as early as the Wisdom of Ben Sira (beginning second century BCE)' (2002: 140). As more modern-language translations of the ancient manuscripts and scrolls become available, intertextuality in Isaiah scholarship can extend to these invaluable areas, which often represent different communities and traditions.

C. *History of Interpretation*

The method of intertextuality may need to be more sharply defined; however, it is clear that intertextuality has been operative throughout the history of biblical interpretation. Significantly, the history of interpretation has recently surfaced as one of the hot topics in biblical scholarship.

Sawyer's 1996 monograph is a major work on the history of interpretation in Isaiah scholarship, and includes extensive resources. It covers a broad range of topics, from 'the Cult of the Virgin Mary', to 'Isaiah in

Literature and Music', to 'Women and Isaiah'. In a later article, Sawyer presents what he calls 'reception history' or '*Wirkungsgeschichte*, the history of the impact of the Bible on those who read it and use it down the centuries' (2002: 246). In this study, Sawyer focuses on the role the book of Isaiah has played in the history of Zionism. He points out key differences of exegetical emphases between Christianity and Judaism throughout the ages, such as why Isaiah was not considered to be as important in Judaism as it is in Christianity. For example, certain passages crucial in shaping Christian theological traditions (e.g., Isaiah 53) are in the Jewish literature diminished in comparison with other key passages. Although Sawyer's study shows the limitations of tracing various resources from a predominantly Christian standpoint, such a concentrated study offers a helpful example of the advantages of narrowing the topic for a more in-depth analysis. Such limitations in fact show the need for more interdisciplinary dialogue with the rich history of Jewish interpretive traditions, including the rabbinic literature and beyond.

McMichael's 1996 article similarly engages a specific topic in a concentrated period. The article examines de Espina's interpretation of Isaiah (see McMichael 1994), with attention to the ways in which medieval Christian interpretation deepened its anti-Jewish hermeneutic. New attention has also been given to the modern era, with the admirable work on Robert Lowth (1794), Romanticism, and Isaiah by Stansell (2000), and the work on Lowth by Tull (2000c). These surveys reassess some important interpretive orientations exemplified in an eighteenth-century interpreter's study that considered Isaiah first and foremost as a poet. Additionally, major scholars of the nineteenth century (e.g., Hitzig 1833; Ewald 1836–40; Dillman 1890), who had influenced Duhm's Isaiah scholarship, are meticulously analysed by Sweeney (2002). Concomitantly, an English translation of Duhm's *magnum opus*, his 1892 commentary on Isaiah, is scheduled to appear soon. We can safely say that this field anxiously anticipates a plethora of multi-volume works.

Blenkinsopp articulately presents the task now before Isaiah scholars: 'To write the history of the interpretation of the book of Isaiah would be an immense undertaking, calling for the collaboration of experts in different fields and epochs. over a considerable period of time. Even to familiarize oneself with the major expositors in the premodern period...would be a task for a lifetime' (2000a: 92). Thus, there is a wide-open door for research, which will require interdisciplinary collaboration among experts on all historical eras, and scholars of diverse disciplines. In that respect, intertextuality has much to offer in terms of: 'diachronic' analysis on tradition-history, redaction, manuscripts, and ancient commentaries, on the one hand; and 'synchronic' appreciation on literary-aesthetic features and implications, on the other.

IV. *Readers and Readings*

The Reader matters. Postmodernism has brought more awareness of and attention to the reader than to the text. After all, the text would be silent unless we, the readers, (re-)read and (re-)tell the text. Inasmuch as the authors/redactors composed the text, so the readers function as filters for engaging with the text. Biblical scholarship has sharpened its attention to two main realms of readership: the ancient readers (reader-oriented) and the modern readers (reader-response).

These approaches are predominantly synchronic in their interests. Almost none of these synchronic studies aim to discount the importance of the historicity of the ancient text or of past scholarship. Readers ought to be aware of the phenomenological problems in both extremes, i.e., historical positivism and ahistorical or achronistic skepticism. Maintaining the reciprocal balance between the historical aspects and literary aspects, while keeping both in dynamic tension, will have to be an essential hermeneutical concern on both sides. Against the backdrop of such a tension and shift, literary features such as rhetorical patterns, metaphors, figurative language, symbols, imagination and aesthetic dimensions are gradually gaining a central place in the field, which has thus far been dominated by much history-oriented scholarship.

A. Reader-Oriented/Response Approach

Innovative approaches focused on the reader have recently been presented by scholars such as Conrad (1991), Miscall (1993) and Watts, with his influential commentary during the 1980s (1985, 1987). While their methodological disciplines and outcomes may vary, these reading strategies put more emphasis on the role of the ancient and/or modern readers, as the following select examples indicate.

K. Darr (2001) carries forward her influential monograph of 1994 by expounding the 'unfaithful female imagery in Isaiah's vision'. Applying a reader-oriented approach, the study focuses on the 'ancient, sequential reader' as a heuristic construct in the synchronic reading. Contrasting Isaiah's unfaithful-female imagery with the similar imagery in Ezekiel 16, Darr underscores the shift in the female imagery from negative in Isaiah 1–39, to positive in Isaiah 40–55, and then back to negative in Isaiah 56–66. The harlotry imagery of Zion reveals Isaiah's vision for the sequential readers of the 'tumultuous postexilic period', when 'God's plan, (now) announced already in Isa. 1.27-28, provides hope both for Zion's redemption and for the destruction of those rebels and sinners who have defiled her' (2001: 76).

In his monograph (1998), Laato offers an interpretation of the book of Isaiah as 'an ideological unity'. Distinguishing the 'Ideological-reader

(I-reader)', who is synchronically oriented, from the 'Modern-reader (M-reader)', who is diachronically oriented, Laato plays the role of the I-reader for this interpretation. This role involves scrutinizing the 'imaginary rhetorical situation' intended toward the 'Implied Readers (= IR)' by the 'Implied Author (= IA)' (p. 170). With this broad hermeneutical orientation, the focus is on examining the place of Isaiah 36–39 in the book of Isaiah: 'My strategy is to show that the Assyrian invasion in Isaiah 36–39 connects different texts inside Isaiah 1–35 which together open the way to understanding of the message of Isaiah 40–66 where the crux is the marvelous destiny of Zion' (p. 13). To delineate this thesis, Laato reviews various ancient traditions, especially the book of Ben Sira, which evidences two parts of the book of Isaiah: 'the first of which deals (primarily) with the time of Isaiah, and the second with the post-Isaianic period and the future of Zion' (p. 47). The analysis of the entire book of Isaiah in light of chs. 36–39 generates the insight that the treatment of 'the Assyrian invasion and the annihilation of the enemy army before Jerusalem [Isaiah 1–39] constitutes a paradigm in the Book of Isaiah which attempts to convince the potential readers [Isaiah 56–66] that the marvelous fate of Zion is more than merely utopian visions of the future [Isaiah 40–55]' (p. 124).

In his 1998 monograph, van Wieringen undertakes a synchronic analysis of the 'implied reader' of Isaiah 6–12. Instead of dissecting the historical developments of the *Denkschrift*, this study expounds the ways Isaiah 6–12 'contains a communication pattern towards the reader' (p. 1). Interrelated methods, such as text-linguistic analysis (*Textlinguistik*), domain analysis, and communication analysis, are employed to explore 'where and in what way the *implied reader* is situated in the text' (p. 26; emphasis in the original), which is the goal of this study on Isaiah 6–12. The implied reader in this text is situated and involved with the text in various ways. The identification of the ideal figure with Immanuel, for example, is reconnected to the ideal figure of the Child: 'The Child in Isa. 8.23c–9.6, therefore, can be identified with the Immanu-El in 7.1–25' (p. 244). The 'implied reader' not only looks back on the past, however, but also gets drawn to look to the future, with the ideal image of the sprouting Shoot in Isa. 10.28–11.16. Then, in Isa. 12.1–6, the 'implied reader' is 'admitted into the chain of callings' that is open to the future (1998: 247).

In a subsequent article (2002), van Wieringen again utilizes a reader-oriented approach, focused on the temporal framework for the implied reader of Isa. 2.2. The analysis produces a double perspective of the 'time-unit of the exile, which is hidden in the book Isaiah between the chapters 39 and 40' (p. 258). The first temporal fulfillment indicates the days after the kings' days, thereby causing the implied reader to anticipate the post-exilic period. The subsequent temporal perspective signals to the implied reader the time beyond the exile, with an open end.

B. Metaphors, Symbols and Figurative Language

Nielsen (2003) introduces a new approach, termed 'metaphorical criticism' (cf. Ricoeur 1978). For Nielsen, metaphorical criticism has much in common with redactional criticism. Advancing the methodology of her previous monograph (1989), she acknowledges the dubiousness in trying to date an oracle on the basis of any given metaphor, and argues for a metaphor's innate openness to reuse or reinterpretation. Her study then addresses the intricate relationship between imagery and intertextuality. An exemplary reading of Isa. 5.1-7 in conjunction with 1 Kings 21 and Hos. 2.24-25 shows that 'some central metaphors may be markers for intertextual readings' (p. 31).

Labahn (2003) presses the methodology of 'metaphorical intertextual reading' further by suggesting the need to distinguish between 'imagery' (informative function) and 'metaphor' (performative function). Proposing to limit the method only to metaphors in synchronic levels, and to exclude imagery, Labahn underscores the polyvalent possibilities of metaphors: 'A metaphor can, thus, not be taken up isolated from its literary context, but has to be read within its framework' (p. 55). Then, Labahn illustrates the multiple meanings through a case study on the metaphor of 'daughter of Zion' (Isa. 1.8; 52.2; 61.3), which can be interpreted 'either in a context of salvation or in a context of doom' (p. 67), depending on yet another intertextual interaction between metaphors and addressees or readers (p. 67).

Baumann (2000; English edition 2003) engages in a more synchronic undertaking, with conclusions similar to those of K. Darr (2001). Baumann's study explores the marriage imagery in the prophetic books. From the survey of the recent scholarly research, Baumann addresses the need for further research on this topic: 'what has long been lacking is a study of the book of Isaiah' (2003: 22). Then, following the definition worked out by Ricoeur (1978: 64), Baumann defines 'the concept of "imagery" in the sense of a root metaphor'; whereas she calls 'the individual parts of the metaphoric complex "metaphors"' (2000: 30). In comparison with other prophetic books, 'the appearance of the female personification of Zion as "wife" of YHWH in connection with promises of salvation is unique to Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah' (p. 176). Likewise, Isaiah 56-66 depicts both the critique of Jerusalem, and the hopeful images of her marriage with YHWH: 'In the special sequence of themes in Trito-Isaiah we can read this as a "history of Jerusalem": from sinfulness through marriage with YHWH to wealth of children' (p. 189). Thus, the study notes that female imagery in the book of Isaiah is more positive than in other prophetic books, such as Hosea, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel. Baumann concludes by noting:

Thus female imagery is used in the book of Isaiah with widely different significance and in very different contexts... The imagery functions both to appreciate and to deprecate, and it appears both in a prominent position (for

‘daughter Zion’) and in a marginal stance. This very multiplicity and plurality distinguish its usage in Isaiah from that in the other prophetic books. (pp. 199–200)

Blenkinsopp (2001), while juxtaposing both historical and thematic aspects, presents a case study on the theme of nature and city in Isaiah 1–35. He notes: ‘One of the forms in which anti-urban animus is expressed is the prediction that the city will return to nature’, as attested in various texts, e.g., the city will become fields for sheep (5.17), cattle (27.11), and wild donkeys (32.14); it will become a desolation (6.11 and numerous other references) (p. 39). Additionally, this motif of the reversal of a ‘rural utopia’ is juxtaposed with the motif of the transformation of the city-turned-ruin in the future. Overall, Blenkinsopp’s study incorporates diverse approaches, connecting historical, intertextual, and thematic investigations in the interpretation of the book of Isaiah.

Carroll (2001) also presents an analysis of metaphors and imagery regarding the city, employing a more imaginative, rather than a restrictively text-oriented hermeneutic. Exploring the various scholarly ways to identify the city in the prophetic discourses, especially in Isaiah 24–27, Carroll raises a hermeneutical question: ‘Is there one or more cities referred to in these chapters?’ (p. 49). Carroll, a Jeremiah specialist, expounds the related texts in Jeremiah 7, 25, 50–51, and proposes to identify ‘the city of chaos’ (Isa. 24.10–13; cf. 25.3) and related phrases in terms of their poetic function, with full acknowledgment of their ambiguity. Relying on the metaphorical signals of the motif of oppression for the city of chaos in the so-called Isaiah Apocalypse, rather than relying on a specifically determined historical locale, Carroll contends that the ‘city of chaos’ (24.10–13) and ‘holy city’ (48.2; 52.1) can be equated, just as Jerusalem can be equated with Babylon: ‘So for me as a reader of Isaiah I would have to say: *the New Jerusalem is but the Old Babylon writ (built) large*’ (2001: 54; emphasis in the original).

Landy (2000b) expounds the multifarious force of metaphors in his fresh and imaginative reading of Isaiah. This article focuses on vision and voice *vis-à-vis* the imagery of seeing and hearing in Isaiah, chs. 1 and 6 in particular: ‘The equivalence and antithesis of seeing and hearing introduces us to the problem of metaphor and poetry in general, in Isaiah’ (p. 25). Appropriating the descriptions of ‘metaphor’ by Julia Kristeva (1980) and Roman Jakobson (1960), Landy presses a hermeneutical issue concerning the poetic force and complexity of Isaiah: ‘Critics have devoted themselves to solving the problems of the text by assigning different sections or verses to different hands, by unraveling it. This, however, avoids the problem, and domesticates the prophet to our expectations’ (p. 30). Instead, the study deduces that ‘the metaphor, however, introduces an element of uncertainty and ambiguity’ (p. 34).

In another study (2002b), Landy explores the discourse of sexuality in Isaiah 1–12, especially 8.1–4 and ch. 12, on the relationship between language and sexuality: ‘What is the relation between sex and writing?’ (p. 262). On the first passage (8.1–4), Landy points out various metaphorical connections, such as the association of conceiving the child with the writing on the tablet: ‘Take for yourself a large placard and inscribe on it with a human stylus’ (8.1). ‘The analogy between pen and penis is both explicit and ironic. The human or male stylus is a premonitory displacement of the silenced and discreet penis, embedded tactfully in a textual elision’ (p. 267). Other relations with symbolic puns or metathesis are attested.

Treating the second passage (ch. 12), Landy elucidates the symbolic interactions between the prophet and God by discussing the poetic linkage of Isaiah 12 with Isaiah 6. Further symbolic features signify the dynamic correlations between the prophet and the community, as well as the masculinity and femininity of God: ‘The Song of the Sea is an affirmation of God’s virility; his masculinity is hardly ever more explicit or uninflected. Chapter 12 of Isaiah is a poem of desire, for the incorporation of the masculine in the feminine or *vice versa*, and for feminine fulfilment’ (p. 275). Landy presents a poetic conclusion on this text: ‘The ending cannot but be ambiguous and unresolved... The vision is of the end, of the song which is beyond the end, and in which vision dissolves’ (p. 276).

Clements’s article, ‘A Light to the Nations’ (1996), presents another dimension in Isaiah scholarship. This article, which traces the themes of light and darkness throughout the book of Isaiah, reads the entire book of Isaiah through the lens of key themes and motifs, whether synchronically or diachronically.

Williamson (1998b) explores the motif of divine and human kingship as a thread unifying the book of Isaiah. Tracing both the synchronic and diachronic dimensions, Williamson examines the shifts and connections of themes as intratextual threads within the book of Isaiah: ‘Attention has focused primarily on phraseology and themes that span the whole or substantial parts of the book’ (p. 1). Thus, concerning the vision of the divine kingship, its emphasis on ‘the Lord of hosts’ in 1.1 and 6.1 is understood to have ‘exerted a particular influence on these later writers, as indeed it has on other parts of the book as well’ (p. 9). Also, the role of kingship in the pertinent texts (8.23b–9.6; 11.1–9; 16.4b–5; 32.1–5) is depicted as closely associated with building and preserving justice and righteousness. Likewise, regarding the servant of YHWH in the latter half of the book, Williamson points out both the ‘democratization’ of monarch and the ‘privatization’ of servant (p. 165; cf. Sweeney 1997b; Kim 2003: 73–88). These investigations on the intratextual correlations and transformations through the theme of ‘king, messiah, and servant’ in Isaiah, therefore, lead to an astute conclusion:

It has been my contention, however, that what unites the Isaianic witness above all is not the identification of individuals or dynasties, nor the question of nearer or more distant hopes for fulfilment. Rather, it is that each passage contributes its own variation to the theme of the role of leadership in God's ideal society—a leadership characterized by faithfulness, justice and righteousness. (1998b: 112)

J. Willis (2001) discusses the 'symbolic names' and their 'theological themes' in Isaiah. In examining the symbolic names in Isaiah 7–9, 'Shear-jashub' (7.3), 'Immanu-el' (7.15), 'Maher-shalal-hash-baz' (8.3), 'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God (Divine Warrior), Everlasting Father (Father Forever), Prince of Peace' (9.6), Willis lucidly delineates the aim of this approach, which is to explore symbolic names that impress 'the hearer (or reader) with important theological themes', and thereby signify 'a type of coherence' throughout the entire book (2001: 74). In the case of the 'remnant' passages, unlike the approach that attempts to retrieve and arrange the relevant passages in 'chronological' order, this study attempts 'to analyze the passages in the book of Isaiah that deal with "the remnant" and with "returning" *in the order that they appear*, in an attempt to determine the significance of these ideas for the theological coherence of this book as a finished literary work' (pp. 76–77; emphasis added). Willis also examines the symbolic names in Isaiah 60–62, which together with Isaiah 7–9 connote five key themes:

- First, 'God's desire for God's people was that they be holy...but they turned against God';
- Second, 'a period of severe discipline in Babylonian exile led to a "remnant" of the exiles "returning" to Yahweh';
- Third, 'Yahweh overthrew those who were oppressing this remnant, making their possessions the "spoil" and "prey"';
- Fourth, 'Yahweh "sought out" those who turned to [Yahweh], looked with compassion on this remnant'; and,
- Fifth, 'Yahweh is restoring Zion (62:1–2), working with and through a descendant of David' (2001: 92).

These themes help connect the entire book of Isaiah with its implied audience of the post-exilic community.

Other applicable studies include: Robinson's examination (1998) of the motif of deafness and blindness (6.9–10) as a metaphor in the broader context of Isaiah 1–12 and the rest of the book; and Olley's study (2001) on the metaphors of animals in Isaiah, with particular attention to Isa. 11.6–9 and 65.25, which, in contrast with Ezekiel, depict animals in positive roles, and thereby express Isaiah's inclusive vision for all creatures of the earth. Treating various animals as symbols, Klingbeil (1999) offers a similar insight by comparing the ram (Isa. 13.21), the lion (Isa. 15.9), and the serpent (Isa. 27.1) with ancient Near Eastern iconographic motifs.

Whereas a myth must develop a whole constellation of the narrative process, iconographic representation as figurative language can express symbolic value. While using these well-known Near Eastern mythological themes, Isaiah applies them in a surprisingly different manner, in which everything moves from chaos to order, from a desperate pagan myth to a messianic proclamation of hope.

Finally, Leclerc (2001) examines the use and implications of the word 'justice', and other related terms such as 'righteousness', 'salvation', and 'instruction' in Isaiah. This careful analysis of the thematic development of justice in the three conventional sections of the book of Isaiah (chs. 1–39, 40–55, 56–66) presents a significant case for reading the book with attention paid, in both synchronic and diachronic ways, to key words and themes.

V. Biblical Theology and Contemporary Hermeneutics

Sweeney has interfaced the intertextual readings of the text of Isaiah with key issues raised in biblical theology. For Sweeney, intertextual observations raised both by textual connections and by thematic comparisons become significant factors in understanding Isaiah. Stressing the particularity of events in history, as well as their universal implications (1998b: 152, 155), Sweeney presents a case study on significant issues addressed in Isaiah and the questions of theodicy they raise (2000). The study derives theological implications from a unified reading of the final form of Isaiah after the Shoah addressing issues such as: 'YHWH's identification with the conqueror, YHWH's decree of judgment against Israel without the possibility of repentance, and the failure of YHWH's program to be realized by the end of the book' (2000: 209). Key issues, such as the people's obduracy (Isaiah 6), and the different depictions of Ahaz and Hezekiah (Isaiah 7; 36–39), are addressed in dialogue with divergent implications from the stories of Amos, Abraham, Moses, and Job. Conceptual correlations yield a thought-provoking hermeneutical insight: 'YHWH's demands for justice throughout the book of Isaiah include the obligation to demand justice, like Abraham in Genesis 18, from YHWH' (2000: 219). Reading Isaiah in light of conceptual intertextuality and its interface with biblical theology has significant implications for Isaiah scholarship that acknowledge the hermeneutical dynamics between ancient settings and today's contexts.

Schroeder addresses the similar issues raised in Isaiah's prophetic vision, but with a different orientation: 'Whether or not the notion of God's agency in history and creation reflects a *true* understanding of reality is one of the central theological problems in the study of the Old Testament' (2001: 3). The main focus is thus placed on the 'notion of the universality of history, in order to show that it accounts for a realistic understanding of history and of human existence in it' (p. 29). The study expounds the implications of this

hermeneutical approach with attention to the relationship between biblical texts, including Isaiah 1–6, and historiography. In particular, the ‘strange work’ of YHWH envisages not only the identification of the attack of the Assyrians with YHWH’s action, but also the very involvement of the prophet Isaiah as an integral part of history. ‘In the presentation of history given in Isaiah 5–8, the Assyrian threat has a theological rationale: It is YHWH’s action against Israel and Judah in response to their violation of the Torah. The Syro-Ephraimitic crisis is only an episode in the realization of YHWH’s plan’ (p. 77; emphasis in original). This viewpoint is based on the following hermeneutical assumption: ‘The Old Testament is not an object in space and time but a phenomenon in history and we can understand this phenomenon because we are in the same history’ (p. 56). Hence, the reader’s participation or presence into the text’s history, which is a part of the universality of history, is essential for interpretation: ‘The question that this book leads one to ask is not “What is the setting of this book?”, but “Where is our place in the history described in this book?” ’ (p. 57). Therefore, YHWH’s commissioning of the prophet Isaiah (ch. 6) to announce the message of judgment upon the people and their lack of comprehension is a pivotal core to understanding the entire narrative of Isaiah 1–39. It is Israel’s violation of the Torah, justice, and righteousness that causes YHWH to fight against his people by means of the Assyrians, with the crucial messenger role to be played by the prophet Isaiah. Although the issues of theodicy are lacking in this explication of Isaiah, its contention for the universality of history, which encompasses both YHWH’s and the readers’ involvement, prompts an important hermeneutical quest.

Melugin’s compelling presentations offer some enlightening projections for future Isaiah scholarship at the dawn of the twenty-first century. In his assessment of the ‘problem of historical reconstruction’ (1996b), Melugin makes a trenchant postmodern observation: ‘One may question whether the result of a historian’s research is more a picture painted by the historian than a reproduction of the past as it really was’ (p. 64). Scrutinizing specific aspects of the historical criticism of prophetic books, especially with regard to the degree of various hypotheses being ‘probable’, ‘intriguing’ or ‘possible’, Melugin asserts that ‘most of what the book of Isaiah portrays, however, is difficult to correlate precisely with actual historical events’ (1996b: 72). Thus, for a new hermeneutical direction, Melugin proposes to pay more attention to synchronic rather than to diachronic analysis, to poetic and figurative language rather than to historical events, to story rather than to history, and to ‘useful’ rather than to accurate interpretive ventures. Identifying the subjectivity the interpreter brings to the text, even in major scholarly discussions on the book of Isaiah, Melugin points out Conrad’s (1991: 3–33) and K. Darr’s (1994: 22–45) hermeneutical principles that emphasize the role of the readers and/or interpreters for the construction of

meaning as 'a paradigm which opens more new doors for the construction of meaning' (Melugin 1997: 49). The issue, then, in the interpretive orientation of Isaiah scholarship, lies in whether to remain in the post-Enlightenment period, or to move to the postmodern period. Melugin therefore suggests a 'performative hermeneutic' that focuses not on 'description of reality', but rather on 'transformational purposes', including the legitimacy of the various reading communities (1999b: 113). Thus, in reading biblical texts, Melugin offers important perspectives for reading Isaiah 1 and other pertinent texts (1999a): 'shaping a symbolic world' (p. 254); 'typological use of scripture' (p. 259); and 'use of scripture as precedent' (p. 260).

VI. Conclusion

An Asian proverb says, 'After ten years, even rivers and mountains change their shapes'. In the rather short span of a decade, Isaiah scholarship has seen major developments, extensions, and even changes. Approaches that pay attention to history continue to appear, but approaches that consider Isaiah as text *vis-à-vis* (ancient and/or modern) readers have also proliferated. We may wonder whether these changes imply our entering the gates of a whole new world, or our opening the floodgates of a mountainous host. Is historical criticism the way to continue for the next decade, if not the entire century? Or, is postmodernism the new path to follow and develop? Or, is postmodernism already a thing of the past, and thus neo-classicism (or post-modernism in another definition or application) at hand? Can there be a synthetic method? Or must one side trample over the other? Admittedly, both approaches contain methodological or hermeneutical shortcomings. Consider, for example, Gitay's quote (1997b: 64) of Julia Kristeva, who still questions the 'interpretive obsession that tries so desperately to make the Holy Text say what it does not know it is saying', on the one side, and Tate's scathing reaction on the other side: 'When this kind of reading is done by a scholar...it can be interesting and evocative, but I cringe to think about the results of such reading by most laity and preachers in the churches' (1996: 49).

One lesson history has taught us is that 'new' does not guarantee improvement or superiority. On the other hand, though there may be nothing new under the sun, change might be an indispensable movement on the journey toward growth. Amid change and the potential for change, the fact that Isaiah scholarship is currently moving in several different directions may indicate not only that there is no clear sign of a unified or championed theory, but also that there are significant writings and vital perspectives still to be developed. Blenkinsopp's remark might be noteworthy: 'In biblical studies, major paradigms seem to have a life span of about a century: Wellhausen's *Prolegomena* (1893), which set the agenda for the critical study of

the Pentateuch, appeared in 1883, and Duhm's *Das Buch Jesaja* (1892), a landmark publication in Isaian studies, in 1892' (2000a: 73). If we use an analogy from the world of opera, after the glorious era of the three tenors, the music world is waiting for their successor. Isaiah scholarship might also be awaiting a successor to Duhm. However, the major works discussed in this article will become better shaped and refined through a community or communities of scholars with varying agendas. After all, even Wellhausen (1883) and Duhm (1892) built their gigantic works on the basis of numerous preceding theories and perspectives.

ISAIAH 40–66 IN RECENT RESEARCH: THE ‘UNITY’ MOVEMENT

Roy F. Melugin

Overview

During the past thirty years or so a movement interested in the ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah as a whole has come into being. Some of its early roots can be seen in the 50s, 60s, and 70s. Beginning in the late 70s, essays by Ackroyd, Clements, and Rendtorff gave more definitive shape to the emerging hermeneutical issues. By the 90s, questions about relationships of synchronic and diachronic approaches became paramount in many hermeneutical discussions about the book of Isaiah, with some scholars retaining strong interests in the history of the development of the book, while others turned almost entirely to synchronic approaches. Reader response criticism also entered the discussion, as well as questions regarding the use of the book holistically as Scripture. Much of this scholarly work is chronicled here.

I. Isaiah and the Beginnings of the ‘Unity’ Movement

For many years, it was customary to envision the book of Isaiah as consisting of three independent literary blocks: First Isaiah (chs. 1–39; also called ‘Proto-Isaiah’), Second Isaiah (chs. 40–55; also called ‘Deutero-Isaiah’), and Third Isaiah (chs. 56–66; also called ‘Trito-Isaiah’). Furthermore, scholars commonly argued that each of these three literary blocks may be broken down into many shorter pericopes, most of which were created in circumstances that differed from their present literary settings in the book of Isaiah. Indeed, it was often assumed, much of the material in the book arose as oral speech, but over time oral utterances were juxtaposed, on the one hand, with other oral speeches, and on the other hand, with (usually later) written textual material, to form a larger and larger literary whole. Methods such as form criticism and redaction-historical analysis therefore emerged as some of the most common tools of textual analysis.

Such approaches to the study of the book of Isaiah have by no means come to an end. Yet, since the 1980s, certain new ways of asking questions have become common in the study of the book of Isaiah. One of these ‘new

paradigms', if indeed 'paradigm' is an adequate term, consists of a scholarly *movement*, which concerns itself with what might be called the 'unity' of Isaiah 1–66. Although what I am calling 'unity' has been variously conceptualized in different scholarly circles, a remarkable interest in reading the book of Isaiah holistically in one way or another has emerged in recent years.

A. James Muilenburg, Claus Westermann, and Roy Melugin

The trend toward reading the Isaianic literature in a holistic fashion can be traced especially to the *Interpreter's Bible* commentary on Isaiah 40–66 by Muilenburg (1956). In it, Muilenburg argues that, in the 7th century BCE, there was a literary revolution in Israel in which the conventions dominated by short oral utterances gave way to longer written compositions—a change that is visible, so Muilenburg argues, in Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and in Isaiah 40–66 (p. 385). Although remnants of traditional oral genres can be found in Isaiah 40–66, they exist only as material that the prophetic *writer* used and reshaped creatively to form relatively lengthy units of literature. In this new style of composition, poems were constructed by means of stanzas or strophes; and the strophes are subdivisions of still longer units (pp. 385, 389–90). Moreover, Isaiah 40–66 exhibits a progression of the prophet's thought, so that these chapters may be read holistically. Although Muilenburg does not try to read the entire book of Isaiah in holistic fashion, his way of reading Isaiah 40–66 had a major influence on others who became concerned with the 'unity' of the entire book of Isaiah.

In response to Muilenburg's work, Westermann argues that Deutero-Isaiah consists, for the most part, of literary units which were longer than earlier form critics had believed (1964: 107–108). Indeed, Westermann contends, Deutero-Isaiah's longer units are not defined by any one genre. He disagrees, however, with Muilenburg's contention that traditional genres played only a small role in the shaping of units of speech (Westermann 1964: 108–10). Lengthy units in Deutero-Isaiah were not almost exclusively the product of the artistic freedom of the poet, but rather a complex interweaving of genres, sometimes with the structure of *one* genre functioning as the basis for the interweaving of several genres into a longer poem (see Westermann 1964: 120–22, 127–33, 151–54). Furthermore, he argues, Isaiah 40–55 is itself a text whose structure displays unity (see pp. 164–65).

A book of my own, *The Formation of Isaiah 40–55* (1976), also contributed to what later became a trend of looking for the 'unity' of Isaiah. Writing in dialogue with both Muilenburg and Westermann, I contend that the smallest units of speech could be isolated by form critical method (here I disagree with Muilenburg), but I argue *with* Muilenburg that these smaller

'genre-units' are juxtaposed in such a way as to enable Isaiah 40–55 to be read as an artistic whole (Melugin 1976: 77–82, 86–89). Even though I contend that Isaiah 40–55 represents the work of a collector of earlier speech-units, I avoid any attempt to present a history of the redaction of the Deutero-Isaianic text. Instead, I interpret the juxtaposed units synchronically as an artistic whole, arguing that 'in its final form the collection has deliberately eradicated any indicators of the process of growth' and that 'it is as if we were intended to see only the final pattern of arrangement' (p. 175). Indeed, at the very end of the book, I make preliminary remarks as to how the entire book of Isaiah could possibly be read synchronically as a unity (pp. 176–78). These concluding remarks were sometimes used by others in further research regarding the unity of the book, especially by Ackroyd, Rendtorff, and Sweeney.

B. Peter Ackroyd, Ronald Clements, and Rolf Rendtorff

It has become quite common to look to certain works by Ackroyd, Clements and Rendtorff as foundations upon which was built a rapidly-developing concern for interpreting the entire book of Isaiah holistically. Although both Ackroyd and Clements (and nearly all their followers) considered the book of Isaiah to be the result of various stages of literary growth, they nonetheless focused on the reasons why it makes sense to read the book as a unified whole.

1. *Ackroyd.* Ackroyd (1978) argues that Isaiah 1–12 has been structured so that we may now read the text as a presentation of a prophet and his activity. Indeed, Isaiah 1–12, read as a whole, permits us to see 'the significance of this prophet, the messenger of doom, now fulfilled, as he is also presented as messenger of salvation' (p. 45). Questions about the authenticity of the prophetic sayings are left open so that readers can apprehend the picture of the prophetic figure as he is portrayed by the literary text. Furthermore, Ackroyd argues that Isaiah 1–12 was structured by the redactors of the book to present the prophet in a way that would connect with other parts of the book, e.g., chs. 13–23, 36–39, and, indeed the book as a whole (p. 47). Obviously, chs. 40–66 would be an important part of that whole.

In an essay on Isaiah 36–39 (1982), Ackroyd again focuses on the text as a literary 'presentation', with particular concern for relationships between Isaiah 36–39 and chs. 40–66 (1978: 4, 6, 18), and 6.1–9.6 (pp. 5–6, 17–21). His essay was stimulated in part by the brief remarks at the end of Melugin's book regarding the connections between Isaiah 40–55 and the book as a whole (Ackroyd 1982: 4–5, 18–21). Ackroyd's careful discussion was designed to explore 'more fully the possible links of 36–39 with the book as a whole' and 'to give more ground for Melugin's claim than is...to be found in his brief discussion of the point' (Ackroyd: 21).

2. *Clements*. Clements has also shown interest as early as 1982 in the book of Isaiah as a whole (see 1982; 1985). His interest in the whole, however, is tied to an understanding of the history of the growth of the book (see 1982). Indeed, he argues, we can easily recognize that the book was ‘assembled over a long period, but with a very clear concern to group prophecies in a thematic fashion’ (1982: 120). He notes, for example, that the prophecies against Babylon in Isaiah 13–14 are part of an extensive collection of prophecies against foreign nations (chs. 13–23), put together in the interest of ‘a measure of editorial unity and connectedness’ (p. 120), even though they did not come from the hand of a single author. The beginning of this collection of prophecies (chs. 13–14) certainly paints a picture of Israel’s fortune in the time of the neo-Babylonian empire, but the book as a whole encompasses the fate of Israel from the eighth to the fifth centuries BCE (p. 120).

An examination of the structure of the entire book of Isaiah shows that chs. 36–39 have been taken from corresponding materials in 2 Kings 18–20, and were placed ‘before Isaiah 40 at a relatively late stage’ in the book’s composition process, for the purpose of helping the reader move from the ‘Assyrian’ to the ‘Babylonian’ parts of the book (from chs. 1–35 to 40–66), with the narrative of the visit of Babylonian travelers to Hezekiah (Isaiah 39) serving as the primary transition between chs. 1–35 and 40–66 (Clements 1982: 120–21).

Clements regards all this as reason to believe that ‘the overall structure of the book shows signs of editorial planning and that, at some stage in its growth, attempts were made to read and interpret the book as a whole’ (1982: 121). First of all, Isaiah 35 is not the only passage in chs. 1–35 that anticipates chs. 40–66; there are other assurances in chs. 1–35 that YHWH’s people will return to Zion (11.12–16; 19.23; 27.12–13)—assurances based on prophecies in Isaiah 40 and subsequent chapters (p. 121). Furthermore, Clements argues, 18.7 promises that Ethiopians will bring gifts to YHWH’s people in Zion, a promise which Clements believes was derived from Isa. 45.14 (p. 121).

Other passages also seem to connect chs. 1–35 with 40–66 (especially 40–55). For example, metaphors of blindness and deafness in 42.18–20 and 43.8 seem to be an allusion to the speech of the commissioning of Isaiah in ch. 6 (Clements 1982: 125). It would make sense, Clements argues, to believe that ‘a later prophet, who had come to view the entire period of Israel’s subjugation to the Mesopotamian powers of Assyria and Babylon as one of national blindness and deafness, should have deliberately picked up such a theme in stressing the joyousness of his new message’ (p. 125). Moreover, in a passage stemming from Isaianic editors in the time of Josiah (Isa. 32.1–8), the theme of blindness and deafness is picked up, and appears again in Isaiah 35 and in 40–55 to explain the catastrophes that Israel had suffered (p. 125).

To cite another example, the message of judgment announced by the eighth-century prophet himself (see, e.g., Isa. 2.6–4.1), originally having to do with the threat of Assyria in the time of the Syro-Ephraimite war and afterward, came to be seen as an explanation for the events of 598 and 587 BCE (Clements 1982: 126). The composer of Isaiah 40–55—the only part of the book to have come from a very compact period of time (546–538 BCE)—scarcely had a message all his own (p. 128). Thus, the message of chs. 40–55 can easily be understood as ‘a complement to that which has preceded it in the earlier chapters of the book’ (p. 128), whether the prophet of the exile himself saw this, or whether later editors added his message (Isa. 40–55) to that of the earlier Isaianic tradition.

Clements develops his insights further in an article published in 1985. What is of significance about Clements’ work is that, while he makes abundant use of source theory and redaction-historical approaches in his discussion of the formation of the book of Isaiah as a whole (1985: 95–97), he also asks questions about the synchronic relationships that various parts of the book came to have as the book took shape in the context of the exile and even later (see, e.g., pp. 101–106, and also 106–110). Questions regarding the place of diachronic and synchronic method, as we shall see, became important as the scholarly movement concerning the ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah developed.

3. *Rendtorff*. Rendtorff is another important scholar whose work on Isaiah contributed significantly to a movement focusing on the ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah. In 1984, Rendtorff published an article in *Vetus Testamentum* on the composition of the book of Isaiah. This article reappeared in a collection of essays by Rendtorff, which was translated into English in 1993. In this essay, Rendtorff, who claims to have been influenced by the work of Ackroyd and Melugin in reading the literature in the book of Isaiah in holistic fashion (Rendtorff 1993b: 147–49), argues that certain verbal repetitions can be of significance in reading the book holistically. The cry, ‘Comfort, comfort my people’ (Isa. 40.1), for example, is by no means unexpected, for at the close of the first major section of the book (Isa. 1–12), a psalm reads: ‘I will give thanks to thee, YHWH; yes, thou wast angry with me, but let thy anger be turned away, that thou mayst comfort me’ (Isa. 12.1). Moreover, the cry, ‘Comfort, comfort my people’, is echoed in 51.12: ‘I, I am he that comforts you’. And in 66.13—‘right at the end of the book’, says Rendtorff (1993b: 150)—the divine voice again reappears: ‘As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you’. What is especially important to notice is that ‘the proclamation of the divine “comforting” spans all three parts of the book of Isaiah, and in each of them it has been given a prominent position...’ (p. 150). Moreover, the theme of ‘comfort’ appears again (49.13; 51.3; 52.9), and finally at a ‘central point in chs. 56–66’, where Yahweh’s

anointed claims the calling of ‘comfort(ing) all who mourn’ (61.2; see pp. 150–51).

There is scarcely space here to rehearse all the verbal connections that lead Rendtorff to see in the book of Isaiah certain evidences of unity. His point is that ‘evident links can be detected between the introductory chapter of the second part of the book of Isaiah, ch. 40, and the other two parts’ (p. 154). And at least some of these links, Rendtorff says, ‘have been deliberately forged in order to connect the three parts’ (1993b: 155).

There are also thematic and theological relationships, Rendtorff argues, which move beyond individual passages (1993b: 155). The theme of Zion/Jerusalem, for example, is present in Isaiah 1 and 2.1–5—with the daughter of Zion left like a booth in a vineyard (1.8), as a remnant preserved from extinction (1.9), as a city that once again becomes righteous (1.21–26/27), and finally, in terms of a pilgrimage of the nations to Zion to be taught by YHWH’s Torah (2.1–5). This theme also appears in the next passage (2.6–4.6) in a ‘tension-laden antithesis between indictment and a message of salvation: Jerusalem’s “supports” will be removed (3.1), so that she stumbles and falls (3.8); the “daughters of Zion” have proclaimed to them the divine punishment for their arrogance (3.16ff.), but those who are left are then promised salvation and protection for themselves and Zion (4.2–6)’ (p. 156). In 6.1–9.6, the preservation of Jerusalem is also at issue (especially in ch. 7), and in 10.5–34 there is language about Assyrian attacks against Jerusalem (vv. 10–11, 32), but also promise of divine help against Assyria (vv. 12, 24; see p. 156). Isaiah 1–12 finally closes with a psalm whose final verse, reminiscent of Deutero-Isaiah, focuses on Zion: ‘Shout and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion! Yes, great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel!’ Indeed, the entire unit constituted by Isaiah 1–12, Rendtorff says, is ‘encircled’ by the theme of Zion/Jerusalem, and ‘its whole tenor is marked by the assurances of salvation in 2.2–5, 4.2–6, and ch. 12’ (pp. 156–57).

The centrality of the theme Zion/Jerusalem is abundantly clear in Isaiah 40–66 (1993b: 157–58). Isaiah 40.1–11 is an address to Jerusalem (v. 2) and Zion (v. 9). Indeed, chs. 49–55 are dominated by the theme of Zion/Jerusalem (see 49.14–26; 51.17; 52.7–9). In chs. 56–66, Zion/Jerusalem language is clustered in 60–62 and 65–66 (but see also 59.20 and 64.9).

At the end of the essay, Rendtorff makes a few preliminary observations about the composition-history of the book of Isaiah (1993b: 167–69). Particularly noteworthy is his contention that chs. 40–55 play a dominant role in the book as a whole, and that the compositional activity in chs. 1–39 and 56–66 ‘takes its bearings’ from 40–55 (p. 167). Yet, I am struck by the fact that in his essay, synchronic relationships across the entire book of Isaiah are at least as important as Rendtorff’s theories about composition history. A similar observation could be made concerning his essay on ‘Isaiah 56.1 as a Key to the Formation of the Book of Isaiah’ (Rendtorff 1993c). He

says that there is no independent First Isaiah, i.e., that 1–39 is an extremely complex collection of materials of diverse origins, *and* that 56–66 do not represent an ‘independent literary unit’ (p. 185). Yet, if no independent First or Third Isaiah can be found, we must conclude that ‘in the framework of “Greater Isaiah” the author of 1.21ff. could have meant precisely this group of addressees who, according to 56.1, had now arrived in the country as repatriates from Babylon’ (p. 186). What is obvious is that Rendtorff is now reading the entire book synchronically. His essay on ‘Isaiah 6 in the Framework of the Composition of the Book’ is moving in the same direction (Rendtorff 1993d; see esp. 179–80).

Rendtorff’s essay on synchronic and diachronic readings in the *New Visions of Isaiah* volume (1996) also seems to tilt more toward synchronic reading than diachronic analysis. Although, in his discussion of scholarly literature on Isaiah, one wonders to what extent Rendtorff himself is still tied to diachronic method, he nonetheless appears to give priority to synchronic approaches: ‘The first and main question is no longer, What was the “original” meaning of this text?, and also not, When and how had this text been incorporated into its present context?, but, What is the meaning of the text in its given context?’ (1996: 40). He also says: ‘In general, I believe that a changing view on the book of Isaiah should allow, and even require, studies on topics, themes, expressions, and even ideas characteristic of the book as a whole or considerable parts of it, without at the same time discussing questions of redaction or composition’ (p. 44).

II. *The Unfolding of the ‘Unity’ Movement*

In Form-Critical, Canon-Critical, and Traditio-Historical Approaches

A. Marvin A. Sweeney

1. *SBL Formation of the Book of Isaiah Seminar*. As the movement begun by Ackroyd, Clements, and Rendtorff became institutionalized by the establishment of the SBL Formation of the Book of Isaiah Seminar (1992–96), co-chaired by Melugin and Sweeney, a lively dialogue began, culminating in the production of a collection of essays entitled *New Visions of Isaiah* (Melugin and Sweeney 1996). In the years of the Seminar and immediately preceding, there appeared a number of scholarly writings related to the question of the ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah. Three works by Sweeney are especially important in this regard (1988a, 1996a, 1996b). All three are concerned with the structure of the entire book of Isaiah in a synchronic way, while at the same time using diachronic methods in an attempt to reconstruct the redaction history of the book. Indeed, these three writings are of special importance because Sweeney’s synchronic structural analysis and his diachronic reconstruction of the book’s redaction history are undertaken in remarkable detail.

(a) According to Sweeney, the eighth-century BCE prophet himself contributed the earliest literature in the book of Isaiah. Sweeney argues that the genuine utterances of Isaiah himself came from various periods of the prophet's career (Sweeney 1996b: 59): from the period of the Syro-Ephraimite war (1.21–26, 27–31; 5.1–24; 6.1–11 [12–13]; 7.2–17* [* indicates 'a hypothetical form presumed to underlie the text': Sweeney 1996b: ix], 20; 8.1–15; 8.16–9.6; 15.1b–16.12; and 29.15–24), from the time of the fall of Samaria and the early rule of Sargon II (5.25–30; 9.7–10.4; 10.5–34; 14.24–27; 17–18; 19.1–17; and 29.1–14), from the period of Hezekiah's revolt against Assyria (1.2–9, 10–18; 2.6–19; 3.1–9, 12–15; 3.16–4.1; 14.4b–21, 28–32; 22.1b–14, 15–25; 23.1b–14; 28; 30.1–18; 31; 32.9–14), and from the time of Sennacherib's attacks against the Chaldean Merodach-baladan (21.1–10, 11–12, 13–17).

(b) Late seventh-century BCE redactors played a major role in shaping chs. 5–12; 14–23*; 27; 28–32; and 36–37, in order to support Josiah's reform (Sweeney 1996b: 57–59). The redactors created several texts: a reformulated form of ch. 7 (vv. 1–4, 10, 18–19, 21–25); 15.2b; 16.13–14; 20; 23.1a, 15–18; 27; 30.19–33; 32.1–8, 15–20); and a 'reworked form of 2 Kings 18–19 in Isaiah 36–37', plus 19.18–25 (p. 57).

(c) A late sixth-century BCE redaction included chs. 2–32*; 35–55; and 60–62 (Sweeney 1996b: 55–57). Obviously this redactional layer included what is often called 'Deutero-Isaiah' (chs. 40–55). But it also shaped the basic form of several major blocks of text (2.2–4.2; 24–27; 35; and 60–62), contributed the oracle regarding Babylon at the beginning of the oracles against nations in chs. 13–23, and reworked materials in chs. 36–39. And these sixth-century redactors actually composed several texts, including 2.2–4, 5; 4.2; 13.2–22; 14.1–2, 3–4a, 22–23; 24–26; 35; and 60–62 (p. 55). According to Sweeney, this layer of redaction was connected with the building of the second temple (p. 55).

(d) A fifth-century BCE redaction was responsible for the final form of the book, and these redactors themselves composed 1.1, 19–20, 27–28; 2.1; 4.3–6; 33; 34; 56–59; and 63–66 (Sweeney 1996b: 52–53). These fifth-century redactors did their work in the period of Ezra–Nehemiah (pp. 51–55). See also Sweeney's essay on 'The Book of Isaiah as Prophetic Torah' (1996a) for detailed arguments regarding the setting of the final form of the book, especially his arguments proposing that the final redaction of the book of Isaiah is closely connected to the program of Ezra (pp. 52–58).

Of at least equal importance in Sweeney's interpretive activity is his synchronically-conceptualized structure of Isaiah 1–66 as a whole. The book of Isaiah in its present form, according to Sweeney, has two large structural units (portrayed slightly differently in Sweeney 1988a and 1996b): (1) YHWH's plans for worldwide sovereignty at Zion (Isaiah 2–33 [1996b: 39–40]) and (2) realization of YHWH's worldwide sovereignty at Zion (Isaiah

34–66 [1996b: 39–40]). The larger subsections of these two macro-units are presented synchronically: chs. 2–4, 5–12, 13–27, 28–33 as subsections of the first macro-unit (pp. 39–40); and chs. 34–54 (34–39 + 40–54), 55–66 as subsections of the second macro-unit (1996b: 40; see Sweeney 1988a: 98 for a slightly different synchronic structural pattern for the book).

The introduction to Sweeney's 1988 monograph (pp. 1–9) exhibits the author's extensive commitment to the 'unity' of Isaiah 1–66, despite its complex redaction history. Early in the introduction, he contends that in the present form of the book of Isaiah, passages in chs. 1–39 must first of all be interpreted in the context of their function in the book as a whole, rather than as pre-Deutero-Isaianic texts (1988a: 5–6). Even if, from a redaction-historical perspective, some passages in Isaiah 1–39 pre-dated the material in Deutero-Isaiah, Deutero-Isaiah's understanding of them is 'not determined exclusively by their context in Isaiah 1–39, but in relation to the historical events and theological impulses of his contemporary situation' (1988a: 6). Indeed, everything in Isaiah 1–39 (or any other part of the book of Isaiah, for that matter) has ultimately received its present form, its place in the book, and its theology and function in relation to the final form of the book of Isaiah as a whole. The book as it now stands clearly shows that it has disrupted and rearranged earlier forms of the text. Isaiah 5.8–25 and 9.7–10.4 undoubtedly were once a collection of woe oracles and a collection of oracles containing a common refrain, but later they were broken up and recombined in a form that mixes the two collections (1988a: 7–8). And, as Sweeney would surely be ready to admit, there may well have been reformulations of earlier materials that are not evident to us at all.

It is important to observe that, most basically, Sweeney remains throughout a redaction critic. As far as I can see, all his rhetoric about the unity of Isaiah 1–66 is focused on Isaiah 1–66 as the final *redaction* of the book. That is why he insists that the 'synthetic stage' of interpretation (a synchronic inquiry concerning the structure of the book as a whole) must be followed by an 'analytic stage'—an inquiry involving the reconstruction of the *process* by which the book arrived at its final form (1988a: 7–8). A focus on redaction history is of course legitimate, but it is not shared by everyone—not even by all of the leading members of the Formation of the Book of Isaiah Seminar, especially Conrad, Darr, and Melugin.

2. *Isaiah 40–66*. Most of Sweeney's earlier methodological writing regarding the 'unity' of the book of Isaiah is to be found in works that focus especially around texts in 'Proto-Isaiah (PI)' (1988a, 1996b). But Sweeney has also produced essays that center on Isaiah 40–66. In 'The Reconceptualization of the Davidic Covenant' (1997b), Sweeney centers his attention on the 'redefinition' of the Davidic covenant in Isa. 55.3–5 and the significance of that redefinition for the book of Isaiah as a whole: 'Most importantly, it

redefines the concept of the Davidic covenant in that the Davidic king is no longer the primary recipient of YHWH's steadfast love, but the people who accept the covenant are now the recipients of that relationship instead' (1997b: 47). The text has already indicated that the Persian king Cyrus has been named by YHWH as 'messiah and Temple builder', so that a Davidide will no longer perform that function. Thus, the Persian empire (and Cyrus as its king) take over the role once occupied by Davidic kings, but the Davidic promise 'still stands secure'. Now, according to Isaiah 55, the Israelite people will function as the fulfillment of the Davidic promise (1997b: 47–48).

When one reads Isaiah 56–66 in connection with Isaiah 55, the former 'defines the requirements for those who will be included in YHWH's covenant as articulated in the book of Isaiah' (1997b: 49). 'Holding fast' (cf. 56.1–8) to the covenant entails 'Shabbat observance'—and converts and eunuchs, may participate in that observance (p. 49). Furthermore, the people are called upon to behave responsibly by 'releasing captives, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving shelter to the homeless and observing the Shabbat' (58.1–14). And those who 'turn from transgression' will share in the covenant (59.20–21). In addition, we find a promise of salvation for a 'reconstituted covenant community in Jerusalem' (chs. 60–62), with portrayal of a restored Jerusalem and a pilgrimage of nations proceeding to Jerusalem. In this context, covenant is given to the community that has been restored (61.8). Finally, Sweeney contends, chs. 63–66 argue that the 'reconstituted community' will consist of the righteous and that the unrighteous will be destroyed (quotations are from pp. 49–50).

It is important to recognize that, once again, Sweeney's understanding of the 'unity' of the book of Isaiah involves an examination of the final form of the book, and that this 'final form' is the last stage of the book's redaction history. Therefore (and this is of paramount importance for Sweeney's hermeneutic) the final stage of the book's redaction history has a *setting*, namely, that of the Persian empire in the post-exilic period (see Sweeney 1996b: 51–55).

3. *Isaiah 65–66 and Isaiah 1*. Another essay by Sweeney, 'Prophetic Exegesis in Isaiah 65–66' (1997a), focuses on material in Isaiah 40–66. Sweeney notes at the outset that scholars have already traced lexical correspondences between Isaiah 1 and 65–66, often proposing that they function as 'a literary envelope that ties the entire book together' (1997a: 455). Indeed, Sweeney rehearses in some detail the connections which bind chs. 1 and 65–66 (pp. 464–66). Sweeney notes, however, that relatively little has been done in the way of exploring connections between Isaiah 65–66 and material in First Isaiah, especially in terms of what 'would establish their role in relation to the book as a whole' (p. 455). Consequently, Sweeney undertakes the filling

of that gap (pp. 466-72). For instance, although Isa. 1.4 describes the people as 'rebellious seed' and 65.9 speaks of the 'seed' that God will 'bring out from Jacob', the connection between these two verses 'has little meaning unless it is considered in relation to Isa. 6.13', a text that employs 'the imagery of a burnt tree' for speaking about a 'holy seed' that will 'emerge from its stump to constitute the remnant of Israel' (p. 466). Sweeney adduces many connections between chs. 65-66 and the rest of 'First Isaiah'. Furthermore, he argues that the *kind* of intertextual connections found in Isaiah 65-66 reflect a *literary* (as opposed to oral) kind of prophecy (pp. 472-74). The writers of Isaiah 65-66 (and many of their predecessors) 'treated the earlier Isaianic writings as a source of revelation that stood at the basis of the creation of new prophecy in the final form of the book' (p. 474; emphasis mine).

B. Christopher R. Seitz

1. *Canonical Criticism*. Seitz has also contributed significantly to the movement concerned with the 'unity' of the book. He has been influenced by Clements and Rendtorff—and also by the form critical approach characteristic of the work of Westermann and Melugin on Deutero-Isaiah. If Sweeney's approach to the 'unity' of Isaiah can be said to be primarily redaction-historical in focus, Seitz's self-designated approach is 'canonical criticism' (1988: 105). The term 'canonical' expresses 'the role the Book of Isaiah plays as Scripture for the present community of faith...' (p. 105); however, historical criticism continues to be influential in Seitz's discussion. Seitz focuses his analysis around two questions: 'What is the source of the Book of Isaiah's unity?' and, 'How are we as readers to make sense of Isaiah as a sixty-six-chapter whole?' (1988: 105). It could perhaps be argued, says Seitz, that the *source* of the book's unity can be found outside the text in sociological developments, namely the work of disciples in creating three separate collections (First, Second, and Third Isaiah). *Internally*, however, the question of the coherence of the entire book is somewhat different: 'Are clues given to us as *readers* and *hearers* of the Word of God presented in Isaiah that enable us to make sense of its sixty-six-chapter shape?' (p. 106; emphasis mine). Seitz does not intend this primarily as a question about our subjective way(s) of reading the book. Instead, he is more concerned as to how the book itself leads its theologically interested readers to read it, i.e., how the literary form of the *whole book* presents itself, especially in the light of modern scholarship, which has tended to see the book as composed of three separate and independent entities (p. 106). One must not have the impression, however, that Seitz denies that there were various stages in the growth of the book. Indeed, like a farmhouse whose structure shows that it was added to over a period of time, so there is evidence that the book of Isaiah underwent growth. But the literary patterns in the book show organic relationships

among the various parts of the book, suggesting that earlier parts of the book were added *to*, rather than having been completely separate and independent blocks of text that were later juxtaposed (pp. 107–109).

Seitz challenges three tenets of modern historical research: (1) the claim that ‘the final shape of the book is accidental or the result of successive phases of supplementation, phases more independent than integrative’ (1988: 107); (2) the claim that ‘in the present shape of Isaiah we move in clear geographical terms from Judah to Babylon, and then back to Judah; and in clear temporal terms, from eighth through seventh to sixth centuries B.C.E.’ as we cross the boundary markers at chs. 39/40 and 55/56 (p. 107); and, (3) the claim that ‘internal division is necessitated because we move from a clear proto-Isaiah prophet to a Babylonian prophet to a Persian prophet’ (p. 107).

The text of the book of Isaiah, however, does not fit such patterns. For example, there is only one superscription for the entire book (1.1). Moreover, there is only one narrative reporting the commissioning of a prophet (Isaiah 6). In addition, the literary boundaries separating the supposed three parts of the book ‘are not marked in a special way’ (Seitz 1988: 109). Indeed, the references to the ‘former’ and ‘latter’ things seem designed to connect Isaiah 40–55 with messages and themes of earlier chapters, rather than to separate them from one another (p. 109). The language about the ‘servant’ in chs. 40–55 seems to be integrally related to talk about the ‘servants’ of the community in 56–66 and thus appears to connect 40–55 and 56–66 (p. 109). Isaiah 36–39 connects 1–39 with the material beginning in ch. 40, rather than rendering them independent from one another (pp. 110–11).

Furthermore, the temporal and geographical boundaries supposedly separating the book clearly into three distinct parts are not nearly as clear as is often thought. The opening chapter of the book is ‘comprehensive in scope’ (Seitz 1988: 113). We enter the book of Isaiah *in medias res*: ‘Cities have already fallen. Already only Zion is left. Already a people has revealed a choice for disobedience and lack of trust. Already we have moved well beyond the 8th century, and the threat of Assyrian invasion, and nearly into the 7th, when the threat had become a reality’ (p. 113). Zion was left ‘like a booth in a vineyard’ during the invasion reported in Isaiah 36–37. ‘In Isaiah 1’, says Seitz, ‘the entire literary, historical, and theological sweep of the whole Book of Isaiah is reviewed... We do not have to wait to cross 2 and 3 Isaiah to know the whole story’ (p. 113). Even the theme of the judgment of the nations connected with the future of Zion appears already in Isaiah ch. 2. Moreover, the focus on Zion by no means disappears when we cross over into Second Isaiah, as is clear in ch. 40 (‘comfort, comfort my people... speak to the heart of Jerusalem...’) or 49–55 or in 60–62 (pp. 114–16).

To sum up: in Isaiah 1–66 *chronos* does not disappear; different periods in Jerusalem’s history are clearly observable. But, as Seitz has made clear,

'*chronos* is subtly subverted' in the fact that 'we as readers are privileged to see the whole journey in a twinkling in the opening chapters' to prepare us for what lies ahead in the rest of the book (Seitz 1988: 122). Thus, the book as a whole hangs together.

2. *Commissioning the Prophet*. A second study by Seitz (1990) builds upon the one discussed above. Its focus is on the relationship of Isa. 40.1-8 to chs. 1-39 (especially ch. 6) on the one hand, and chs. 40-66 (especially chs. 40-48) on the other. Over against a well-known argument that Isaiah 6 and Isa. 40.1-8 are parallel texts because the former narrates the call of the eighth-century Isaiah while the latter represents the commissioning of the prophet whom we call Deutero-Isaiah, Seitz contends that Isa. 40.1-8 *presupposes* the commissioning of Isaiah in ch. 6, and serves to bring the ministry of Isaiah to a close (1990: 243-44). Far from functioning as a commissioning of an individual prophet (i.e., Deutero-Isaiah), 40.1-8 is a literary creation designed to make a sharp distinction between the time of Isaiah ('the former things') and the exilic period ('the new things'). Indeed, Isa. 40.1-8, though rooted in the language of a commissioning in YHWH's heavenly council (see 1 Kgs 22; Isa. 6), does not clearly depict the commissioning of an individual prophet (as in Isa. 6). Thus, Isaiah is not recommissioned in ch. 40, nor does the text describe the commissioning of a new individual prophet for a new time. There is, to be sure, a reactivating of the Isaianic commission in the time of the 'new things' (1990: 240-45). Language from 'First Isaiah' appears: 'fading flower' (Isa. 28.1, 4; 40.7), 'grass' (Isa. 37.26; 40.6-8). Moreover, in chs. 40-48, Cyrus replaces Assyria as YHWH's instrument. And the 'new things' that are soon to take place are announced beforehand to Zion (41.27), signifying that the earlier words of judgment (the 'former things' of the time of the prophet Isaiah) are to be replaced by new deeds in a new time (pp. 242-43). Furthermore, if one follows the MT in Isa. 40.6 ('and he said') instead of the LXX and Qumran ('and I said'), we cannot assume that we have a first-person objection of an individual prophet (cf., e.g., Isa. 6.5; Jer. 1.6). Instead, Seitz contends, Isaiah as a voice from the past is to be sharply differentiated from the 'new things' about which Isaiah 40-48 speaks. The third-person address ('and he said') refers to an unnamed member of the divine council and not to Isaiah or an individual prophet. Yet, even though there is no recommissioning of Isaiah (or another individual prophet), YHWH does again speak from the heavenly council as in the days of Isaiah. The word of YHWH, which 'rises up forever', will still work with power (Isa. 40.8; see 1990: 245).

The divine word then commissions the 'herald of good tidings' (40.9-11), but the 'herald of good tidings' is only one of the many to whom YHWH speaks in the texts beginning in Isaiah 40. Seitz has in mind especially the servant in chs. 40-48, and Zion in chs. 49-54. Nowhere in chs. 40-48 is

there a first-person prophetic speech until 48.16b and 49.1-6, Seitz claims (1990: 245-46). This is scarcely accidental, he argues: Isaiah 40–48 never departs from the concerns of traditional commissioning speeches. Indeed, he argues, chs. 40–48 throughout are preoccupied with the question, ‘Who will accept the call God has issued in 40.1-11?’ Will the servant Israel respond to the call (cf. 41.8; 42.1; 43.1; 44.1, 2; 45.4; 48.20)? No one steps up to the plate until 48.16. Moreover, Seitz contends, in 49.6 the one who spoke in 48.16 makes use of the conventions of commissioning language. At this point the ‘servant Israel’ (49.3) reports itself having been commissioned and, after having uttered an objection followed by a word of confidence (v. 4), narrates a more extensive scope of the servant’s call, i.e., to be a light to the nations (vv. 5-6; see p. 246).

3. *Melugin’s Response.* ‘Is it really true’, I ask, ‘that throughout chaps. 40–48 the question is, as Seitz claims, “Who will accept the call God has issued in Isa. 40.1-11?”’ (Melugin 1991: 23). The commissioning language in 40.1-11, I argue, is not ‘*clearly* followed in chs. 40–48 by concern about who will answer the call given in 40.1-11’ (p. 23). The text moves directly into disputation speech (40.12-31) and trial speech (41.1-7, 21-29; 48.12-15). Indeed, disputation/trial language and salvation speeches are far more abundant in chs. 40–48 than genres having to do with commissioning. Does the commissioning language in 40.1-8 (11) and 49.1-6 (13) serve as a frame for 40.12–48.22? Is 49.1-6 truly a response to the commissioning language as far back as 40.1-11? Moreover, ‘does the textual material in 40.12–48.22 relate to the commissioning language of 40.1-11? And does 40.12–48.22 move organically toward the servant’s acceptance of Yahweh’s commission in 49.1-6?’ (p. 23).

I answer these questions in the affirmative (1991: 24-30). However, the fact that 40.12–48.22 is a rather complex and baroque text does not mean that my positive answer is simple and free of ambiguity. My basic thesis is that ‘Isa. 41.1–42.13 builds upon Isa. 40.1-8 by emphasizing Israel as Yahweh’s commissioned servant (42.1-9)’ and that ‘a two-sided portrayal of Israel as recipient (41.8-20) and giver (42.1-9) of salvation corresponds with the double mission of the servant Israel in 49.1-6’ (p. 29). Yet, in 48.16, as Seitz has already pointed out, we encounter a human voice that says, ‘And now the Lord YHWH has sent me and his spirit’. So I ask about the identity of that voice (p. 30). Is it the same commissioned servant who speaks in 49.1-6 (there said to be *Israel*)? A comparison with analogous texts in Zechariah (Zech. 2.13, 15; 4.9; 6.15), I contend, might incline us to view the speaker in Isa. 48.16 as the prophet who produced most of Isaiah 40–48, rather than as the speaker who personifies Israel in 49.1-6. Furthermore, in Isa. 50.4-11, the servant’s voice is heard (obeyed) by some, but not by all (50.10). Might this possibly mean, I ask, ‘that the servant Israel and the prophetic speaker of the “new

things” [cf. Isa. 48.16] cannot be clearly distinguished?’ (1990: 30). Even though I believe that a strong argument can be made that the commissioning in Isa. 40.1-8 has to do ‘with the reactivating of Yahweh’s word for a new age rather than the commissioning of an individual prophet’, I still wonder whether there is at least a ‘hint of an “individual” prophetic call’ (p. 30).

4. *Further Discussion by Seitz.* My sense of ambiguity regarding the identity of the servant did not provoke a response by Seitz. Yet, he did expand upon his essay of 1990. In a new essay (Seitz 1996), he builds upon the argument of 1990 by contending that, beginning with Isaiah 40, the so-called ‘call’ of a prophet (often said to be the call of ‘Second Isaiah’) is not a call to a new prophet, nor even a call to Isaiah himself. Indeed, no new prophet, not even Isaiah, is depicted as speaking *here* (p. 231). Isaiah does speak ‘through the word he had spoken in a former time’ (p. 232), but in the new time of God’s forgiveness (Isa. 40.1-2), Isaiah does not speak as a ‘persona’ (p. 231). In Isa. 40–66, the prophetic message is not presented as the word of a particular individual prophet, but instead represents a kind of ‘canon-conscious’ prophetism in which the prophetic word can sometimes seem reminiscent of a particular prophet, e.g., when Isa. 49.1-6 reminds us of Jeremiah, who is called from the womb without *here* actually *becoming* Jeremiah the individual (p. 233). Yet, even the unfitness expressed in Isa. 49.4 is not an ‘unfitness for the [future] task, as with Jeremiah or Moses, or his uncleanness, as with Isaiah’ (in Isa. 6), but is instead ‘a perception that labor *already* spent has been for nought’ (p. 234; emphasis and bracketed word mine). Moreover, in Isa. 49.1-6, as opposed to Jeremiah 1, the prophet (or, at least, the prophet-like servant [my terminology]) ‘has an additional, not an initial, vocation’ in the call to be a light to the nations (p. 234).

Seitz’s 1996 essay is concerned not only with ‘unity’ in the book of Isaiah itself, but also with exploring how Isaiah 40–66 represents a larger ‘canon consciousness’ in the relationship of the last part of the book of Isaiah with other texts as a biblical canon was beginning to take shape. Without doubt, what Seitz observes about Isaiah 40–66 in this essay deserves further consideration.

C. Richard J. Clifford

Clifford (1993) joins with ‘Ackroyd, Childs, Clements, Rendtorff, Seitz, and Williamson’ (Clifford 1993: 1) in affirming the ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah; nevertheless, he finds certain problems that must be dealt with in articulating the redactional unity of the book (pp. 2-3). Three themes in Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 40–55), he says, appear ‘to stand outside the inherited Isaian tradition’ (p. 2): (a) the themes of exodus and conquest, (b) creation, and (c) Cyrus as YHWH’s king instead of the Davidic king that is prominent in Proto-Isaiah.

1. *Themes of Exodus and Conquest.* Given that references to the exodus in ‘the received Isaiah tradition’ (p. 3) are at best ‘illustrative’ or ‘supplemental’ (if indeed they belong to First Isaiah at all; see Isa. 4.5; 10.24; 11.1), and that the plentiful and structurally significant references appear in Deutero-Isaiah (40.1–11; 41.17–20; 42.10–43.8; 43.16–21; 46; 49.1–11; 51.9–11; 55.12–13; and ch. 35 as well), how can we say that Proto-Isaianic materials and Deutero-Isaianic texts display unity? The solution, as proposed by Clifford, is that Second Isaiah turns Zion into the *destination* of the Exodus journey (pp. 3–5). Clifford appears to contend that the Proto-Isaianic theme of Zion as the dwelling of YHWH and Israel is joined with the exodus language of Deutero-Isaiah by making Zion the goal of Israel’s journey from Babylon.

2. *Themes of Creation.* Language about creation is abundant in Deutero-Isaiah, but almost totally absent from the older Isaianic tradition, Clifford notes. Whether this difference between Proto- and Deutero-Isaiah is an argument against the unity of Isaiah 1–55 is difficult to determine, Clifford observes, because of the ways in which scholarship has defined the role of the creation story in Isaiah and because of relative neglect by biblical scholars of ancient Near Eastern understandings of creation (1993: 5).

Interpretive work on creation by von Rad (1966: 136), Rendtorff (1954: 12), Westermann (1984: 24), and Stuhlmeier (1970: 227) has encouraged us to view creation in terms of certain polarities, e.g., redemption and creation, myth and history (Clifford 1993: 5–8). Precisely how these recent interpretive works on creation support a view of Isaiah 1–55 as displaying unity is not clear. My best guess is that connecting creation with redemption and history would help us see unity between Proto-Isaiah’s interest in Israel’s salvation in history and Deutero-Isaiah’s concern with creation in terms of redemptive history. But I may have understood Clifford incorrectly.

Likewise, it seems unclear why more attention to ancient Near Eastern understandings of creation would help us to see *unity* in the relationship of Proto- and Deutero-Isaiah. Perhaps the connections ancient Near Eastern cultures saw between creation and the normal processes of human activity, such as exodus-events or land-taking in their mixture of ‘cosmogonic and historic language’ for depicting particular events (p. 10), suggest to Clifford a similarity between the focus on history in Proto-Isaiah (without specific use of *creation* language) and the interest in history in Deutero-Isaiah, where explicit creation language *is* employed. Clifford, however, may argue that I have not correctly understood his discussion on pp. 7–14.

3. *Cyrus as True King.* A third seeming discontinuity lies in the difference between Davidic messianic language in the early Isaiah tradition (Isaiah 9, 11), and its absence in Deutero-Isaiah. In Clifford’s judgment, this is not

really a fundamental discontinuity. The Davidic king in Proto-Isaiah is not of primary importance *in himself*, Clifford argues. The king's greatness is judged by his trust in God's power to protect Zion (Isa. 7). Indeed, in chs. 36–39, the Proto-Isaianic tradition contrasts the lack of faith on the part of Ahaz with firm faith on the part of Hezekiah. Nor is it completely surprising that the Davidic king's task is transferred to Israel as a whole in Isaiah 40–55 (see 55.3-5). Corresponding to the 'democratization' of the royal witnessing is the language about the servant of YHWH's task of bringing justice to the nations (1993: 14-15).

The true king in Deutero-Isaiah, according to Clifford, is Cyrus the Persian. Cyrus is the 'mirror-image' of the king of Assyria (Isa. 10.5-19). Both Cyrus and the Assyrian king are instruments of YHWH (10.7; 45.4). Although these two kings play different roles within the book of Isaiah, First and Second Isaiah are nonetheless held together, in part, by the book's designation of both the Assyrian king and Cyrus as YHWH's chosen instruments (see Clifford 1993: 14-15 for more details).

The correspondences mentioned above suggest a three-stage portrayal of history in Isaiah 40–55 (Clifford 1993: 15-16): (1) a period characterized by sinful behavior on Israel's part; (2) a time of punishment (by Assyria in 'small-scale' fashion, and by Babylon in a 'definitive' way); and, (3) a time of restoration for Israel ('small-scale under Hezekiah, definitive under Cyrus'). This three-stage portrayal of history unites the early Proto-Isaianic tradition and Deutero-Isaiah.

4. *Renewal of Zion*. Of the Deutero-Isaianic themes discussed above, only the theme of the creation of Zion is developed further in Trito-Isaiah (see Clifford 1993: 16). Trito-Isaiah opens with an affirmation of the necessity of the practice of justice and righteousness for entry into Zion (56.1-8). Indeed, some of the themes from the old Isaiah-tradition (e.g., 1.21-28; chs. 2; 28–33; 36–38) reappear in the portrayal of the 'judgment and glorification of Zion' in chs. 56–66 (p. 16). It is a glorification, says Clifford, that can come only 'through judgment and repentance' (p. 16).

Furthermore, the renewal of Zion (Isa. 65 and 66) is expressed by means of creation language. Yet, Trito-Isaiah's creation language differs in some ways from that of Deutero-Isaiah. Creation occurred, for Deutero-Isaiah, when YHWH defeated Babylon through Cyrus and brought Israel through the desert to Zion; whereas in Trito-Isaiah, creation is seen in terms of Zion's transformation when YHWH upholds the righteous and judges the unrighteous.

5. *Summary*. Clifford's essay is a journal article well worth reading and re-reading. I have deliberately placed it here, together with the works discussed above under Part I and Part II, because, alongside Sweeney and

his form-critical/redaction-historical approach to questions of ‘unity’, and Seitz’s tendency to emphasize the ‘canonical’ shape of the book, Clifford’s ‘traditio-historical’ focus applies to the *book* of Isaiah yet another already widely-known way of looking at biblical literature in a time before the ‘unity of Isaiah’ movement became truly widespread. Of course, as the totality of my essay will show, the approaches used by Sweeney, Seitz, and Clifford, however well known and commonly used, represent only *some* of the ways in which the ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah has come to be explored.

It is indeed my hope that, in my conceptualization of ‘beginnings’ and ‘unfolding’ of the ‘unity’ movement (see Parts I and II above), my discussion of a small number of scholars will be helpful in preparing my readers to explore in more detail a variety of approaches to the ‘unity’ of Isaiah, i.e., historical-critical approaches, synchronic approaches, reader-response approaches, and approaches that emphasize the reading of Isaiah holistically as Scripture. Although many of the works that I survey below are not limited to the category in which I place them, I hope that the value of exploring various approaches to the question of ‘unity’ outweighs the inevitable shortcomings of having to place individual scholarly works under headings which only partially characterize their approach.

III. *Historical Method and the ‘Unity’ of the Book of Isaiah*

A. *H.G.M. Williamson and the Role of Deutero-Isaiah in the Reshaping of the Earlier Isaianic Tradition*

Williamson’s *The Book Called Isaiah* (1994) explores the question of the ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah by reconstructing the history of the growth of the book. According to Williamson, Deutero-Isaiah does not represent a text that originated independent of Proto-Isaiah, but instead is the result of using some of the literature created by the eighth-century Isaiah to produce a new message for a later time.

1. *An Example of Williamson’s Analysis.* I will illustrate briefly Williamson’s much more detailed analysis of the text. In Isa. 8.1–4, for example, we are told that God instructed Isaiah to write ‘belonging to Maher-shalal-hash-baz’ on a tablet. Then, we are told, Isaiah procured witnesses to certify the document. Then follows a narration of the conception, birth, and naming of Maher-shalal-hash-baz, concluding with an indication that the significance of the child’s name has to do with the historical situation of the Syro-Ephraimite war (Williamson 1994: 95). Apparently, Williamson argues, it was the eighth-century Isaiah’s intent to record his message prior to the events to which the message refers (p. 97).

Williamson next (pp. 97–103) discusses Isaiah 8.16–18, which reads:

Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my disciples.
 I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob,
 and I will hope in him. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given
 me are signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on
 Mounts Zion. [trans: RSV]

Williamson argues that the ‘testimony’ and ‘teaching’ is best understood as a *written* document deposited among the eighth-century Isaiah’s disciples—in the context of ‘waiting’ and ‘hoping’ for a ‘more positive future, after the expected judgment had passed’ (1990: 99-100). Indeed, these ‘disciples’ were taught by the prophet and could act as ‘witnesses of the tying and sealing of the document’ concerning the future (p. 102). The length of the period is unspecified. Indeed, Williamson sees it as ‘open-ended’, for a time—probably in Isaiah’s own lifetime (says Williamson)—when Isaiah ‘would be able to unseal the document and thereby contribute to the establishment of a truer faith with all the positive potential which that would entail...’ (p. 103).

Isaiah 30.8 also refers to the writing down of the prophet’s message:

And now, go, write it before them on a tablet,
 and inscribe it in a book,
 that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever.

Williamson questions (1994: 103-106) why the eighth-century prophet needs to write his message down. Because ‘they are a rebellious people, lying sons, sons who will not hear the instruction of the Lord’ (v. 9), that’s why. It must be put in writing ‘so that it can stand as a witness for those who *in future* may be more willing to listen to it’ (p. 105; italics mine). Verse 8 is to be read ‘in some unspecified future time’, Williamson contends. Thus ‘it must imply a circle of readers who are more sympathetic to its contents than the present generation’ (p. 105).

All three passages (8.1-4; 8.16-18; 30.8-9) have a common purpose, connected with the activity of writing down the message. All three presuppose the rejection of the prophet’s words by the people in Isaiah’s time, and the consequent writing down of his words to function as a witness ‘in future, more hopeful days’ (Williamson 1994: 106)—days that will come in Isaiah’s lifetime, according to Williamson.

2. *Proclamation of the New Message of Salvation.* These three passages profoundly influenced Deutero-Isaiah in a new day (Williamson 1994: 106). ‘As the period of divine judgment by means of the exile wore on’, argues Williamson, ‘it may be proposed that *now* was the time of which Isaiah had written when the sealed document was to be opened and a *new* message of salvation, to which the earlier prophet had alluded, was to be proclaimed’ (p. 107; italics mine). In Isa. 50.4-9, the speaker hears and speaks as one who

is ‘taught’, i.e., as a disciple (see Isa. 8.16). In 54.3, the prophet anticipates the day in which ‘all your sons shall be taught by YHWH’, here to be taken as a reversal of 30.9, where ‘sons’ are deceitful and unwilling to ‘hear the Torah of YHWH’ (pp. 108–109). Furthermore, over against 8.17 and its statement that YHWH ‘hides his face from the house of Jacob’ because Jacob refuses to listen, the later prophet in 50.6 says that ‘I did not hide my face from shame and spitting’ when being open to God’s word leads to the servant’s rejection (p. 109). ‘We may conclude’, Williamson claims (p. 109), ‘that in his own person Deutero-Isaiah meets the conditions necessary to open the long-sealed book which bespeaks the end of God’s judgment...’ and ‘looks forward to the day when this will be true of all Zion’s children (54.13)’.

3. *Deutero-Isaiah’s Reinterpretation of the Eighth-Century Isaiah.* Deutero-Isaiah’s reinterpretation of the eighth-century Isaiah is not limited to Isaiah 40–55. Williamson argues that a number of passages in Isaiah 1–39 also stem from Deutero-Isaiah. Isaiah 12, for example, seems to reflect more affinity with Deutero-Isaiah than it does with the early Isaianic tradition. The hymnic language of Isaiah 12 has much in common with the ‘eschatological hymns of praise’ (see Westermann 1964: 119) that characterize Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 42.10–13; 44.23; 45.8; 48.20–21; 49.13; 51.3 (?); 52.9–10; 54.1–2; see Williamson 1994: 92–170). Moreover, the hymnic text in Isaiah 12 is employed as a major structural marker, much in the way hymns function in Deutero-Isaiah (40–55) (p. 120). Furthermore, the language and thought of Isaiah 12 are much like that of Deutero-Isaiah. ‘Thou didst comfort me’ (Isa. 12.1) reminds us of 40.1 (see also 49.13; 51.3, 12, 19; 52.9; 54.11). That ‘salvation’ takes place (12.2, 3) is reminiscent of Deutero-Isaiah (49.6, 8; 51.6, 8; 52.7, 10). The Deutero-Isaianic language about a time much like the exodus of old—uncharacteristic of the eighth-century Isaiah—seems to be present in Isa. 12.3 and its remembrance of Israelites’ having been provided with water in the wilderness (pp. 121–22). Does all this not suggest that Deutero-Isaiah might have been responsible for Isaiah 12 (p. 123)?

Isaiah 11.11–16 and its language about God’s ‘raising a standard to the nations in order to re-gather those of Israel and Judah in the dispersion’ displays not only the same vocabulary as the Deutero-Isaianic 49.22, but also shares with 49.22 a portrayal of God’s summoning of the nations as displaying a positive intent, rather than the negative treatment of the nations in other passages (Williamson 1994: 125). Indeed, Williamson’s rather detailed analysis of Isa. 11.11–16 leads him to conclude that this passage also was created by Deutero-Isaiah and placed at the end of chs. 6–11 (pp. 125–27, 141).

Williamson’s book discusses in detail the relationship of Deutero-Isaiah to the earlier Isaianic textual traditions. Williamson himself says (1994:

240-41) that his book as a whole makes three major proposals: (1) that Deutero-Isaiah was significantly influenced by the literary 'deposit of Isaiah of Jerusalem'; (2) that Deutero-Isaiah saw that earlier literature as a book sealed until judgment had taken place and the time of salvation had come (a time that Deutero-Isaiah saw himself to be proclaiming); and, (3) that Deutero-Isaiah combined 'a version of the earlier prophecies' with his own literary contribution, and edited them in a way that produced a single work—even though part of what Deutero-Isaiah contributed to the new text was sometimes pre-Deutero-Isaianic materials that were later than the time of Isaiah, such as 5.25-30 (see pp. 132, 134-36), 8.21-22 (pp. 136-41), and 2.2-4 (pp. 150-54), to mention only selected examples from Williamson's book.

In sum: Williamson's book is diachronic in character throughout. He focuses on what a later author-redactor (Deutero-Isaiah) did with earlier Isaianic tradition. Moreover, the 'unity' that Deutero-Isaiah produced is not the same as the Isaiah 40-66 that we now have, for it came prior to the inclusion of chs. 56-66 in the growing book. Yet, Williamson's argument that there is quite a bit of Deutero-Isaianic material in Isaiah 1-39 clearly goes against a view of 1-39 and 40-55 as separate literary works.

B. W.A.M. Beuken

Two essays by Beuken (1990; 1991a) are of particular importance among the numerous books and articles regarding the 'unity' of the book of Isaiah. 'The Main Theme of Isaiah: "The Servants of YHWH"' (1990) presents an argument that the three main parts of Isaiah—Proto-Isaiah, Deutero-Isaiah, and Trito-Isaiah—'were not composed independently of one another' as the book of Isaiah took its shape (1990: 67). Although Deutero-Isaiah almost always speaks of the 'servant of YHWH' in the singular, Trito-Isaiah speaks only in the plural of the 'servants of YHWH'. Yet, the plural expression begins in Deutero-Isaiah (54.17) before it comes to an end (Beuken 1990: 67). Furthermore, in 53.10, the servant is promised that 'he will see offspring' (lit., 'seed'), and in 54.17 that 'the city addressed in ch. 54 learns that its children will live as the servants of YHWH on their own heritage' (p. 66). Moreover, Deutero-Isaiah tells us that the 'offspring' or 'seed' is connected with 'righteous(ness)'. Israel is 'seed' of the patriarchs in Deutero-Isaiah (see 41.8; 43.5; 44.3; 45.19; 49.19), and 'righteousness' is associated with 'seed' (45.25; 48.18; see also 53.11-12; 54.17).

In the opening section of TI (Trito-Isaiah) (56.1-8), Beuken argues, 'righteousness' is proclaimed as the aim of God's activity on behalf of his 'servants' (56.1-2, 6-7). In contrast with Deutero-Isaiah, the servants are portrayed concretely as persons 'who honour the sabbath and hold on to the covenant, and who will therefore be gathered by God on his holy mountain and in his house of prayer' (1990: 68-69). Indeed, something new appears

here, namely, that ‘foreigners can join themselves to YHWH in order to serve him’ (p. 69). Beuken the literary historian shows here how Trito-Isaiah both builds upon Deutero-Isaiah and yet goes beyond Deutero-Isaiah.

The term ‘servants’ does not reappear in Trito-Isaiah until 63.17. Instead, in 56.9–59.21 a ‘contrast between the righteous and the godless’ emerges, and in 60.1–63.6 the place of the righteous in God’s purposes is developed (Beuken: 1990: 69). Despite the absence of direct reference to ‘servants’ in 56.9–63.6, the reader’s interest in the role of the servants does not disappear, Beuken contends. Through the concepts of ‘righteousness’ and ‘offspring/seed’, discussion of the servants is still taking place (p. 75).

Finally, in Isa. 63.7–64.11 the term ‘servants’ reappears in a penitential prayer that follows the vision of salvation for the righteous in chs. 60–62. In this penitential prayer, God is asked to ‘return for the sake of thy servants, the tribes of thy heritage’ (63.17). There is prayer for God’s return, because adversaries ‘have trampled the sanctuary’ (63.18). While this language in Trito-Isaiah is connected with Deutero-Isaiah’s speech about God’s returning to Zion (52.8), the divine return to Zion is not present in 63.17. Indeed, Beuken argues, in 63.17 ‘God must return not *because* those who pray consider themselves as his faithful servants, but *in order* that they really do serve him’ (1990: 75).

In Isaiah 65, which is presented as YHWH’s answer to the servants’ preceding complaint, God rejects the oppressors of the servants and bestows justice on them (Beuken 1990: 76–77). Trito-Isaiah elaborates on Deutero-Isaiah’s claim that salvation is available to all who seek YHWH (55.6), Beuken contends, by claiming that the people as a whole have not responded to that opportunity and that their destiny will be different from the fate of YHWH’s servants (see Isa. 65.13–16).

In ‘Isaiah Chapters lxx–lxxvi: Trito-Isaiah and the Closure of the Book of Isaiah’, Beuken (1991a) also views the book of Isaiah as a ‘unity’ achieved over time—as ‘the result of a complicated process in which extensive *Vorlagen* of the current three major parts [PI, DI, and TI] have been joined together by means of fundamental editing...’ (p. 204).

Yet, in this particular essay, Beuken’s focus is on the *end* of the book of Isaiah (chs. 65–66). More specifically, Beuken is concerned with whether these two chapters can be read as closing *both* TI and the book of Isaiah (BI) as a whole, whether we can draw a *sharp* line between the ways in which TI and BI come to a close, and whether DI also comes to a close in Isaiah 65–66.

TI’s main topic, the ‘servants of YHWH’ (see the discussion of Beuken 1990 above), comes to a close in Isa. 65.1–66.14 (Beuken 1991a: 205–207). Does this mean that TI ends with 66.14? No, claims Beuken. Even though 66.14 brings to a close TI’s discussion of its central theme of the servants of YHWH, Isa. 66.15–20a (+20b–21) represents a theophany that concludes

DI and TI (pp. 207-208). This theophanic 'coming' ('Surely, behold, YHWH will come in fire' [66.15]) reaches back intertextually to the prologue of DI ('Behold, the Lord YHWH will come with might' [40.10]), as well as to PI. In PI, 'fire' more frequently 'accompanies God's coming and embodies his judgment' than in either DI or TI (p. 208). Isaiah 66.16a extends the depiction of theophany: 'Surely, by fire will YHWH execute judgment, and by his sword, upon all flesh.' Through 'all flesh' (66.16, 23-24), which is closely tied to 'see my glory' (66.18), the TI epilogue reminds the reader of the prologue of DI: 'the glory of YHWH shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together' (40.5; p. 209). In sum: the depiction of the theophany of YHWH in 66.15-20a (+20b-21) 'brings TI, in his relationship with DI, to an end' (p. 213).

Isaiah 66.22-23 (24) represents the closure of the entire book of Isaiah (BI). First of all (see p. 213), the themes of the 'servants of YHWH' (66.7-14) and of the 'destiny of Israel and the nations at the theophany of YHWH' (66.15-20) are integrated through 66.23 (plus the later v. 24). The promise, 'as the new *heavens* and the new *earth* which I shall make will stand *before my face*, says YHWH, so shall your *offspring* and your *name* stand' (66.22; italics mine), makes use of language found elsewhere in DI and TI, according to Beuken (p. 215). Moreover, Beuken contends that 66.23 ('From new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before my face') 'forms an appropriate end for each of the three parts from which BI is constructed' (p. 215). There are verbal relations with TI's prologue (56.1-8), with DI's prologue (see 40.5), and with the beginning of PI (see 2.5). Thus, 66.23 'on the one hand forms the perspective of the expectations which have been aroused in the long progress of BI; on the other hand it fits well into the context and it concludes ch. lxvi' (p. 216). Verse 23 completes what is said in v. 16 about God's judgment on 'all flesh' by shifting to language about God's judgment on 'all flesh' coming to worship YHWH.

Second, however, Beuken contends that much of the verbal similarity between Isaiah 65-66 and Isaiah 1 'does not reach the level of allusion, let alone of quotation' because 'the correspondence involves neither sentences nor parts thereof nor word groups, but single words' and '[s]pecific segments of chs. lxv-lxvi do not share words with specific segments of ch. i, but borrow them from all over ch. i' (pp. 219-20). Whereas TI often refers to DI 'in a specific way,' the verbal correspondences between Isaiah 65-66 and Isaiah 1 are to be accounted for, to a significant extent, by the fact that 'both text complexes contain the same prophetic literary genres' within which 'the same themes occur', e.g., Israel's sinful behavior, abuse of the cult, God's listening to Israel and Israel's listening to God, different fates for the righteous and the wicked, and the acquisition of a new name (pp. 219-20).

Indeed, Beuken argues, the 'lexical agreement' of Isaiah 66 with Isaiah 1 achieves a level of 'deliberate reference to the opening chapters of the book'

only at the end of Isaiah 66 (vv. 22–24): (1) Just as Isaiah begins by summoning ‘heaven and earth’ to bear witness to Israel as ‘offspring of evildoers’ (1.2, 4), so it ends by proclaiming that ‘new heaven and new earth’ will participate in ‘everlasting existence with the purified “offspring” of those whom the text addresses in 66.22’ (Beuken 1991: 220). (2) In both 66.22–23 and 1.12, what is of importance is ‘the attitude in which Israel “comes before my face” ’ (p. 220). (3) The charge against those who ‘rebelled against me’ and the proclamation of their punishment correspond with one another (66.24; 1.2, 28). (4) Worship on new moon and sabbath as expressed in 66.23 ‘will be the reversal of Israel’s observing these feasts in older times’ (Isa. 1.31; see p. 221). (5) The unquenched fire (66.24) correlates with ‘the burning of the strong one and his works, “with none to quench them” ’ (Isa. 1.31; see p. 221).

To sum up: Beuken’s essays discussed here combine diachronic and synchronic analysis. The fact that Beuken distinguishes Proto-Isaiah, Deutero-Isaiah, and Trito-Isaiah shows that he considers the history of the growth of the book of Isaiah to be of exegetical importance. Yet, at the level of the final form of the text, the various parts of the book are made to relate to one another in a synchronic fashion.

C. Anthony J. Tomasino

Tomasino, in ‘Isaiah 1.1–2.4 and 63–66, and the Composition of the Isaianic Corpus’ (1993), makes a significant contribution to the study of the question of ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah, as examined with primary interest in the composition history of the book. Tomasino is concerned especially with questions regarding light that the beginning and ending of the book (1.1–2.4 and 63–66) can shed on the formation of the book.

Tomasino sees two factors that affect the relationship of Isa. 1.1–2.4 and chs. 63–66. First, both contain similar themes presented in the same order, and they share a common vocabulary. Second, ‘there is a more specific similarity between the structure of Isa. 1.2–31 and that of 66.1–24, based on the occurrence of the same vocabulary items at the beginning and end of each chapter, as well as some other features’ (1993: 83).

The first unit (Isa. 1.1–9), which really begins with v. 2, opens with a call to the heavens and the earth in a divine lawsuit against God’s people. The pairing of heavens and earth appears only at this point in Proto-Isaiah. While the ‘heaven/earth’ pairing appears in Deutero-Isaiah (in 49.13 and 51.16) and in Trito-Isaiah (in 65.17, 66.1, and 66.22), it is of significance to note that this word-pair ‘appears at the beginning of the first oracle in the book, in 1.2, and the beginning of the last oracle, in 66.1’ (Tomasino 1993: 84). Additional connections between 1.2–2.4 and 63.7–66.24 may be found. Father-son language in the first chapter ‘Sons I have reared...but they have rebelled against me’ (1.2) is paralleled in Trito-Isaiah’s closing

compositional unit (which begins with 63.7) by ‘For he said, “Surely, they are my people; sons who would not be false” ’ (63.8). Moreover, as in 1.2-9, the text in Isaiah 63 goes on to describe the people as rebellious, with the result that God turned against them (63.10). Additional ties between Isa. 1.2-9 and 63.7–64.11 can be found, with Israel likened to ox and donkey (1.3), and to horse and cattle (63.13-14), with Israel described as ‘sinful’ and laden with ‘iniquity’ (1.4), paralleled by a plea for God not to remember ‘iniquity’ forever (64.9), and with similarity in depicting the consequences of Israel’s sin: ‘Your land is a desolation, your cities burned with fire...’ (1.7); ‘Your holy cities have become a wilderness...’ (64.9-10). In both texts (1.2 [28]; 66.24) the verb ‘rebel’ appears (see Tomasino 1993: 85-86).

The second unit (Isa. 1.10-20) begins by condemning cultic practices unaccompanied with justice (‘What is the number of your sacrifices?’ [1.11-15]) and subsequently calls for purification (1.16-20). Only one other such text appears in the entire book of Isaiah, near its end (66.1-6). In Isaiah 66, first of all, the importance of the temple is questioned, with humility and trembling at YHWH’s word stressed instead (66.1-2). Then follows a contrast between cultic and human behavior: ‘he who kills an ox is as one who smites a man; one who sacrifices a lamb is as one who breaks a dog’s neck...’ (66.3). Tomasino believes that ‘(t)hese parallel condemnations of the cultus are the clearest indication of the relationship between 1.2–2.4 and 63.7–66.24’ (p. 87).

The third unit (Isa. 1.21-26) portrays Zion as a woman: ‘How she has become a harlot, the once-faithful city’ (1.21). In 66.7-13, Zion is also personified as a woman, but for a different end, namely, to portray God’s care for the devastated woman by describing her as a woman who gives birth immediately without the pangs of labor. Yet, in the structure of both of these passages, Tomasino argues (p. 88), the metaphor of the city of Zion as a woman appears in the same place: first comes rhetoric against the cultus (1.10-17; 66.3-4), then ‘threat of judgment’ (1.18-20; 66.5-6), and then the metaphor of Zion as a woman (1.21-26; 66.7-13).

Tomasino uses Zion-as-woman passages throughout the book of Isaiah as a whole to connect the uses of the metaphor in 1.21-26 and 66.7-13:

- Zion’s lament about having been abandoned by God in 49. 14 (see 49.14-21), when read in the context of Isaiah 1, may be understood as having occurred because of her rebellion (1.2, 28) and iniquity. (1.4; see also 50.1)
- However, in 54.1-8 we find a promise that Zion will bear many children without travail (54.1); her husband YHWH has forsaken her, but promises once again to have compassion (54.7-8). And in 62.1-5 Zion is assured that, though abandoned by God, she will once again be married as one in whom YHWH delights.

- Finally, ‘the process comes to its climax in Isa. 66.7-13’ (see Tomasino 1993: 89-90). In this passage, the ‘newly-married Zion is with child, bearing sons to replace those she had lost...’. (p. 90)

In the fourth unit (Isa. 1.27-31), both 1.27-31 and its parallel in 66.14-17 begin with ‘promises of blessing for Zion’ and ‘threats of judgment for YHWH’s enemies’ (1993: 90). In both, enemies will be punished by fire (1.31; 66.16), and both close in similar ways: ‘Both shall be consumed together’ (1.31); ‘They shall come to an end together’ (66.17). Moreover, in 1.31 we can see signs of trying to impose a similar structure on both 1.2-31 and 66.1-24, through repetition of ‘quench’ at the end of each text (1.31; 66.24). As a result, chs. 1 and 66 open with the same word-pair (‘heaven and earth’), and end with the word ‘quench’ in the description of the judgment on evil-doers (p. 91).

The fifth unit (Isa. 2.2-4) promises universal salvation—a time in which all nations of the world come to YHWH’s mountain in Jerusalem to ‘learn the word of YHWH’ (1993: 92). The author of Isaiah 63–66 knew that this promise was part of the beginning of Proto-Isaiah, Tomasino contends. Thus, in ch. 66, following the word of judgment in 66.14-17, vv. 18-23 present the nations as coming to see the divine glory (p. 92).

Was Isaiah 1 composed to relate to an already-existing 63–66? Or, was 63–66 composed to relate to an already-existing Isaiah 1? Or, were chs. 1 and 63–66 created by the same author? Tomasino inclines toward the first of these three, because:

- There are numerous linguistic connections between Isaiah 1 and the rest of Proto-Isaiah: e.g., ‘rebellious sons’ in 1.2 and 30.1, 9; reference to a vineyard in 1.8 and 5.1-6; reference to a remnant in 1.9 and 4.2; the mention of Sodom in 1.9-10 and 3.9; both the reference to ‘blood’ in 1.15 and the summons to ‘wash yourselves’ in 1.16 (and, in a different context, in 4.4). (1993: 93-94)
- Although there are indeed some verbal connections between Isaiah 1 and Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 40–55; see Tomasino 1993: 94), there are also major themes in Deutero-Isaiah that are absent in Isaiah 1: e.g., the critique of idolatry, sovereignty and foreknowledge on YHWH’s part, and the theme of ‘comfort’.

All of this suggests to Tomasino that Isaiah 1 was composed to introduce PI, and not by someone who knew Deutero-Isaiah (p. 94).

With what *does* Isaiah 63–66 have ‘literary affinities’ (Tomasino 1993: 94)? There do seem to be connections between chs. 63–66 and the rest of 56–66, for example: the concern with Zion/Jerusalem, with special attention to cultic behavior (cf. 56.3-7; 66.1-6, 21); similar depictions of the return (60.4-9; 66.18-20); and, the theme of nations seeing the divine glory

(62.1-5; 66.7-9). Yet, the more obvious verbal connection for 66.7-9 is not in *Trito-Isaiah* (62.1-5), but rather in *Deutero-Isaiah* (54.1-8). Furthermore, *Isaiah* 66.13 ('As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you...') seems to show that the author of ch. 66 knew *Deutero-Isaiah*. The creation theme in 65.17-25 and 66.22 also seems to show knowledge of *Deutero-Isaiah*, e.g., 40.25-28; 45.18 (pp. 94-95).

In summary, it appears to Tomasino that: (a) *Isaiah* 1 marks the beginning of *Proto-Isaiah*, and that the author of *Isaiah* 1 did not know *Deutero-Isaiah*; (b) yet, it seems that the composer of chs. 63-66 knew both ch. 1 and *Deutero-Isaiah*; and, (c) furthermore, that the structural parallelism between 1.2-2.4 and 63.7-66.24 suggests that the closing chapters of *Isaiah* were based on the opening of *Proto-Isaiah* (see p. 95).

Still, Tomasino sees a degree of 'misplacement' in the linguistic parallels between the beginning and ending of the book (1993: 91). The first unit as represented in *Isa.* 1.2-9 correspond with the beginning of ch. 66, in that both have the pairing of 'heaven' and 'earth'. Yet, the 'father-son' language in 1.2-9 appears, not in ch. 66, but in 63.7-64.11 (p. 91). Moreover, ch. 65 'breaks up the thematic parallelism between 1.2-2.4 and 63.7-66.24' (p. 96). So, Tomasino suggests that the original beginning and ending of the book did not have ch. 65, but were constituted by 1.2-2.4 and 63.7-64.12 + 66.1-21 (or, perhaps, vv. 1-21 + 23). This original form of the beginning and ending of the book was concerned with the restoration of the temple and the cult, but in a way that emphasized righteousness and humility as more important than ritual in itself. Later, perhaps after the temple had been rebuilt, a second redactor added ch. 65 (and also 66.22-24 [or 66.22,24]) in order to move the *Isaianic* book from a focus on the restoration of the temple (together with righteousness and humility) to 'a more general concern for the restoration of Israel' (pp. 96-97). This expanded form of 63.7-66.24 has considerable linguistic parallels with ch. 1, but it also includes textual materials from elsewhere (see the citation of 11.6 in 65.25).

Tomasino proposes that, in the time of this second redactor, a secondary introduction had already been placed at 2.1, so that 2.2-4 became separated from ch. 1. Because this secondary redactional addition significantly reconfigured the boundaries of the first section of *Isaiah* (remaking it as 1.2-21 instead of 1.2-2.4), the new ending of the first unit was a word of judgment. To match the word of judgment at the close of the newly reconfigured introduction (1.2-31), 66.24 was added as a new end of the book of *Isaiah*, so that both the book's first and last units would close with language of judgment (p. 97).

Tomasino's redaction-historical reconstruction is in some ways quite speculative. For vigorous criticism of the speculative character of many redaction-historical endeavors, see Melugin 2003: 52-58. However, Toma-

sino's historical-reconstructive hypothesis is not aimed primarily at disassembling the final form of the text. Rather, it is a redaction-historical essay whose primary concern, like that of Sweeney, Williamson, and Beuken, is for the 'unity' of the book of Isaiah as a whole.

D. John D.W. Watts

In the mid-1980s, Watts made a significant contribution to the question of the 'unity' of the book of Isaiah in a two-volume commentary in the Word Biblical Commentary series: on chs. 1–33 (1985), and on chs. 34–66 (1987). Watts treats the sixty-six-chapter book as 'a single literary whole', 'a kind of drama, divided into acts and scenes, each of which relates to a generation of Israel's life from the mid-8th century to the mid-5th century B.C.' (1987: 71; see also Watts 1985: xxvii–xxxiv, xli–l). As Watts says (1987: 72): 'The first six acts of the Vision (chs. 1–39) are dominated by the curse (see ch. 6). The last six (chs. 40–66) stand under the gracious promise of comfort and blessing (40.1–9)'. To be more precise:

The first five acts (chaps. 1–33) are set against the background of Assyria's rise and rule. The sixth (chaps. 34–39) depicts Babylon's dominance. The seventh (40.1–44.23) is set in the last years of Babylon's rule, already under the influence of Cyrus's approach. The eighth to the twelfth acts are set against a Persian background in which the books of Ezra–Nehemiah are a welcome companion and aid to understanding. (1987: 72)

In this commentary, the entire book of Isaiah is understood as a unity, i.e., a single Vision structured in twelve scenes. Even though it embraces an amazing sweep of history from the 8th century down to the 5th, the book is nonetheless a literary whole. On the other hand, Watts sees the text's referential character as a chronologically-sequential and historically-knowledgeable presentation of reality (see Watts 1985: xxxii–xxxiv for a discussion of materials available to the writer of Isaiah 1–66). Although many passages in the book of Isaiah do not represent *explicitly* the historical reality about which they speak, Watts believes that it is possible for biblical scholars to clarify historical realities to which particular texts in Isaiah point, even though the Isaianic text itself has spoken much less explicitly. As we shall see below, Miscall (1993: 10–11), while sharing Watts's assumptions about Isaiah's having been formulated in the 5th century as a unified whole, does not embrace Watts's apparent conviction that we can reconstruct from such poetic texts so much historical information.

A few examples from Watts's work show how he connects particular texts in the book of Isaiah with historical reality. Watts begins his discussion of Isaiah 40–66 by noting that 40.1–44.23 present YHWH's 'servant' as 'Jacob/Israel' who are in exile to Babylon, whereas *Cyrus* is the one identified as 'servant' in 44.24–48.22 (Watts 1987: 68). Indeed, in 40.1–44.23,

the plan of YHWH is presented as ‘tak[ing] shape’ (1987: 68). Cyrus is depicted as the ruler for YHWH (cf. 41.1-4), and Israel is designated as ‘servant, messenger, and witness’ for YHWH (cf. 41.8-13, 14-16; 43.8-13. See 1987: 68). Yet, ‘Jacob/Israel’ is not the only entity in 40.1–44.23 to whom the term ‘servant’ points. In 42.1-9 the ‘servant’ is Cyrus—chosen to be ‘God’s agent’ to make known the verdict of the heavenly court to ‘the nations, the land, and the coastlands’ (1987: 119). He is also ‘called, strengthened, kept, and appointed...as covenant (for) people and light (for) nations’ as the emperor who is ‘responsible for government, justice, and order for the peoples under his rule’. The servant (Cyrus) also has a role in ‘opening blind eyes and releasing prisoners’ (1987: 119).

Perhaps Isa. 40.1–44.23 (Act VII) is designated to reflect the period of ‘King Jehoiachin (ca. 586–540 B.C.)’. Watts sees Act VII as the portrayal of the time when ‘Yahweh’s plan takes shape’ (Watts 1987: 68), i.e., of the time when Cyrus’s name is but ‘*whispered* in all the world’s seats of power’ (p. 102; emphasis mine), rather than a depiction of the consequences of Cyrus’s military conquests. Perhaps Watts identifies 44.24–48.22 (Act VIII) as reflecting the time of Cyrus and Cambyses (539–522) because ‘the promise of a deliverer from the east/north has been fulfilled’, in that Cyrus is now understood as already having conquered Babylon, and ‘succeeding scenes interpret his role in restoring Jerusalem [cf. 44.28; 45.13], building the temple [cf. 44.28; 45.13], and freeing the captives’ (cf. 48.20-21; p. 147). Moreover, Watts argues, in Act VIII, especially in ch. 46, that ‘the humiliation of having idols moved through the streets on the way back to their temples and of having Babylon taken over by a foreign power is pictured in detail’ (p. 147). Perhaps this also is reason to consider 44.24–48.22 as depicting a ‘generation’ later than the time portrayed in 40.1–44.23 (see the ‘generation’ headings on pp. 68 and 147). Even in 48.16b, ‘someone, ostensibly a leader, claims that *Yahweh has sent* him and *his spirit*’ (p. 178; emphasis Watts’s). Cyrus, who has been given YHWH’s spirit (42.1), ‘empowers and directs this leader’, a leader whom Watts identifies as Sheshbazzar (cf. Ezra 1.2-8).

In Isa. 49, 1–52.12 (Act IX), a still later time is represented (Cambyses/Darius, 522–ca. 518; see the ‘generation’ heading on p. 180). In ch. 49, an utterance of servant Israel (vv. 1-4; see p. 185) is followed by what Watts alleges to be the speech of a *second* servant (vv. 5-6, 8-12)—a servant whom Watts identifies as Darius (1987: 186). Furthermore, in Isa. 50.4-9, ‘a beleaguered teacher’, whom Watts is inclined to identify as Zerubbabel, expresses his determination to be faithful. In vv. 10-11 (a voice whom Watts identifies as Darius), ‘Zerubbabel’ seems to be defended by ‘Darius’ (p. 197). And Zerubbabel ‘may well be’ the servant in Isa. 52.13–53.12 (p. 201; see also pp. 229-32).

IV. 'Unity' in Terms of Synchronic Interpretation

As my discussion above indicates, the trend which again and again concerns itself with questions as to the 'unity' of the book of Isaiah has led to interpretive activities that are in many respects synchronic. That this is the case, however, does not necessarily lead to an exegetical paradigm that is purely, or even primarily, synchronic. Clements's approach to Isaiah is primarily diachronic; his approach to the 'unity' of the book is articulated primarily through an attempt to reconstruct the growth of the book as it grew over several centuries. Sweeney, as I argue above, is fundamentally a redaction historian. The unity of Isaiah 1–66 as a whole is understood by him as the work of a 'final redactor' in a particular historical context. There are now, however, some interpreters of the book of Isaiah who interpret the book primarily, if not almost exclusively, in synchronic terms.

A. *Peter Miscall*

Miscall (1993) presents a study of the book of Isaiah that is thoroughly holistic and synchronic. Like Sweeney and Watts, Miscall believes that Isaiah 1–66 is a unified work composed in the post-exilic period (probably the 5th century). Although Miscall considers it likely that the post-exilic authors of the book used quite a bit of earlier textual material, some of which originated as early as the eighth century, he does not try to isolate it or identify whatever setting(s) it might have had prior to its usage in Isaiah 1–66 as a whole. Indeed, Miscall argues, Isaiah 1–39 is a post-exilic portrayal of the pre-exilic period, i.e., a text which, in its presentation of pre-exilic times, informs us more about 'the fears and the hopes' of communities in the post-exilic period than about the events and the people of the eighth and seventh centuries (p. 12). Likewise, Isaiah 40–66, as part of a fifth-century sixty-six chapter book, is a representation and reinterpretation of the exilic and early post-exilic time as it was understood by fifth-century shapers of Isaiah 1–66. Consequently, Miscall interprets Isaiah 1–66 as a *vision*—a vision in the sense that it presents to the reader a world that is to be 'imagined' rather than a world as it really was. Miscall steadfastly refuses to make 'the world as it really was' the object of his attention; his eye is fixed instead on the world that the text of the present form of the book imagines.

Miscall retains the well-known divisions between 1–39 and 40–66, but only for focusing on the differences in how the text, read synchronically, presents its vision in various parts of the book (1993: 19). According to Miscall, chapters 1–39 present in some detail presumed persons and events 'from the beginning of the Syro-Ephraimite crisis in Ahaz's reign to Sennacherib's invasion during Hezekiah's' (p. 19). There are many proper names and other details from the period, e.g., Judah, Israel (7.1), Damascus (17.1),

Assyria (20.1; 36–37), Egypt (36.6), and Babylon (ch. 39); and Judean officials are called by name in 8.1–3, 22.15–25, and 36.1–37.2. Isaiah 40–66, by contrast, ‘are set in the time of exile and return, but it is impossible to be more specific’ (p. 19). Isaiah 40–66 is ‘more consistently visionary and metaphorical’ than 1–39 (p. 19). Names used in 40–66 tend to be ‘traditional and specific rather than personal and individual’ (p. 19). The names Jacob, Israel, Sarah, Abraham, and Moses point to ‘the people or traditional figures’, rather than to ‘historical individuals of the postexilic period’ (p. 19). Even though Cyrus is mentioned by name, his country, Persia, is not. ‘In Isaiah’, Miscall concludes, ‘he is a figure somewhere between history and vision’ (p. 19). Furthermore, in Isaiah 40–55 we have no mention of the historical kingdom of Babylon or its king, but rather the ‘virgin daughter Babylon’ (47.1; see p. 19). Nor do we find the names of Nebuchadnezzar, Zerubbabel, Ezra, or Nehemiah (p. 97). This story of the particular people Israel, according to Miscall, is treated as a part of the ‘larger story of all peoples in the entire world’ (p. 101). The lack of specificity of referentiality in Isaiah 40–66, according to Miscall, is related to the ‘double aspect’ of Isaiah 40–66: ‘Proclamations and descriptions of Israel’s fortunes are meant for this particular people and, at the same time, are symbols and allegories of the fortunes of others’ (p. 101). Simply reading Miscall’s discussions of the so-called ‘servant songs’ will show how strongly inclined he is toward reading the book of Isaiah in terms of plurality of meaning (see p. 124).

B. Robert H. O’Connell

O’Connell (1994) also proposes a way of reading the book of Isaiah that is thoroughly synchronic in character. He understands the entire sixty-six chapter book as a ‘covenant disputation’ that is composed of seven major rhetorical units which are remarkably similar in structure: (1) 1.1–2.5; (2) 2.6–22; (3) 3.1–4.1; (4) 4.2–12.6; (5) 13.1–39.8; (6) 40.1–54.17; (7) 55.1–66.24 (for the structure of the various units, see pp. 43–44, 59–60, 70–71, 82–84, 111–12, 152–54, and 219). Each of the seven, according to O’Connell, consists of a central ‘axis’, surrounded by several blocks of text (called ‘tiers’) arranged concentrically in easily identifiable patterns of repetition (see O’Connell: 22, 23). Indeed, O’Connell argues, the similarity of structure among the seven units is a major constitutive element of our being able to see Isaiah as a unified book. Moreover, he contends, there is progression from one rhetorical unit to the next. The first unit (1.1–2.5) centers on ‘an appeal for covenant reconciliation’ (p. 20). The second and third units represent ‘two structurally analogous accusatory threats of judgment’ (p. 20). Unit two (2.6–22) condemns ‘cultic sins’, and unit three (3.1–4.1) criticizes ‘social crimes’, while the fourth (4.2–12.6) and the fifth (13.1–39.8) are concerned with ‘the punishment and restoration of Zion and the nations’ (p. 20). The sixth (chs. 40–54) represents ‘an exoneration of

YHWH', and the seventh (chs. 55–66) is a 'final ultimatum', which appeals once more for 'covenant reconciliation' (p. 20).

As I indicated above, O'Connell's structure for each of the seven major units in the book of Isaiah consists of blocks of text called 'tiers' (indicated by double letters, e.g., AA, BB, CC, DD) arranged concentrically around an 'axis.' In addition, the arrangement of 'tiers' can be interrupted by what O'Connell calls an 'inset'. For example, O'Connell conceptualizes the structure of the first unit (Isa. 1.1–2.5) as indicated below (pp. 43–44):

Superscription (1.1)

INSET i: Summons to dispute [against Israel]: Call of covenant witnesses (1.2a)

AA Accusation: Declaration of violations (1.2b–3)

AA i Accusation: Declaration of violations (1.4)

INSET ii: Appeal: Motivation/Accusation: Rhetorical interrogation (1.5a)

BB Appeal: Motivation: Description of present distresses [continued destruction] (1.5b–6)

BB i Appeal: Motivation: Description of present distresses [near total destruction] (1.7–9)

INSET iii: Summons to dispute [against Zion]. Call to attention of accused (1.10)

AA ii Accusation: Rejection of ritual compensation (1.11–15)

AXIS: [Hortatory pivot]: Appeal: Condition: Terms of reinstatement (1.16–17)

CC ? Appeal: appeal proper (1.18a)

CC ? Appeal: Motivation: Renewal of benefits (1.18–19)

BB ii Threat: Total destruction (1.20)

INSET iv: Program for Zion's judgment and restoration [concentric] (1.21–27)

[AA*] Accusation: declaration of violations (1.21–23)

[BB*] Threat: Partial destruction (1.24–25)

[CC*] Appeal: Motivation: Renewal of benefits (1.26–27)

BB iii Threat: total destruction (1.28–31)

Resumptive superscription (2.1)

CC i? Appeal: Motivation: Renewal of benefits [chiasmus]

B. Appeal: Appeal proper (2.3a)

CC ii? Appeal: Motivation: Renewal of benefits (2.3b–4)

C. Appeal: Appeal proper (2.5)

The remainder of the major rhetorical units of the book of Isaiah (units 2–7) also reflect 'tiers' arranged concentrically around an 'axis'. And, in each of them, the tiers may be interrupted by what O'Connell calls 'insets.' Yet, in each of the major units O'Connell uses different double letters to designate the 'tiers'. In Unit 1 (Isa. 1.1–2.5) the 'tiers' are designated by AA, BB, and CC., whereas in Unit 2 (Isa. 2.6–22), they are designated by DD and EE, in Unit 3 (Isa. 3.1–4.1) by FF and GG, in Unit 4 (Isa. 4.2–12.6) by HH,

II, JJ, KK, LL, and MM, in Unit 5 (Isa. 13.1–39.8) by NN, OO, PP, QQ, RR, and SS, in Unit 6 (Isa. 40.1–54.17) by TT and UU, and in Unit 7 (Isa. 55.1–66.24) by VV, WW, XX, and YY.

O'Connell's structure for the two major units found in Isaiah 40–66 are remarkably similar to the five units which he postulates for Isaiah 1–39. Notice, for example, the similarities between unit 1 (Isa. 1.1–2.5), as indicated above, and unit 6 (Isa. 40–54), as indicated immediately below (see O'Connell 1994: 152):

- TT Consolations of and disputations against Jerusalem/Zion//Jacob/Israel (40.1–43.13)
- UU Salvation for YHWH's servant/elect/people by trial against Babylon before all nations (43.14–15)
- TT i Consolations of and disputations against Jacob/Israel// Jerusalem/Judah/Zion (43.16–46.13)
- UU i Trial against Babylon concerning YHWH's power in salvation for his people/inheritance (47.1–7)
- AXIS: Taunt song against the unholy city [Babylon/Zion] (47.8–15)
- TT ii Disputation against Jacob/Israel//Judah/holy city (48.1–13)
- UU ii Salvation from Babylon for YHWH's servant Jacob/Israel and the nations through YHWH's elect/servant (48.14–22)
- TT iii Disputation against and consolation of Zion/Jerusalem//Jacob because of YHWH's servant (49.1–54.17)

O'Connell postulates a similarity of structure in Isaiah 54–66 to the structures throughout the entire book of Isaiah (see p. 219 for O'Connell's representation of the structure of Isaiah 54–66).

O'Connell's understanding of the structure of the book of Isaiah is too complex to represent adequately here. I profoundly regret this, for I consider it a scholarly work well worth carefully digesting. O'Connell provides a formalist analysis that is indeed controversial: some will perhaps be persuaded; some will be skeptical as to whether O'Connell has discovered, as opposed to having invented, the structure that he proposes; yet others (reader-response types) may well applaud it because they see his proposals as fruitful insights created by an extremely sophisticated reader.

C. Gregory Polan, Edwin Webster, Mark Biddle, and Chris Franke

Four scholars approached relatively small parts of Isaiah 40–66 in a synchronic fashion.

1. *Polan.* Polan, whose book is limited to Isaiah 56–59, interprets the text in synchronic fashion in a manner similar to the 'rhetorical criticism' as practiced by Muilenburg (see Polan 1986: 3–6 for a discussion of Muilenburg). Like Muilenburg, Polan focuses to a large extent on word repetition,

and frequently uses phenomena such as word repetition to divide the text into what he, like Muilenburg, calls ‘strophes’. An ‘overview of the literary unit’ typically establishes the limits of the literary unit by (a) looking for ‘repeated phrases and vocabulary, inclusions, distant parallelism, and examples of recurring literary techniques’; and by (b) determining the ‘strophes’ of the literary unit (a strophe, as Muilenburg defines it, is ‘a series of bicola or tricola with a particular beginning and a particular close, possessing unity of thought, structure, and style’ (Polan 1986: 36–37). Next, Polan undertakes a ‘close reading’ of each strophe, looking, e.g., for ‘various techniques of assonance, various kinds of parallelism, patterns of repetition, metric stability or change, and other poetic devices as will work together to deepen the interpretation already begun in the establishment of the strophes’ (p. 37). Finally, ‘[f]indings from an *overview* and *close reading* are brought to bear on the discernment of a literary device or pattern for a reading of the unit’ (p. 38; emphasis mine). Various ways in which patterns can be discerned include: concentric designs at the beginning and the closing of a literary unit; balanced parallelism; chiasm; employment of imagery; antithesis; and wordplay (p. 39). Patterns will differ from text to text, for variety in formulation is characteristic of Hebrew poetry.

The richness of Polan’s work must not be overlooked. In the first ‘literary unit’ of Isaiah 56–59 (56.1–8), Polan points to the recurrence of the divine name (vv. 1a, 3a, 3b, 4a, 6a, 6b, 8a). Polan argues that the repetition of the name reminds us that it is *God’s* word that is given, i.e., ‘the literary unit is framed by the affirmation that this message comes from the Lord’ (1986: 44). Other repetitions of the divine name also express unity between God and people (p. 45). Moreover, there is a rhetorical contrast between a foreigner’s being ‘joined’ to YHWH and YHWH’s ‘separating’ the foreigner from God’s people (v. 3). Rhetoric about foreigners’ ‘joining’ themselves to YHWH appears again in v. 6, further explicated by three infinitives: ‘to minister to him’, ‘to love the name of YHWH’, and ‘to be his servants’. Polan also points to other repetitions in 56.1–8: ‘keep justice’ (v. 1), ‘keeps the sabbath...and keeps his hand from doing any evil’ (v. 2; cf. also vv. 4, 6); ‘does’ righteousness (v. 1a), ‘does’ this (v. 2a), ‘from doing any evil’ (v. 2b); the person who ‘holds fast’ (v. 2a), the eunuch who ‘holds fast’ to YHWH’s covenant (v. 4c), and those who ‘hold fast’ to YHWH’s covenant (v. 6c). In addition, Polan points out the ways in which these various word-repetitions interpenetrate with one another (pp. 46–47).

Polan’s overview of 56.1–8, his close readings of this literary unit and of the other units in Isaiah 56–59, and his applications of literary devices to any of these texts all hold further treats for readers. I hope that this taste of Polan’s work will whet the appetite and induce readers to devour the full richness of what Polan contributes to a discussion of literary unity in the book of Isaiah.

2. *Webster*. Webster has contributed rhetorical studies of Isaiah 66 (1986) and Isaiah 63–65 (1990). Webster's studies, like the work of Polan, deal with the text synchronically as a rhetorical unity—both within each of the texts he interprets and also in connection with the larger book of Isaiah (1986: 96, 99, 103; 1990: 92). Webster's work presents complex, sophisticated literary analyses. These essays *must* not go unread. They are not for rhetorical critics alone; form and redaction critics can profit greatly from reading them carefully.

3. *Biddle*. Biddle has formulated a study of Isa. 47.1-15 and 57.6-13 as 'structural counterparts' (1996). Biddle explores ways in which several passages in Isaiah—especially 47.1-15 and 57.6-13—are interrelated. While he expresses respect for both diachronic and synchronic approaches (p. 126), for the most part he helps us see synchronic relationships more than diachronic interconnections in his important and well-argued essay. I would underline the importance of what he has to say.

4. *Franke*. Franke has produced two stimulating synchronic analyses of texts in Isaiah (1994 and 1996). In her 1996 article, Franke discusses relationships between the oracle against Babylon in Isaiah 14 and the taunt against Babylon in Isaiah 47. She sees Isaiah 14 as a parody of a lament, with alterations of lament forms that reverse the reader's expectations. Isaiah 47 also exhibits elements of a lament – a lament that features Babylon's descent from ruler to slave. In both texts, Babylon is denied a throne. Moreover, faults rather than achievements are emphasized, and their boastful pretensions are satirized. Yet, Isaiah 47 is not clearly a parody of a lament in the way that Isaiah 14 is.

Franke's *Isaiah 46, 47, and 48: A New Literary-Critical Reading* presents a synchronic literary-critical reading of these chapters. Indeed, she stands in the tradition of rhetorical criticism which Muilenburg initiated, paying attention to 'what is atypical, original, or unique' in the text, with particular attention to 'determining bicola and tricola, and clusters of bicola and tricola', i.e., stanzas or strophes (p. 13). Andersen and Freedman (1980: 60-61) further develop Muilenburg's investigation of literary structure, discussing not only large units within the text but also the workings of poetry 'on the level of word and line'. And Franke moves in this direction also. She begins the study of each of the three chapters in Isaiah with a 'transliteration of the text, indicating line and section (or strophic) divisions, and a schematic outline of syllable and stress count' (p. 14). Then she presents her own translation of the text, followed by notes regarding grammar, style, and vocabulary, as well as attention to the 'kinds of devices' used by the author at the level of the line. Finally, she discusses the microstructure and the macrostructure of the poem (pp. 14-15).

Rejecting form criticism's attempt to distinguish diachronically between different genres and to assign each genre within the text to its *Sitz im Leben* and proper stage within the history of the growth of the text, Franke chooses instead a synchronic approach, i.e., an examination of 'the surface structure of the text' as it appears in the Masoretic Text (p. 19). And her synchronic approach is a combination of the classic rhetorical-critical approach with which we are already familiar (e.g., in Muilenburg, Polan, and Webster) and the kind of poetic analysis we find in Andersen and Freedman. For example, her analysis of the structure of Isaiah 46 eschews form critics' arguments that the text consists of several independent units (p. 72-82, esp. p. 82). Instead, she looks for the structure of the text as it presently stands. She divides the poem into five sections (I = vv. 1-2; II = 3-4; III = 5-7; IV = 8-11; V = 12-13), each of which (at a microstructural level) has its own distinctive rhetorical patterns. But, at a macrostructural level, the entire five-part poem fits together as an artistic whole. Indeed, Franke argues (pp. 97-99), the whole 'is built upon a complicated interweaving of contrasts and comparisons on several levels' (p. 97): If one considers Bel/Nebo versus YHWH, the former must be carried, while YHWH carries. With regard to Bel/Nebo and Jacob/Israel, both are 'carried, borne up', but with Bel/Nebo it is the animals who carry, while Jacob/Israel are carried by their God (see p. 98). Bel/Nebo and idol-worshippers are portrayed as 'bowing down, going down' (p. 98). The gods 'bow down as heavy burdens on the animals' and 'go down into exile', and the worshippers 'fall down in fruitless worship to impotent idols' (p. 98). For Franke's comparison of YHWH with idols and YHWH with idol-makers, see (pp. 98-99).

5. *Summary.* Whether or not the approaches of rhetorical critics such as Polan, Webster, and Franke (Biddle is less easy to classify) are utterly incompatible with form criticism is an interesting question. Certainly, form criticism as classically practiced, and the work of rhetorical critics such as these three, move in directions that seem to be in large measure incompatible. But I wonder if form criticism—reconceptualized to focus especially on the text as it presently exists, rather than to draw premature conclusions about the original separateness of various 'units'—could make common cause with rhetorical criticism by exploring the interrelationship of typicalities of speech and unique aspects of literary expression *within* entire texts in their present literary form (see Knierim 1973: 461; Melugin 1974; Melugin 1996a: 282-95; Melugin 2003: 46-52).

V. 'Unity' and Reader Response Criticism

Most 'reader-response' interpreters of Isaiah tend to read the book of Isaiah as exhibiting some kind of unity, although reader-response theory itself would not necessarily require reading the book as a 'unity'.

A. *Edgar W. Conrad*

Conrad (1991), led by discussions of literary theory in the last half of the twentieth century, re-evaluates the dominance of historical criticism as a paradigm for the study of biblical literature. Indeed, the 'reader response' hermeneutics of Stanley Fish (1980) dramatically influences his way of reading the book of Isaiah. Fish has persuaded Conrad that readers do not *first* read texts and *then* apply strategies for interpretation (see Fish 1980: 13). Instead, interpretive strategy is already at work the moment one begins reading. Particular ways of reading affect at the outset what one observes; thus, the reading strategies one brings to the text shape dramatically one's understanding of texts (Conrad 1991: 4-5). For example, the influence of 19th-century Romanticism on biblical studies has significantly shaped interpreter's beliefs that prophets were speakers rather than writers, and also has influenced scholarly convictions that prophetic utterances were the result of ecstatic experiences. Historical-critical readers' assumptions that the text of Isaiah came from short, independent utterances generated by ecstatic experiences have significantly shaped (and even 'reshaped') what the readers themselves have seen as 'text' (Conrad 1991: 6).

If meaning is generated by what *readers* do, how could there be widely-shared understandings of texts such as Isaiah? If readers are, as it were, 'coauthors' who 'complete' texts in their reading of them (see Conrad 1991: 11), why are there not so many 'texts' (i.e., meanings) that there would only be 'total interpretive chaos'? Fish's answer is that similarity in interpretation is the result of the fact that readers are shaped by *communities* of interpretation (Fish 1980: 15-17, 167-73). As Conrad says (1991: 12), 'These shared interpretive strategies result in approximate readings or interpretations. Because these interpretive strategies become conventional and have social support, most interpreters are unaware of them, assuming that the meaning purportedly embedded in a text gives rise to the interpretation'.

As we have seen, a new interpretive community has arisen, which is interested in the 'unity' of Isaiah. Ackroyd and Melugin were its earliest proponents, upon whom Clements, Rendtorff, and Sweeney did much to build a community of interpretation (Conrad 1991: 12-20). Conrad could well have included Seitz as a pre-1990 founder of this interpretive community.

Earlier, the scholarly guild's equation of 'the meaning of the text with authorial intentions' and with 'the historical situations in which the author wrote' (Conrad 1991: 84) resulted in an interpretive community's reading of the text of Isaiah as a composite text. As a result, there has been a devaluation of concern for the text's 'implied audience' (the imaginary audience which the text creates for the reader) by giving primary attention to authorial intention (p. 84). And there has also been a devaluation of the 'final form of the text' by 'stressing the primary importance of recovering earlier components of the text' (p. 85). Conrad *decides* to read Isaiah 'as literature' to explore how

its 'created world of meaning ... lays bare the imagination of the community' (p. 87). Moreover, by emphasizing 'the interaction between the production and the reception of the text', he hopes thereby to engage 'in a process in which we, as contemporary readers, are active participants' (p. 87).

Conrad's attention to 'implied audience' affects the way he construes structure for the book of Isaiah, in light of his observation that narrative texts are completely absent in the first five chapters of the book, and also after ch. 39. Conrad argues that at the beginning of the book and toward its end (see 1991: 83–116), there appears to be an implied audience of 'survivors' that speaks of itself in first person plural, e.g., 'If the LORD of hosts had not left us a few survivors...' (1.9–10); 'Behold, you were angry and we sinned...' (64.4); 'you hid your face from us and delivered us into the hand of our iniquities' (64.6); 'O LORD, why do you make us err from your ways and harden our heart...?' (63.17). This implied community, portrayed at the beginning and end of the book (chs. 1–5, 40–66), represents what is left after a larger sinful group (generally called 'they' or 'you' in the plural) has already experienced calamitous destruction (see p. 103). Indeed, Isaiah 1–5 and 40–66 (parts 1 and 3 of the book) depict that implied community's *present* situation after YHWH has exercised judgment on Babylon. The implied community of survivors (see 66.18–21) is portrayed as presently waiting for the future, i.e., 'the final manifestation of the LORD's plan to establish peace in all the world and to restore Zion to its promised glory' (p. 102). Only the second part of the book (chs. 6–39) represents the *past*—a past represented as the time of Isaiah the prophet. The portrayal of the past is significant, however, because Isaiah, particularly in his call (ch. 6), 'resembles in significant ways the experience of the survivors' (p. 111). Moreover, Isaiah and his disciples (8.16) are construed by Conrad as a model for the present community of survivors depicted in parts 1 and 3 of the book (p. 112).

Conrad's construal of the book of Isaiah as a literary unity, especially by downplaying historical reconstruction and emphasizing synchronic relationships among its various parts, provides us with an understanding of structure markedly different from the familiar 1–39 + 40–55 + 56–66. Of course, Conrad did not have to construe the book this way. According to his own presuppositions, he as reader has necessarily played a significant role in saying what the book of Isaiah means. So do all readers, Conrad would surely say. That doesn't mean, however, that he is an arbitrary reader. He has taken the *text* quite seriously, and he has used the *text* to make his case. Moreover, a historical-critical interpreter is no less subjective than he, Conrad would surely contend. The historian has indeed *chosen* to approach the text as a historian, and the historian's own subjectivity (communally shaped though it surely is) is also a significant aspect of how she or he proceeds (in this regard see also Conrad's important essay of 1996, esp. pp. 311–23).

B. Katheryn Pfisterer Darr

K. Darr (1994) is a reader-response critic who appears to have been influenced especially by Iser (1972) and Booth (1961), as well as by her husband, J. Darr (1987). According to K. Darr's introduction to her book on Isaiah, interpretation is greatly affected by what readers do:

- We anticipate as we read, and we reflect retrospectively (K. Darr 1994: 31). Indeed, we 'continually reassess earlier expectations and judgments, forming fresh ones as new insights and data emerge' (p. 31).
- We build consistency as we interpret; we correlate texts and fill gaps; we 'construe texts on the basis of preceding chapters and verses' (p. 31).
- We move back and forth, sometimes investing and identifying ourselves fully with what we read, but at other times becoming more detached.
- 'We can perceive that with which we are familiar in new ways, a process known as 'defamiliarization' (Iser 1978: 69)—'setting the well-known in unfamiliar terrain' (K. Darr 1994: 32).

What readers do is so constitutive in the process of interpretation that the reader is in some sense a 'co-creator' of the text's meaning. Indeed, different readers will construe texts in somewhat different ways. Darr is not thereby suggesting that competent readers are simply arbitrary. The text, she argues, *guides* the reader. In addition, the reader can be influenced by historical, social, and literary contexts, which influence the way texts are shaped when they are produced and first read (K. Darr 1994: 26). Yet, what the reader does continues to be an important aspect of the interpretive process.

K. Darr values the contribution of historical scholarship. Indeed, historical scholarship is important in her decision to construct her imaginary reader of Isaiah as a fourth-century, BCE, reader (1994: 29-30). I suspect that she makes 'him' (she's undoubtedly trading on gender roles in ancient Israel!) a fourth-century reader because she thinks that a fictive *fourth*-century reader could credibly be someone not far distant historically and culturally from the environment and outlook in which the completed book of Isaiah took shape. Furthermore, creating her fourth-century reader as someone who 'belongs to post-exilic Israel's cognoscenti, a scribe or religious leader enjoying such legal rights and social standing as were possible at the beginning of the fourth century BCE, and under Persian rule' (p. 30), gives plausibility to the sophisticated readings of the text that K. Darr assigns to her fictive reader. Still, the ancient Israelite reader that she constructs reads Isaiah in accordance with theory about metaphor articulated by *modern* Western scholars, most of whom have not focused especially on figurative language in ancient Israel (see pp. 36-45).

K. Darr's presumed reader is a sequential reader, who reads the entire book holistically. Therefore, he makes connections between texts that appear earlier in the book and texts that appear further on in the book. He is also a reader who focuses on figurative language. Indeed, in K. Darr's book, we see him mainly as a reader of child imagery and imagery about women. The fact that we are allowed to see such a limited part of the totality he presumably would have read means that we cannot see how K. Darr would have had him read the book of Isaiah as a whole; we are allowed to see him interpret only texts involving imagery related to children and women. The result for *us*, then, is not a reading of the whole, but a reading of certain parts of the book given to us by one whose *approach* to reading is that of reading the book as an artistic whole.

K. Darr's book deals with child and female imagery in the whole of the book of Isaiah. Thus, she has, for example, a chapter on 'ladies' lots' in Isaiah 1–39 (1994: 124–64) and one on 'ladies' lots' in Isaiah 40–66 (pp. 165–204). We can recognize differences in the ways that women are portrayed in parts of 1–39 and in 40–66 that are already familiar to us from historical-critics' treatment of Isaiah as bi-partite or tri-partite (and K. Darr readily admits her own indebtedness to widely accepted theories about the growth of the book). Nevertheless, she has *chosen* to read primarily synchronically and holistically. Thus, when she discusses, for instance, the text in which the personified Jerusalem is told to 'get you up to a high mountain...' (Isa. 40.9), we must realize that, for the sequential reader she has created, 'personified Zion is a well-established figure by this point' (p. 167), and that 'the image of a strong and vocal Zion is congruous with our last glimpse of her (37.22), and serves well the rhetorical end of affirming her ongoing survival' (p. 168). Likewise, when the reader encounters, in Isa. 40.9, the imperative 'get you up to a high mountain', he remembers an earlier prophecy: 'In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains' (2.1). Or, when personified Zion is told, 'lift up your voice with strength' (40.9), K. Darr's reader recollects Jerusalem's 'weak whisper from the dust' (29.4; see p. 168).

I have shown what K. Darr shares both with the 'unity of Isaiah' movement, and with reader-response criticism, while also showing some of what is unique about her approach.

C. David M. Carr

Carr also contributes to the larger discussion about the role of readers in the determination of meaning. In an essay (1993) about the trend in biblical studies to approach texts in terms of 'unity', Carr argues that the unity of a text is difficult to pin down. As he notes, 'unity' can be conceptualized in different ways. Sometimes the unity of Isaiah can be seen in thematic and intertextual terms (pp. 62–64). Sometimes we find studies that construe the entire book

as a 'literary unity' with a 'common structure' into which all of its parts fit (p. 64). Conceptualizations of literary unity 'must be supported through arguments for some kind of overarching macrostructure' (p. 64). Isaiah 40.1-8, he argues, is a macrostructural marker that reaches back to certain themes of chs. 1-39, but also reaches forward (pp. 65-71). Furthermore, Isaiah 1 and 65-66 are frequently understood as an *inclusio* that introduces and closes the book (pp. 71-73). Yet, as Carr notes, Isaiah 1 and 65-66 fail 'to anticipate or summarize...much of the intervening material' (p. 73). More importantly, there is 'a fundamental conflict between the exhortatory focus of 1.2-31 and the rhetorical presuppositions of other parts of the book, particularly Isaiah 65-66' (p. 73). The exhortation language in Isaiah 1 presumes 'the possibility of repentance', whereas chs. 65-66 'presuppose that...the groups of sinners and righteous have already been determined' (p. 73). If this is so (for an argument to the contrary, see Melugin 1996a: 301 n. 50), one might argue with Carr that this 'conflict in rhetorical aim' is so fundamental that it 'makes it difficult for 1.2-31 and 65-66 to function cohesively as a paired introduction and conclusion to the book as a whole' (p. 75). Indeed, argues Carr, lack of integration in various parts of the book of Isaiah suggests (1) that *several* redactors 'have introduced their macrostructural conceptions into the book of Isaiah' (cf., e.g., the 7th-century redactor proposed by Barth [1997: 109-17], as well as other subsequent redactors) and (2) that, while some early-stage redactors 'seem to have systematically rearranged earlier materials', later redactors 'did not completely integrate their materials into their overall macrostructural conception' (p. 77).

Carr's 1993 article about the 'unity' of Isaiah tends to remain largely within a redaction-historical paradigm, but his 1996 essay pays more attention to ways in which meaning of texts is the result of what readers do.

In his discussion of Isaiah 1 and 65-66, Carr focuses in particular on a contrast between what Steck and Conrad do with the beginning and the end of the book of Isaiah (see Carr 1996: 190-92). Steck, although interested in the structure of the text as we now have it, engages in an analysis that is primarily diachronic. Conrad's synchronic reading is nonetheless in some ways similar to that of Steck. The connections he observes between 'the lament in 1.9 and the communal supplication in 63.7-64.11' remind us of Steck (Carr 1996: 192). Conrad also resembles Steck in seeing 'an exact correspondence between the call to hear the word of the LORD in 1.10 and the call to hear the word of the LORD in 66.5' (p. 192). Conrad, however, has a different interpretation. Steck makes 'historically grounded observations' regarding the formation of the book, whereas Conrad focuses on how these and other texts present an 'implied audience' for those who read Isaiah as a literary unity (Carr 1996: 192).

In addition, Carr argues that different readers can make use of the diverse rhetorical aims of Isaiah 1 and Isaiah 65-66 (see his 1993 essay), construing

the book as a ‘whole’ in different ways (see Carr 1996: 214–18). It is possible for modern readers, he argues, to read the entirety of the book ‘as a drama opening with a call to repentance [Isa. 1] and closing with paired proclamations to those who answered the call and those who did not [Isa. 65–66]’ (p. 214). Alternatively, it is possible to read the entire book through the ‘lens’ of Isaiah 1 and its focus on repentance (Sweeney: 1988a: 27–29), or Isaiah 65–66 ‘as a reassurance to an already righteous group’ (an interpretation close to that of Conrad; see Carr 1996: 214). There are also other possibilities, for the book of Isaiah contains ‘multiple and often paradoxical connections’ (p. 215).

Finally, ancient readers would surely read Isaiah differently from modern readers. Reading it from a scroll suggests a lesser likelihood for seeking unity than reading it from a codex (Carr 1996: 193–97). Moreover, ancient readers would have been less likely to read it ‘silently and alone’ (p. 194). Ancient readers would also have been more likely to read Isaiah as a part of the entirety of Scripture, and less likely than we moderns to read it as an individual book (p. 194).

In sum: Carr, unlike Conrad and Darr, does not emphasize literary *theory* about the role of the reader. But he has contributed significantly to reflection about the role readers play in the interpretation of the text of Isaiah.

D. Roy F. Melugin

In my essay ‘The Book of Isaiah and the Construction of Meaning’ (1997), I argue that all historical reconstructions of origin and usage of Isaianic traditions are ‘pictures of the past painted by scholars’ (p. 40). Whether or to what extent they actually correspond to the past ‘as it actually was’, I contend, ‘is virtually impossible to ascertain’ (p. 41). This is the case, I argue, because the sources from which historians draw are, as historiographer Hayden White says, ‘both too full and too sparse’ (1978: 51). Historians must make decisions about what material in their sources to include and what not to include in a particular reconstruction of the past. Then, however, the historical material is also ‘too sparse’, in that historians must ‘fill in the gaps’ by constructing a plot in order to make a connected story of the past. They have to decide what is probable or improbable. In short, historians do not simply report what is in the historical record; they must also decide what is relevant, and create the story of the past (White 1978: 51, 61–75).

I then turn to the work of several historical-critical scholars in the ‘unity school’ and show that their historical reconstructions are to a significant extent the result of what they bring *to* their scholarly enterprise. Clements, treating Isaiah as a unity, argues that later Deutero-Isaianic survivors of 587 BCE, driven by ‘an almost psychological need’ (Melugin 1997: 42), used earlier Isaianic themes to interpret the catastrophe that had been visited upon them, and to shape for themselves a hope of renewal. I consider it impossible

to know whether these later redactors felt exactly the needs ascribed to them by Clements. I note that 'Clements has constructed for us a scenario; he has taken twentieth-century ways of looking at human beings and constructed for us a plausible story as to how these authors might have reasoned as they added to the emerging book of Isaiah' (Melugin 1997: 42). I also contend that historical arguments made by Seitz, Williamson and Sweeney are significantly conditioned by assumptions that these scholars bring to the text (Melugin 1997: 42-45). Likewise, the synchronic arguments of Rendtorff and Sweeney (Melugin 1997: 46-48) and the reader response interpretations of Conrad and Darr (Melugin 1997: 48-50) are to no small degree the constructs of the interpreter.

In arguing that all interpretation is affected greatly by what interpreters bring to the text, I do not claim that all arguments are equally viable. Some interpretive arguments are better than others: 'A scholar's interpretation', I argue, 'must be shown to "fit" the text' (p. 50). Indeed, I claim there might be a number of different interpretations that could 'fit' the same text very well. Even so, I contend, any interpretation 'must show why its claim to fit the text is trustworthy' (p. 50).

What does the term 'fit' mean? Does it mean that an interpretation must make a good case for its correspondence with what a text *says*, i.e., to correspond with the text's *referential meaning*? Undoubtedly, that is an important way an interpretation could claim to 'fit' a text. I open the door, however, to a broader understanding as to how a text could be employed in a fitting way: 'The assumption that meaning is constructed by interpreters of texts allows us to scan new horizons for envisaging meaning in the reading of the book of Isaiah' (1997: 51). If exilic authors, in developing new horizons of understanding, did indeed give older Isaianic texts new meaning in a later context, are there any senses in which we can say those new meanings 'fit'? If so, we might ask whether still later interpretations, e.g., in Jewish rabbinical or liturgical texts, or in Christian texts, up to and including the present, can be said to be 'fitting' interpretations for responsible usage. I explore a freshly-created interpretation of Isaiah 1 that could fruitfully be used by a community of white Christians in the context of the injustice of racism in our time (pp. 52-53). I suggest, but do not develop, the possibility that an interpretation of Isaiah 53, colored by 'Martin Luther King's interpretation of suffering love as undertaken for the redemption of the oppressor', could be a 'fitting' interpretation and usage of Isaiah 53 (p. 53). Must a 'fitting' interpretation of Isaiah be limited to Isaiah itself (or at least to that book in the context of ancient Israel's social situation)? Or, may 'fitness' in interpretation be seen in terms of a continuum—from exilic and post-exilic reinterpretations of 'proto-Isaianic' texts all the way down to reinterpretations done in our own time? What can responsible interpretation of Isaiah include?

VI. 'Unity' and the Interpretation of Isaiah as Scripture

Questions of 'fitness' in the interpretation of Isaiah are especially germane for interpretations that focus on the book of Isaiah as *Scripture*, for the use of texts as Scripture necessarily entails their interpretation and use in contexts far different from those in which the texts were produced. A number of recent scholarly works that focus especially on Isaiah as Scripture are committed to a holistic approach to the book of Isaiah. I shall discuss writings by Childs, Seitz, Oswalt, and Sheppard.

A. Brevard S. Childs

Childs's discussion of Isaiah in his *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* represents a concern for 'unity' in the sense that the book of Isaiah in its completed form is a 'canonical' text (1979: 316–38). As canonical text, its meaning is not to be seen primarily in terms of the original meanings of its various parts in their original contexts. Indeed, hypothesizes Childs, 'Second Isaiah' undoubtedly was originally a sixth-century text produced by an 'unnamed prophet' to speak to Israelite exiles in Babylon (p. 325); but whatever once indicated its original concrete historical context 'has been almost totally disregarded by those who transmitted the material' (p. 325). Indeed, Childs argues that 'the canonical editors of this tradition employed the material in such a way as to eliminate almost entirely those concrete features and to subordinate the original message to a new role within the canon' (p. 325). The effect of this loss of historical particularity means that the 'Second Isaiah' message, now tied to a book connected with the eighth-century Isaiah, 'no longer can be understood as a specific commentary on the needs of exiled Israel, but its message relates to the redemptive plan of God for all of history' (p. 326). The 'Second Isaiah' material, now in canonical context, has been reinterpreted so that its meaning can be 'fitting' (to use my term) for use 'as a promise of God's purpose with his people in every age' (p. 326).

Childs's new commentary on Isaiah (2001) appears to build upon what he said in 1979. As he argues in his Introduction, the book of Isaiah is a 'multilayered' text with a diversity of voices; and we must understand this diversity of voices as a significant aspect of its witness to God as canonical text. While Childs does not unreservedly accept modern synchronic analysis, he cautions against primary concern with reconstruction of 'a succession of redactional layers, each with its own agenda, which are never heard in concert as a whole' (Childs 2001: 4). Such redaction-historical scholarship 'fails to reckon with the book's canonical authority as a coherent witness in its final received form to the ways of God with Israel' (p. 4). Therefore, any analysis of redactional layers 'must be used to enrich the book as a whole...' (p. 4). Childs seeks a balance between diachronic and synchronic methods

by stressing the importance of intertextual study, especially that of Beuken: 'The growth of the larger composition has often been shaped by the use of a conscious resonance with a previous core of oral or written texts. The great theological significance is that it reveals how the editors conceived of their task as forming a chorus of different voices and fresh interpretations' (Childs 2001: 4). The phrases 'different voices' and 'fresh interpretations' point to the value Childs sees in recognizing that the text in its canonical form is multilayered. The word 'chorus' indicates that the 'different voices' are to be heard as a choir that sings synchronically together, even though each voice does not sing the same note.

Childs sees noteworthy intertextual parallels, for example, between Isaiah 65–66 and Isaiah 1 (2001: 543–44):

- 'God spreads his hands to a rebellious people' (65.2)// 'Sons I reared, they rebelled against me' (1.2);
- 'A people who provoke God' (65.3)// 'The whole head sick, utterly estranged' (1.4);
- 'They corruptly sacrifice in gardens' (65.3)// 'You will blush for the gardens' (1.29);
- 'God will repay into their bosom' (65.6)// 'Why will you continue to be smitten?' (1.5);
- 'I will not destroy them all' (65.8)// 'If he had not left a remnant, then like Sodom...' (1.9);
- 'His servants will be called by a different name' (65.15)// 'You will be called the city of righteousness' (1.26);
- 'All nations will come to my holy mountain' (66.18ff.)// 'Let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh' (2.1–4).

Furthermore, Childs points to parallels between Isaiah 65–66 and Isaiah 40:

- 'God's presence manifested: Here am I' (65.1)// 'Behold, your God' (40.9);
- 'God comes in fire for judgment' (66.15)// 'God comes with might, his reward with him' (40.10);
- 'Israel's former troubles are forgotten, hidden from God's eyes' (65.16)// 'Israel's warfare is ended and iniquity pardoned' (40.2);
- 'God comforts his people' (65.13)// 'Comfort, comfort my people' (40.1);
- 'Gladness and joy for Jerusalem' (65.18)// 'Jerusalem, herald of good tidings' (40.11);
- 'Sharon, a pasture for flocks' (65.10)// 'He feeds his flock like a shepherd' (40.11);
- 'God's glory among the nations' (66.18–19)// 'His glory revealed to all flesh' (40.5).

Childs also discusses the intertextual relationships between Isaiah 65–66 and the rest of the book. To summarize: Childs sees chs. 65–66 as playing an editorial role in ‘shap[ing] the entire book of Isaiah into a coherent whole by a reuse, reordering, and reinterpretation of Second and Third Isaiah’ (2001: 542–43). Indeed, the editorial shaping of Third Isaiah is of hermeneutical significance in a number of ways (p. 545), and the intertextual reinterpretation and reshaping into the present canonical form of the book is something that Childs sees, to use my term, as quite ‘fitting’.

Also quite fitting are intertextual relationships between Isaianic texts and the New Testament, as well as theological uses of Isaianic texts in Christian theology (2001: 420–23). Childs is, of course, aware of historical-critical discussions about the significance of Isaiah 53 in its ancient Israelite context, and about its use in the New Testament. While, in his judgment, there is no reason to deny a role for diachronic study or for recognizing the influence of the text of Isaiah 53 in shaping the New Testament witness, one must also recognize that the perspective of the gospel has contributed to the reinterpretation of the Old Testament witness. Furthermore, the use of historical criticism in showing the differences between Isaiah 53 itself and its reinterpretation by New Testament writers must not be allowed to contribute to the ‘confusion of categories that misunderstands the distinction between treating the text as an objective source of information or as a kerygmatic testimony to a divine reality’ (pp. 421–22). Indeed, he says, ‘the true exegetical task is to understand its theological role as the witness of Scripture within the entire Christian canon’ (p. 422).

Furthermore, Childs argues, Isaiah 53 should not be interpreted in terms of ‘prophecy and fulfillment’ (p. 423). Rather, in Christian usage, ‘an analogy was drawn between the redemptive activity of the Isaianic servant and the passion and death of Jesus Christ’ (p. 423). That is to say, the connection was understood ‘ontologically’, i.e., ‘in terms of its *substance*, its *theological reality*’ (italics mine). Thus, for Childs, interpretation in the context of an entire canon of scriptural books expands dramatically the horizons for what is fitting in the enterprise of interpretation.

B. Christopher R. Seitz

Seitz’s 2001 commentary on Isaiah 40–66 in *The New Interpreter’s Bible* is clearly influenced by the form critical work of Westermann (1969) and Melugin (1976). These two form critics, Seitz argues, differ from earlier form critics who wrote on Isaiah 40–55 in that both are less preoccupied with life setting (*Sitz im Leben*), but prefer instead ‘to account for the organization of the chapters in Isaiah 40–55’ (2001: 322), by which he appears to mean a kind of form criticism that focuses to a large degree on the *synchronic* form of these chapters taken as a whole. While he mentions Muilenburg and various other literary approaches as a second possible direction for

interpreting chs. 40–55, Seitz says that his commentary ‘follows these two approaches [Westermann’s and Melugin’s] closely throughout’ (p. 322). But (in part at least) because Melugin did not write on chs. 56–66, and because Westermann’s analysis of chs. 56–66 (as opposed to his study of 40–55) construed ‘Third Isaiah’ as a ‘much more heterogeneous and haphazardly arranged collection of formal units’, Seitz opts for viewing Isaiah 40–66 as a unity whose structure is ‘highly thought out’ (p. 323). Indeed, the structure of the text as we now have it is as follows: (1) chs. 40–48, (2) 49.1–52.12, (3) 52.13–53.12, and (4) chs. 54–66.

Seitz’s understanding of structure is rooted in his 1990 article (discussed above). In his 2001 commentary, as in his essay of 1990, he sees Isaiah 40–48 as introducing a message about a time of ‘new things’ which is to be contrasted with the time of the ‘former things’ (largely the time portrayed in Isaiah 1–39). Chapters 40–48 put us into ‘the context of a trial from the heavenly council, in which Israel and the nations are litigants’ (2001: 327). In 48.16 and 49.1–6, the servant, who has already been commissioned in 42.1–9 to a task on behalf of the nations, takes up his mantle and speaks. As the depiction of the ‘servant’ is unfolded synchronically in chs. 40–48, *Israel* is first identified as servant (41.8–9; see p. 361), and the identification of Israel as servant reappears in 42.19, 43.10, 44.1–2, 21, 44.26, 45.4, and 48.20 (p. 364). The presentation of the servant as one who brings to the nations ‘justice’ and ‘Torah’ (42.1–9), can be seen ‘according to an old design and purpose’ as Israel (p. 364). Yet, there is a problem involved with the commissioning of Israel as light to the nations; as 42.14–25 makes clear, ‘Israel’s own track record as being blind and deaf and its own present imprisonment and subjugation’ shows that Israel is no ‘ideal figure’ for the task (pp. 368–69). The judgment against Israel, after all, came from God (42.23–25). Yet, that judgment ‘now describes a past reality, already experienced’, but ‘God is about to change all that, so that the servant might be about a new thing in God’s service’ (p. 370).

As we move to Isaiah 44.24–48.22, Cyrus and his commissioning take center stage (Seitz 2001: 390): ‘Before Israel can be servant, Israel must—though blind and deaf—see and hear and repent and be forgiven (44.21–22)’. The commissioning of Cyrus—one from the nations—is clearly controversial (see the disputational language in 45.9–13). And now the opportunity for Gentiles coming to worship YHWH is presented (45.14–25), along with the possibility of idolatry among Israelites—something to be ‘sarcastically entertained’ (48.5) and ‘appropriately satirized or condemned’ (44.25; 45.16, 20; 45.1–2, 6–7; cf. p. 391). Toward the end of this section of text (see 48.12–16), immediately following language about the fulfillment of God’s word concerning Cyrus, an individual who is *not* Cyrus reports his own commission: ‘and now the Lord GOD has sent me and his spirit’ (p. 419). Does the person speaking here consider himself to be the servant commissioned in 42.1–4?

According to Seitz, we have reached a turning point. The one who speaks in first person singular in 48.16 and in 49.1–6 ‘reflects on his frustration in accomplishing what was said of the servant in 42.1–9, and behind this failure lies the entire history of prophecy as that was directed through Israel to the nations’ (2001: 429; see Jer. 1.5, 10). Language that had once been applied to Israel is now directed toward an individual servant whose ‘hidden mission to Israel is here augmented to include a public mission to the nations, as this was once Israel’s more broadly’ (p. 430). Moreover, the poem in 50.4–9 that depicts the servant’s suffering, consciously evoking Isa. 8.16, describes him as a ‘disciple’—indeed, a disciple whose audience has been narrowed to the ‘weary’ (p. 437). Then, in Isa. 52.13–53.12, we find a poem that ‘represents the culmination of all that precedes and constitutes the decisive boundary line in the larger discourse (chs. 40–66), as the text moves from the achievement of the servant (40.1–52.11) to the work of the servants (54.1–66.24), which is an elaboration and ramification of that prior legacy’ (p. 460). We have to do, Seitz argues here, with a point of transition between the text’s emphasis on the ‘servant’ (singular noun) and a new dispensation (see Isa. 54–66) in which it is ‘servants’ (note the plural) who find themselves ‘among the nations’ (p. 460). The mission of the servant as a ‘light to the nations’ (see both chs. 42 and 49) is still in force, but the turning points in the presentation of the servant (especially in 48.16 and 49.1–6) affect the understanding of the servant in 52.13–53.12. It is especially worthy of notice that the first-person voices of Isaiah 53 represent the ‘servants’, who are very central in chs. 54–66.

A few summarizing remarks: Seitz’s interpretation of the book of Isaiah as Scripture is clearly to be seen in his holistic approach to the text, and in his observations (called ‘Reflections’), where he often discusses Isaianic texts in relation to the New Testament and Christian theology. If there were space here, it might be fruitful to examine carefully the ways in which Seitz involves himself in ‘reflection’ and to inquire as to the ‘fittingness’ of such theological reflection as a constituent part of disciplined scholarly interpretation of biblical texts as Scripture.

C. John N. Oswalt

Oswalt’s two-volume commentary on the entire book of Isaiah (1986, 1998), coming from what is commonly thought of as a conservative evangelical wing of Christianity, certainly fits within a discussion of scholarship on the ‘unity’ of the book of Isaiah. Oswalt is a careful scholar whose interpretive work shows the influence of a wide range of scholarly writings, a very large number of which come from the mainstream of historical-critical research. At the same time, he does argue, unlike Childs, that the eighth-century prophet himself produced the entire book of Isaiah (1986: 23–28). His arguments, however, are carefully nuanced. He says that form criticism,

for example, remains helpful in its recognition that ‘verbal messages tended to be self-contained units which could be grouped together with other such units in various ways’ (1986: 25). Therefore, Oswalt suggests that this book, written entirely by the eighth-century Isaiah, is nevertheless something like ‘what we call an anthology, a collection of sermons, sayings, thoughts, and writings of Isaiah, all arranged according to the theological scheme outlined in the previous section’ (p. 26). Even the ‘stylistic differences and differences of historical context’ between chs. 1–39 and 40–66 should not be accepted simplistically as necessarily indications of different writers: ‘it is a matter of observation that different subject matters, as well as different periods in a person’s life produce different styles’ (p. 26). Yet, he recognizes that ‘the material in Isaiah is unusually extensive and unusually suited to the specific context in the future’. Although he proposes hypotheses to answer the last statement (p. 27), what he says appears to be more like thoughtful reflections than statements put forth as unassailable truths.

My concern here is not to defend Oswalt’s contention that the historical Isaiah wrote the entire book (it’s not a proposition to which I am personally committed). My intent is rather to suggest that Oswalt puts forth his arguments as propositions for reasoned discussion. Indeed, Oswalt is himself in many respects a historical critic, who commonly presents the text as coming from a particular time and place. In his discussion of messianic texts in chs. 7–11, or the ‘servant songs’, he emphasizes that their place in the context of ancient Israel is prominent. Yet, he also connects them to the messiah as understood in Christianity, but often in subtle and understated ways. The titles for the child in Isaiah 9 (‘Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace’), he contends, are ‘extravagant titling...not normal for Israelite kings’ (1986: 246); this is why he says that ‘the divine ruler will not merely be God, but although partaking of the divine attributes, will have the most human of all arrivals upon the earth, namely, birth’ (p. 245). Furthermore, he says that this perfect king will be both human and divine. Such a claim seems to be intended, in large measure, as an argument with significant roots in historical-critical analysis. Or, his contention that the phrase, ‘from the loins of my mother’ (Isa. 49.1), supports a strong argument against a collective view of the servant (1998: 289) seems to me the kind of argument that has been frequently used by persons who present their claims as historical-critical in character. Yet, Oswalt’s assertion that the servant’s expansive commission to save, not Israel alone, but also the nations (49.6) is subtly nudged in the direction of christology as ‘the restoration of an estranged world’ (1998: 294), something that ‘neither collective Israel nor any human prophet’ would be able to accomplish. Furthermore, Oswalt’s discussion of Isaiah 53, described in large measure in terms of its ancient Israelite religious context, without fanfare sometimes edges the conversation more specifically in the direction of *Jesus Christ*, e.g., ‘Whoever

he is, the Servant stands in the place of God, pronouncing a pardon that the Sinless One alone can offer...’ (note the capital letters; 1998: 405).

Criticism of Oswalt’s Christian bias in his reading of the book of Isaiah is in no way a part of my intent here. In our time, we are aware that *all* interpreters have biases. Even historical-critical interpreters who were sometimes thought to be neutral are now widely recognized as having very definite biases. Indeed, all who speak of reading Isaiah as a single ‘unit’ function with bias, whether literary, or theological, or still something else. Likewise, to read Isaiah as Scripture also involves bias, even though not all readers of Isaiah as Scripture have identical biases. I include Oswalt in this discussion, because he is a well-read and articulate scholar, but also because perspectives such as his should not be marginalized.

D. Gerald T. Sheppard

Sheppard’s essay on the interpretation of Isaiah as Jewish and Christian Scripture (1996b) begins by observing that we presently seem to be working in a time of great plurality of ‘visions’ regarding this book (1996b: 257). How might this plurality be understood? Sheppard turns to Jacques Derrida for help. Despite the commitments of many biblical scholars to objectivity, Sheppard argues, Derrida ‘relentlessly exposes the various moments of “aporia” or “gaps” that require decisions between two equally valid possibilities’ (Sheppard 1996: 259). To be sure, different structures can be ‘found’ and supported rationally, but whatever provides the ‘center’ for that structure depends upon a ‘subjective’ conception of ‘presence, intention, intrinsic bond between reality and language, historical reference, symbolic system or whatever’ (Sheppard 1996b: 259; see also Norris 1982: 50). Even though Derrida expresses no doubt about ‘the necessity of finding and using centered structures’ (Sheppard 1996b: 261), the fact that these structures are produced by readers’ biases suggests that we be fully aware of the limitations to their objectivity. Sheppard argues also against an absolutizing of the reader that exists in some forms of reader response criticism, i.e., a ‘universal conception of a “competent” reader’ (1996b: 262). Furthermore, he questions Schleiermacher’s distinction between a general hermeneutic (to be applied to all literature) and a special hermeneutic (to deal with features peculiar to Scripture) (see Sheppard 1994; see also, e.g., Schleiermacher 1998). An ideal general hermeneutic, Sheppard contends, cannot be resolved empirically.

Sheppard then turns to several scholarly monographs on Isaiah, arguing that they do not simply ‘have different perspectives of the same text’ but rather ‘different envisioned texts of Isaiah’ (1996b: 262).

a. Sweeney’s ‘vision’ (1988a), according to Sheppard, is a text that has a structure consisting of various ‘blocks of material’ and interrelated ‘sub-units’ within these blocks. Often, Sheppard says, what Sweeney calls ‘the

structure' is heavily influenced by 'signs of thematization' rather than clear syntactical connections. Thus, in Sheppard's judgment, Sweeney sees 'the text' largely as 'a temporal series of changing structures of new texts that build upon earlier textual compositions, each with its own "reinterpretation" of prior stages, structures, and units of tradition' (Sheppard 1996b: 263).

b. Conrad (1991), however, offers a different 'vision' of the book of Isaiah (Sheppard 1996b: 263-64). Instead of viewing the text as having an intent that is to be objectively described, Conrad sees a text as something that readers 'read *into*'—and in such 'eisegetical' behavior create meaning. Conrad's conception of structure is different from redaction historians' searching for a structure resulting from the text's growth in history. Conrad, by contrast, looks for a text's 'aesthetic momentum', i.e. its 'repetition in vocabulary, motif, theme, narrative sequence, and rhetorical questions, and forms of address', as well as interests in 'implied reader' and 'implied audience' (Conrad 1991: 30-31).

c. Williamson (1994) reconstructs the growth of a Deutero-Isaianic book built upon earlier eighth-century Isaianic tradition. Deutero-Isaiah is a 'pre-scriptural' vision of the book (Sheppard 1996b: 265-66). That is to say, reading from the context of Deutero-Isaiah is rather different from reading Isaiah in its full scriptural form.

d. Seitz's vision (see Sheppard 1996b: 266-68) involves reading the entire book of Isaiah as a 'coherent literary and theological composition' (see Seitz 1988: 19). Yet, Sheppard argues that in Seitz's studies of Isaiah 36-39 (Seitz 1991) and 1-39 (Seitz 1993a), Seitz's 'vision' of the text is pre-scriptural, i.e., based on an 'integration of redactional levels of composition' (see Sheppard 1996b: 267). Focusing primarily on various redactors' responses to a particular theological problem will not, however, necessarily envision Isaiah 'fully as a book of Jewish Scripture or describe adequately the book's participation within a larger intertext of biblical books' (Sheppard 1996: 267). Nor does Seitz's analysis show how his vision of the book 'meets' or 'resists' the concerns of Jewish rabbis with 'midrash' or a Christian focus on 'the literal sense' of Scripture.

Sheppard closes his essay with two constructive proposals, whose purpose is 'to envision the book of Isaiah in both historical and literary terms as a book of Jewish and Christian Scripture' (1996b: 268). First, in searching for 'the distinctive and central message of historical Isaiah's prophecy as presented in the book of Isaiah' (cf. pp. 269-74), Sheppard asks whether the book *does* 'highlight a single message above others in the presentation of the prophet Isaiah' (p. 270). Beginning with the statement in Isaiah 6 that the people will be blind and deaf (vv. 9-11), unable to understand the message, Sheppard asks: what message will they not understand? The answer appears initially in the narratives which follow the commissioning report. In ch. 7,

the message first appears by means of the short, repeated formula, ‘fear not’ (7.4; 8.12). The message reappears in the narrative about Hezekiah: the king is exhorted not to fear, for he will be delivered (37.5). Moreover, between the narratives about Ahaz and Hezekiah, we find the message in ch. 12 [v. 2]: ‘Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and *will not be afraid*’ [emphasis Sheppard’s]. Also, in 28.16, there is a reminder, ‘One who trusts will not panic’. And 35.4 says, ‘Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, *do not fear* ...’ [emphasis Sheppard’s]. The formula appears numerous times in chs. 40–55, and we find it also in 56–66, e.g., ‘Why, O Lord, do you make us stray from our ways and harden our heart, so that we *do not fear you?*’ (cf. also 57.11). ‘Fear not’ is not so much a ‘theme’ as it is ‘a historical message unleashed upon *generation after generation of audiences*’ (Shepard 1996b: 274; italics mine, to call attention to Sheppard’s agreement with Childs’s contention that the function of Scripture is to speak to every generation of readers). Moreover, Sheppard insists, the ‘fear not’ message ‘becomes distinctive of the message of Isaiah at every level of the biblical text’ (1996b: 274).

Sheppard’s second proposal has to do with the book of Isaiah, understood as Torah (1996b: 274–81). He thinks it appropriate for us at the very least to ‘wonder if Isaiah *as a book of Jewish Scripture* might not have the Torah as its principal subject matter’ (p. 275). Even though, at earlier stages in the formation of the book, ‘Torah’ probably did not refer to ‘Mosaic Torah’, Sheppard argues that ‘the identification of “the *word* of Yahweh” with “the *Torah* of our God” (1.10; cf. 2.3) points to the principal subject matter of the book of Isaiah as a whole’ (p. 277). Moreover, Sheppard does not believe ‘that anything in Third Isaiah precludes the possibility that the Torah here is complementary to the Mosaic Torah of Ezra’ (p. 277). With the role of Joshua 1.8 and its parallels in Psalm 1, connecting ‘the prophets’ and ‘the writings’ with the ‘principal manifestation of the Torah in Jewish Scripture’ (p. 277), Isaiah as Jewish Scripture could be seen in terms of Torah. Yet, Isaiah’s identification as a part of ‘the prophets’ in Scripture also ‘invites an interpretation in terms of promise/judgment and fulfillment’ (p. 280). Indeed, says Sheppard, ‘it is precisely this multivalent nature of the text as a scriptural text that allowed Christians...to give preference often to the prophetic and sapiential reading of the text over its role as a guide to the law.’ Whether what Sheppard says about the ‘multivalent nature of the text as a scriptural text’ is related to his discussion of Derrida and the role of readers in the creation of ‘structure’ in texts is not completely clear. If what he says about multivalence of texts as *scriptural* texts is indeed related to his discussion of Derrida and the role of readers in creating structure, preconceptions in Judaism and Christianity about Isaiah as Scripture would surely color these communities’ ‘vision’ of the text. A present-day scholar who self-consciously tries to interpret the book of Isaiah as *Scripture* might

well hold a 'vision' of the text that could legitimately differ in significant ways from other interpreters.

VII. *Conclusion*

This essay has shown that those who see 'unity' in the book of Isaiah represent a diverse group indeed. Redaction historians such as Sweeney and Williamson deal with 'unity' quite differently from the synchronic approaches to the text represented by, say, Polan or Franke. Conrad's 'vision' of the text differs markedly from that of Childs or Seitz. Yet, despite the variety of approaches, all the scholars discussed above represent a new movement, in the sense that all are interested in looking at the book of Isaiah holistically. Indeed, thanks to them, there is now a major new direction within a part of the larger household of Isaiah scholars—a new direction that, in years to come, will surely significantly affect ways in which the whole of Isaiah scholarship will take shape.

SURPLUS MEANING AND THE CONFLICT OF INTERPRETATIONS: A DODECADE OF JEREMIAH STUDIES (1984–95)

Robert P. Carroll

In the study of ideas, it is necessary to remember that insistence on hard-headed clarity issues from sentimental feeling, as it were a mist, cloaking the perplexities of fact. Insistence on clarity at all costs is based on sheer superstition as to the mode in which human intelligence functions. Our reasonings grasp at straws for premises and float on gossamers for deductions (Whitehead 1942: 75).

I. Introduction

For more than a decade Jeremiah studies has been in a turmoil of competing reading strategies for understanding the book associated with Jeremiah the prophet. Following a long period when there was a dearth of major commentary writing on Jeremiah in English (with the notable exceptions of Bright 1965 and J. Thompson 1980), Jeremiah studies expanded greatly in the 1980s with the appearance of a number of formidably large volumes in the standard commentary series *Hermeneia* (Holladay 1986, 1989), *International Critical Commentary* (McKane 1986, 1996b), *New Century Bible* (Jones 1992), *Old Testament Library* (Carroll 1986) and the *Word Biblical Commentary* (Craigie, Kelly and Drinkard 1991; Keown, Scalise and Smothers 1995). A further set of minor commentaries also have appeared (Brueggemann 1988b, 1991b; Clements 1988; Davidson 1983, 1985). The major German *Biblischer Kommentar* series work on Jeremiah also began to make its appearance (Herrmann 1986, 1990a), but that will take a long time to be completed (given the health of the commentator). A steady flow of monographs in English, French and German throughout the past decade or so (for example, Biddle 1990; Bozak 1991; Diamond 1987; Fischer 1993; Hardmeier 1990b; Levin 1985; Liwak 1987; McConville 1993; Mottu 1985; O'Connor 1988; Odashima 1989; Pohlmann 1989; Polk 1984; Seitz 1989b; M. Smith 1990; Soderlund 1985; Stipp 1992; Stulman 1985, 1986; Unterman 1987) has made work on the book of Jeremiah one of the most prolific growth areas in current biblical studies. The degree of such development of work on Jeremiah is epitomized by the emergence of a 'Composition of Jeremiah Consultation Group' in the SBL under the leadership of O'Connor

and Stulman. Maps of the territory of Jeremiah studies may also be found in the many dictionary articles which contribute to surveys of the material, although dictionary articles are often of limited value because they are not always up to date. This is certainly the case with the Anchor Bible Dictionary articles on Jeremiah, which seem to be arrested in the mid-1980s.

Since the work of Duhm (1901), Volz (1922) and Rudolph (1968), the central problems of understanding the book of Jeremiah have focused on: questions about the relationship of the poetry to the prose sections of the book; the relation between the longer Hebrew text of the MT and the shorter Greek text of the LXX; the connections between the shape and formation of the book and the historical prophet Jeremiah; the role of Baruch in the construction and production of the book; and general questions about the relationship of the edited book of Jeremiah to the Deuteronomistic literature and to the historical period in which the book has been set by its editor(s) in 1.1-3.

More recent interests in literary, ideological and poststructural approaches have developed different ways of reading Jeremiah (cf. Diamond 1987; Polk 1984; feminist approaches, etc.). The general flow of attention to Jeremiah in current Jeremiah studies continues to examine the questions about reading Jeremiah in relation to the answers set forth by Duhm (1901), Volz (1922), Rudolph (1968), Bright (1965) and the oeuvres of Holladay and of McKane. So towards the end of the century Jeremiah studies are poised somewhere between more sophisticated restatements of traditional ways of reading Jeremiah, and new approaches which will move the discussion further and further away from such conventional strategies for reading the book.

II. *Composition of the Book of Jeremiah*

Two broadly similar ways of *reading* Jeremiah but radically different ways of *explaining* Jeremiah have emerged over the past decade of Jeremiah studies. On the one hand, there is the rather traditional historical-critical approach to the book epitomized by the work of Bright (1965), echoed in J. Thompson (1980), and brought to its ultimate conclusion by more than three decades of work on Jeremiah by Holladay, glossed and fine-tuned by his student Lundbom, who is now working on the new Anchor Bible on Jeremiah. This strategy of reading the book of Jeremiah as the work of the prophet Jeremiah via his amanuensis, the scribe Baruch, essentially attributes the work (with some allowance for minor editorial additions) to Jeremiah and Baruch as original speaker, author, editor, reviser and producer of the book as we know it (cf. McConville 1991, 1993). For Holladay there are no data which counter the claim that the portrait of Jeremiah depicted in the book is reliable. Agreeing with Bright and disagreeing with Carroll, Holladay notes:

The conclusions of the present study are that most of the poetry preserved in the book exhibits a distinctive vocabulary, style, and theology that one may attribute to Jrm [Holladay's abbreviation for Jeremiah the man], that the narrative portions of the book are trustworthy in the events they record, and that the book is largely the work of the scribe Baruch. To put it another way, I have concluded that the picture of Jrm that emerges from the book is that of a highly distinctive and innovative person: it is not the kind of figure that later generations would be likely to create. The fact that both Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah seem to be dependent on his phrases points in the same direction. I submit, then, that the data of the book can be used to build up a credible portrayal of the prophet, a portrayal against which there are no opposing data. (1989: 24-25)

This approach to reading Jeremiah makes Jeremiah 36 a paradigm account of the writing of the whole book and not just of the first twenty-three years of oracle production. Holladay refuses to entertain any intertextuality between Jer. 7.1-15, chs. 26 and 36, and 2 Kings 22 as a means of providing an alternative account of the book's composition.

McKane represents a second approach. He attributes an original core of the book to the historical Jeremiah, but sees the bulk of chs. 1-25 as having been built up in various ways, so that the historical Jeremiah cannot have been the author *simpliciter* of the book as we now have it. The supplementation of an original deposit of Jeremianic poems in an intertextual fashion has therefore generated new poems and prose pieces. This process McKane calls 'a rolling corpus' which, for him, explains the notable untidiness and lack of coherence in the book:

[T]here is a tendency to underestimate the untidy and desultory nature of the aggregation of material which comprises the book of Jeremiah... it is not only a lack of large-scale homogeneousness...but sharp dissonances of form and content, and examples of erroneous, secondary exegesis... My argument is that there is no comprehensive framework of literary arrangement or theological system within which the parts of 1-25 are fitted together, and that the prose does not supply such a scaffolding. There is more of accident, arbitrariness and fortuitous twists and turns than has been generally allowed for. The processes are dark and in a measure irrecoverable, and we should not readily assume them to possess such rationality that they will yield to a systematic elucidation. (1986: xlix-l)

Most of the work done on Jeremiah over the past twelve years can be filed under 'Holladay' or under 'McKane' as two different ways of responding to the vexed questions of editorial voices in the production of the book of Jeremiah (for further discussion of these approaches cf. the reviews of their work in Brueggemann 1988a; Carroll 1989c, 1991; Herrmann 1987b, 1990b; Overholt 1988a; Rodd 1987). These two approaches are rather similar ways of reading the book, but differ radically in their explanations and interpretations of how the book's content is to be related to the historical Jeremiah.

McKane's 'rolling corpus' concept allows for a lengthy period of development and seeks to explain the untidiness and arbitrariness of much of the book, whereas Holladay favours viewing the book as a neater composition requiring a much simpler explanation for its origin (cf. Craigie *et al.* 1991; Jones 1992; Keown *et al.* 1995; McConville 1993 for similar approaches).

The beginnings of a third way of reading Jeremiah may be associated with Carroll (1981, 1986, 1989a). His approach to Jeremiah has been described as 'a revolutionary work' (Anderson 1986: 670) and is essentially a postmodernist one which employs an ideological-critical analysis of the text (Carroll 1986: 65-82). Carroll sees the tropes and rhetoric of the book of Jeremiah as collapsing under the weight of their own internal incoherence and contradictions, so his deconstructive approach does not encourage a historical reading of the book along the lines suggested by the editorial colophon of 1.1-3. In place of reportage (Holladay's model) he would make representation the mode of construction for the book of Jeremiah. Carroll is sceptical of traditional biblical scholarship's claim to be able to get behind the (imagined) sources of biblical books to reconstruct the past historical situations, which are then deemed to have given rise to the text in the first place. Reading Jeremiah as a collection of polyphonic voices reflecting the reconstruction of the Palestinian communities in the Second Temple period, Carroll plays down the role of the historical Jeremiah in the 'original' production of a *traditum* reflecting that prophet's words and deeds. Whereas for him tradition extends 'something of the personal attitude of its founder' (Karl Popper cited in Carroll 1979: 47), it is not clear to him that the redactional processes which have constructed the book of Jeremiah have preserved the original Jeremiah's words in anything like a historically reliable mode. Extensive editorial interference and recontextualizing are deemed by Carroll to have transformed Jeremiah's poetry beyond its original purpose in the service of an ideology quite foreign to Jeremiah. For assessment of Carroll's work see Brueggemann 1988a; De Vries 1995; Herrmann 1987b; Jones 1992; Laato 1996; McConville 1993. The critique by Laato (1996), although outside the time capsule of this survey, should be noted because it is a wide-ranging treatment of Carroll on the prophets and on Jeremiah, as well as a neatly modulated account of positive and negative assessments of Carroll's work. I am deeply grateful to Antti Laato for making his book available to me for this survey article.

Much of Carroll's reading of Jeremiah is bound up with his wider work on prophecy in general and, while interesting, that work may yet prove itself not to be the best way of reading ancient biblical prophecy (or Jeremiah) from the point of view of contemporary scholarly purposes. It is still too early to determine this matter and it may be another decade before it is possible to see and assess the influence of Carroll on the younger generation of scholars now working in Jeremiah studies.

Even if all competing accounts of the composition of the book of Jeremiah fell within the spectrum defined by the work of Holladay and McKane, it would be foolish to attempt to delineate all the variations within that spectrum in the space of a limited review. One example may serve as being typical of the most popular way of accounting for the composition of Jeremiah. While stressing the importance of the oral tradition behind the written manuscript of Jeremiah, Jones relies on the claim that the literary deposit of Jeremiah's work is to be found in chs. 1–25 (1992: 28). By regularly dismissing any claim for the documents being 'photographic representations' Jones is still able to work with them as if they were similar to such items, that is, were essentially historical documents ('nucleus and deposit') giving reliable historical information about events and the history of the production of the book of Jeremiah. Such an approach assigns him firmly to the Bright-Holladay-Lundbom end of the spectrum, with the text serving the double function of showing what the historical Jeremiah said and did and also constituting evidence for Jones's claims about how the book of Jeremiah was composed. Jones may allow for a considerable use of glosses expanding the text, but finally he depends on the argument from 'probability' that the 'creative originator' who generated the text in the first place was the prophet Jeremiah: 'The name of the prophet covers the whole tradition, both that which he said and did, and that which he did not say and do' (1992: 63). This is to concur with tradition, not provide an argument in its favour.

In some ways Jeremiah studies finds itself at an impasse as the century comes to a close. Holladay and Lundbom will go on fine-tuning the reading of Jeremiah as a code that must be broken in terms of reassigning pericopae to different periods in the prophet's life. This kind of debate will permanently disagree on whether 627 BCE was the year in which Jeremiah was born, called to be a prophet, or represented by the editors of Jeremiah as having become operant. McKane will go on scrutinizing the text in a piecemeal fashion, erudite beyond the reading abilities of most of his readers, but constructing the most formidable account of the text and its versions. It is difficult to assess McKane on Jeremiah at the time of writing because I have not had access to the second volume of his commentary. In spite of giving the impression that he and Carroll are on the same end of the spectrum of Jeremiah studies, McKane appears to disagree with Carroll at most specific points of interpretation (see for example McKane 1986: 584; 1995a: 144–46). Carroll's point of view will likely continue to be dismissed as either too extreme or too sceptical by those on the Holladay-Lundbom end of the spectrum (for example, 'a form of academic blindness' [Jones 1992: 63]). However, there are already signs that a new generation of scholars is emerging which will disavow these 'historicist' approaches in order to develop holistic accounts of a textualist nature for

reading the book—freed from past obsessions with history and theology (cf. Polk 1984; Diamond 1987).

III. *Baruch the Scribe*

Jeremiah is unique among the prophetic books in that it contains a narrative which is read by many commentators as depicting part of the process whereby the oracles of Jeremiah came to be gathered in a written scroll. Jeremiah 36 is treated by Holladay as containing ‘the genesis of the Book of Jeremiah’ (1989: 253). The figure of Baruch raises many problems for modern interpreters of Jeremiah. Apart from the uniqueness of the depiction of a prophet going about with a scribe for a companion, Baruch also figures in postbiblical literature as a writer and as the more dominant companion of Jeremiah (cf. Carroll 1989a: 91-94). While most scholars do not attribute the later literature associated with Baruch to that scribe, they do tend to regard the role of Baruch in the book of Jeremiah as evidence which enlightens the original production of the book. The evidence is undeniably literary, so one must presume that other factors control the decision to read the book of Jeremiah as the production of Baruch the scribe. It may well be that Jeremiah 36 depicts the reflection of a moment when the prophetic traditions were being transformed into writing, and this story of the inscribing of prophecy was recognized as being essentially the work of scribes and not of prophets. The inscribalization of prophecy reflects the social switch from prophetic orality to scribal literacy (cf. Dearman 1990, Jamieson-Drake 1991 and Orton 1989 on the role of scribes).

The archaeological evidence for a Berekyahu, dated by literary reference to the book of Jeremiah (cf. Avigad 1986; Dearman 1990; P. King 1993: 93-99), has convinced many scholars that the Baruch figure in the text reflects the historical personage rather than a literary representation of the historical figure. Brueggemann (1994) has developed an interesting account of the relation between Jeremiah and Baruch which recognizes the incorporation of the prophet’s work into the pragmatics of whatever Baruch may be said to represent in the tradition (the scribal-Deuteronomistic circles). Carroll’s lack of interest in such a historical figure is due to his very different way of reading the book of Jeremiah.

Even allowing for the existence of a historical Berekyahu around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, this would not rule out the possibility (or likelihood) that the writers of the book of Jeremiah had constructed a fictional Baruch as the writer (scribe) of Jeremiah’s oracles. After all, the writers of the Baruch literature on the Roman destruction of Jerusalem have constructed such a Baruch, so why not the writers of Jeremiah? It is all a matter of hermeneutics and preferred readings. Most writers on Jeremiah prefer the reading of Jeremiah and Baruch as historical figures, whereas

Carroll prefers a reading which views Jeremiah and Baruch as writerly representations of the textual tradition (cf. Collins 1993b: 120-21). These preferred readings reflect different hermeneutic approaches to reading the biblical text.

IV. *The Deuteronomistic Edition of Jeremiah*

The two major positions on the much disputed relationship between the book of Jeremiah and Deuteronomism, the book of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History were written in the 1970s by Weippert (1973) and by Thiel (1973; also 1981). Their radically different ways of reading the deuteronomistic-like phrases and sections (prose narratives) of Jeremiah, similar to the different ways Holladay and McKane read Jeremiah, have set the paths (binary opposition, perhaps) for most subsequent readings of Jeremiah.

For Weippert and Holladay the deuteronomistic-like language of Jeremiah is to be explained as belonging to Jeremiah's own diction. McConville also prefers a reading opposed to McKane and Carroll and believes that Jeremiah and the Deuteronomistic History are not necessarily incompatible, since both use language dependent on Deuteronomy (cf. McConville 1993: 22-26, 173-76). However, for Thiel and, to some extent, McKane, such language betrays the influence of a substantial deuteronomistic editing of the book of Jeremiah. Whichever of these points of view is followed, some allowance also has to be made for post-deuteronomistic influences on the book of Jeremiah and for non-deuteronomistic elements in the book.

In the most recent discussion of the problem (Gross 1995), a wide range of analysis sets out the issues involved in this topos of Jeremiah studies (cf. Lohfink 1991, 1995). The historical approach to reading Jeremiah (see the highly influential Lohfink 1981) inevitably links Jeremiah to the Josianic reform and therefore to the discovery of the scroll of Deuteronomy (as represented by 2 Kings 22-23). Change any one of those presuppositions, and connections between the deuteronomistic movement (what Carroll [1981: 13-18] has called 'the ideology of Deuteronomism') and the figure of Jeremiah disappear from the picture. Again it is all a question of basic and preferred hermeneutics. Holladay offers perhaps the most extreme variation on the conventional reading of Kings and Jeremiah. He argues that as a young man Jeremiah was a propagandist for Josiah (cf. Lohfink 1981), that the youthful prophet spoke counterproclamations against city and citizens during the septennial readings of Deuteronomy (which were prescribed in Deut. 31.9-13), and went on doing so at seven-year intervals until after the destruction of Jerusalem (Holladay 1985; 1986: 1-2; 1989: 27-35). This hypothetical explanation of the relationship between the book of Jeremiah and the book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomistic literature) makes that

relation one of mimicry rather than of influence or editing. It is an ingenious proposal which, like everything else in Jeremiah studies, depends upon the hermeneutical presuppositions of readers of the book of Jeremiah. Once doubt that there ever was a septennial reading of Deuteronomy or that there ever was an actual finding of the scroll (of Deuteronomy) in the temple, and Holladay's proposal loses all force or conviction. True to conventional readings of the Bible, Holladay makes the material in Jeremiah on the 'new covenant' (31.31-34) genuine to the prophet and then locates the occasion of its proclamation at a point after the fall of Jerusalem in 586–587. According to him that pericope was to be Jeremiah's last word in Jerusalem (Holladay 1989: 35).

Fundamental questions about the relationship of Jeremiah to the Deuteronomistic corpus need to be pursued in depth. In particular, scholars need to probe the presuppositions built into any account of the relationship between Jeremiah and Deuteronomistic literary tradition. Traditional answers which assume that Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History predate the production of Jeremiah already skew the answer to the question of relationship. The relationship could be the other way around, but biblical scholarship has not yet got into the business of critically reexamining its own fundamental presuppositions. Unlike other books in the prophetic corpus, Jeremiah has strong similarities to the Deuteronomistic corpus of literature and specifically names prophets other than the prophet after whom the book is named. However, while Jeremiah and the Deuteronomistic History do share a strong interest in named prophets, they do not mention the same prophets. If the end of the Judean kingdom is seen by various scholars as being a period of prophetic and partisan strife (cf. Hardmeier 1990b; Seitz 1989b; Stipp 1992), the book of Jeremiah depicts it as such while the Deuteronomistic History does not. Only the book of Jeremiah focuses on conflict between prophets as characterizing the closing decades of the Judean kingdom. So while the books of Jeremiah and Kings have much in common, they differ fundamentally on the subject of prophetic conflict. One could argue that Jeremiah addresses a blank in Kings which the redactors of Jeremiah filled in, making the relationship between the books both intertextual and supplementational, thereby establishing a link between both blocks of literature; or, one could argue that the discourse of prophecy in Jeremiah is very different from the prophetic discourses embedded in Kings. The differences in explanations offered by scholars in Jeremiah studies are unlikely ever to be resolved in favour of one agreed reading of the significance of the different textualities bearing on the question. Since the book of Jeremiah focuses heavily on conflict, it is fitting that contemporary readers of Jeremiah should be in such conflict about its interpretation. Every aspect of the reading of the book of Jeremiah today is a site of contested meanings giving rise to a conflict of interpretations among the commentators: *doctores scinduntur*. 'Twas ever thus!

V. *The Relation of the Masoretic Text to the Septuagint*

It has long been recognized that there are significant differences between the Hebrew and Greek versions of the book of Jeremiah. The work of Janzen and Tov (challenged by Soderlund [1985]) on the complexities of the relationship between the Hebrew text of Jeremiah (represented by the MT) and the Greek text (represented by the LXX) constitutes part of the ongoing debate about the history of the production of the book of Jeremiah. Ziegler's Septuagint text (1976) provides ample data for serious study of the differing Greek versions of Jeremiah, and it is a particular feature of McKane's work on Jeremiah that study of the Versions has been featured in his commentary (1986, 1996b). Stulman's sterling work (1985) on the prose material of Jeremiah, including a reconstruction of the *Vorlage* underlying the LXX prose sections of Jeremiah, has made available a text which allows the general reader to see how the textuality of the book may once have looked.

Generally, Jeremiah studies (in English) have tended to work with the Hebrew text and its translations into vernacular languages without treating the implications raised by the differences in the Greek texts of Jeremiah, but considerable energy has gone into the comparative study of the Hebrew and Greek traditions of Jeremiah in recent decades. If any trend in such comparative study can be discerned, it is a tendency to regard the Greek text as representing a first edition of Jeremiah, with the Hebrew text representing a second edition and the Qumran material testifying to the fluidity of the textual traditions of Jeremiah. Study of individual pericopae of the book of Jeremiah has shown the task of discerning first and second editions (or the priority of one language tradition over the other language tradition) to be much more complicated than first appeared to be the case. Good cases can be presented for regarding parts of the MT to be prior to the Greek version and vice versa (especially in the work of Tov), so that the picture looks much more complex now than it did in the 1970s when the work of Janzen set the tone of the discussion (1973). The unevenness in various sections of the text in the two languages means that ad hoc and focused arguments need to be made for each separate piece of text, rather than sweeping judgments for the texts as textual totalities.

A much more piecemeal approach, analyzing each section (line by line) in relation to an imagined earlier Hebrew text (*Vorlage*), is now required, and in Jeremiah studies it has become more difficult to generate broad arguments and totalizing claims. As each element of study appears, greater caution has to be exercised in the tendency to generalize about the socio-historical development of the texts of Jeremiah. Either the study of these textual traditions has to become both more theorized and more sophisticated, or there will have to be a general abandonment of any hope of ever getting to the root matter of the generation of the texts of Jeremiah. The

acknowledgment of a greater degree of uncertainty about the origins, the evolution and the finalized forms of the text of Jeremiah would appear to be warranted from the work of the past decades of textual investigations.

VI. *A Sampling of Work on Selected Parts of Jeremiah*

Reading through the multiple works (commentaries, monographs, books and articles) on Jeremiah of the past dodecade, I have come to the conclusion that Jeremiah studies are even more complex and complicated than I had imagined when I was writing my own commentary in the early 1980s. I clearly underestimated just how complex and complicated they were, and I am therefore grateful to writers like McKane for correcting my misreadings of the book and its many discrete traditions. The number and sheer size of commentaries on Jeremiah (Carroll's [1986] is nearly nine hundred pages long; Holladay's [1986, 1989] is more than twelve hundred pages, and McKane's [1986, 1996b] nearly sixteen hundred pages) render it impossible to give an adequate, let alone a comprehensive, account of the interpretation of the substance of the book of Jeremiah. A few sections and topics will be selected here to provide the merest sample of the analytical and interpretive work done on Jeremiah over the past twelve years. These examples should prove adequate to demonstrating the conflict of readings currently going on in Jeremiah studies. They are not chosen in an entirely arbitrary manner, but reflect the most contested sites of meaning in Jeremiah studies, and also some of my own interests in the text and in readings of current discussions going on of the more complicated aspects of the interpretation of the book of Jeremiah. I have chosen the opening cycle of poems in the book (1.4–6.30), the lament poems in chs. 11–20, the topos of prophetic conflict in relation to Jeremiah the prophet, and chs. 30–31, with some feminist/*Ideologiekritik* observations on the text of Jeremiah as sample sections for focusing this review of recent work in Jeremiah studies. The sheer volume of minor studies of words and phrases in Jeremiah indicates something of the strong interest in the language, rhetoric and tropes of the book of Jeremiah, but the philological approach to Jeremiah (best exemplified by McKane's magisterial work) does not lend itself so easily to a summarizing review approach to recent study.

A. Jeremiah 1 and the Cycle of Poems in Jeremiah 2–6

The key to understanding any commentary on Jeremiah is to be found in its interpretation of Jer. 1.4–10 and how it reads this pericope in relation to 1.1–3. The colophon in 1.1–3 represents what the final redactor(s) wished readers to hear about Jeremiah and how they should relate the 'words of', or 'deeds of', or even 'affairs of' (Liwak 1987: 78–103; 1988: 96) Jeremiah to the period in which they are set by the framework of the book. Conventional

readings of the book of Jeremiah have opted to read the colophon as containing reliable historical information and assign Jeremiah's birth to the period 650–640 BCE and his call to be a prophet to the year 627–626 (cf. Jones 1992: 61–63). Holladay, on the other hand, prefers to view 627–626 BCE as the year of Jeremiah's birth rather than of his call (1986: 17). For McKane the section does not provide any historical access to the time of Jeremiah's birth or the beginnings of his ministry of the word, but is a Deuteronomistic interpretation which assigns Jeremiah's activity to the reign of Josiah (McKane 1986: 1–14). McKane favours the reign of Jehoiakim as the time when Jeremiah began his ministry. For Carroll 'conventions conceal particularity' (Carroll 1986: 92), so he finds little historical information in the text. This is consistent with his reading of Jeremiah from an *Ideologiekritik* point of view and is of a piece with the rest of his commentary. Jones dismisses all such interpretive variations on the conventional reading of the text and accepts the text at face value: 'We are left with the traditional interpretation that the editor had substantially true information, which he neither misunderstood nor invented; and this is not a tradition-bound judgment' (1992: 63).

The non-conventional approaches to reading Jeremiah (for instance, the readings of Carroll, McKane and to some extent Holladay) are not to be dismissed out of hand as 'a cavalier treatment of the text' (Jones 1992: 62 on all views which do not read 627–626 BCE as the date of Jeremiah's call), unless serious arguments are provided for reading the text at face value and as if ideology (or ideological considerations) could never have been involved in the construction of the book. Is there no possibility that the editors of the book of Jeremiah could have been producing a *representation* of Jeremiah the prophet rather than just *reporting* past events? Texts as complex as the book of Jeremiah are not frequently found in the ancient world (archaeology has not yet found any relating to the Hebrew Bible). Consequently, some account needs to be given of how such a text was produced, or how it evolved, before reading 'at face value' can be employed as an argument against alternative reading strategies.

Contemporary writing on Jeremiah tends to divide into two camps. One side prefers to read texts at 'face value', with minor adjustments and rejigging of the text for greater symmetry. The other side prefers to read texts as if they had undergone considerable rewriting and reinterpretation, so that their current form has been modified considerably from the original. Hence, a conflict of preferred reading methodologies dominates contemporary interpretations of the book of Jeremiah. There are huge interpretive issues involved here, and it would take a book on the hermeneutics of reading biblical texts to umpire the matter fairly among the conflicting reading strategies currently at work on the book of Jeremiah.

If interpreting Jeremiah 1 is the key to understanding the hermeneutic systems at work in any individual commentary or monograph on Jeremiah,

the exegesis and interpretation of Jeremiah 2–6 are fundamental to grasping how each writer reads the book (see analysis of these chapters in Althann 1983 [for chs. 4–6]; Biddle 1990; Hardmeier 1991b, 1996; and Liwak 1987). The poems which form the cycles in 2.4–4.2 and 4.5–6.27 contain a wide range of generic material and diverse rhetorical elements, including a considerable amount of material transformed by the addition of further material and edited into ‘a new entity’ (Biddle 1990: 228). The content of the cycles represents an ideological commentary on a sweep of Israelite history from the exodus to the destruction of Judah/Jerusalem; hence, the book of Jeremiah has its own short *alternative* version of the primary narrative of the Hebrew Bible found in the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History (Exodus–2 Kings). The reshaping and reformulations going on in chs. 2–3 in effect produce a kind of ‘theological treatise’ reflecting the ‘influence of “orthodox” post-exilic prayers of confession’ (Biddle 1990: 228) which, in turn, introduces the work of Jeremiah to readers and hearers of the tradition. Whatever classical elements of Hebrew rhetoric may be found in these poems—Althann regards the writer of chs. 4–6 as ‘a great religious poet’ and identifies that poet with Jeremiah (1983: 307)—the fully edited sections constitute a grand *ideological* introduction to the Jeremiah tradition from the vantage point of the post-catastrophe period (or later). Commentators on Jeremiah may use their exegesis of these chapters to argue for their own particular views of the relationship between history and prophecy (well summed up in Liwak 1987: 303–31). The grand sweep of rhetoric, using constantly changing multiple images, depicting Israel–Judah’s history from its desert ‘beginning’ to its urban ‘end’, with confessional liturgies forming a ‘present day’ actualizing aspect of the ‘sermon’, points to a ‘fictionalizing’ mode spelling out the import of Jeremiah’s preaching for the latter-day community to whom his words are now applied by the redactors of the tradition (cf. the similar summarizing use of Isaiah 1 to introduce the book of Isaiah).

By placing the war poems of 4.5–6.27, which announce the onslaught of ‘the foe from the north’, at the beginning of the tradition, after the call to repentance (addressed to the community contemporaneous with the production of the scroll), the redactors have focused the work of Jeremiah on the proclamation of the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. the king’s summary of Jeremiah’s words in 36.29). In the production of the MT the importance of this aspect of Jeremiah’s words is given greater symmetry by the placement of the ‘oracles against the nations’ at the end of the book in chs. 46–51, with the repetition of ‘the foe from the north’ topos now directed against Babylon, Jerusalem’s destroyer (this symmetry is lacking in the LXX, which has a different editorial policy schema). If it is the case that ‘At the beginning were the words of an individual figure; at the end we find a complex book which transcends this figure’ (Liwak 1988: 96), it is also the case

that 'we have no way of knowing who it was who had "charge" of the texts' (Liwak 1988: 96). The producers of Jeremiah remain unknown (in my opinion). The more dominant approach to reading Jeremiah, which attributes to the prophet and/or Baruch (and their immediate followers?) the various editions of the scroll(s) of Jeremiah within a short timespan, does not allow sufficient time for the richness and creativity of the tradition-making processes as do approaches that recognize a longer period of time and a greater degree of complexity in the production of those scrolls. 'The process of re-discovering the text requires a creative exegesis which admits of a multi-dimensional concept of task and methodology, if the complex state of the texts and their history is to be satisfactorily studied' (Liwak 1988: 94).

The great strength of McKane's approach is that he takes full cognizance of the untidiness of the Jeremiah tradition and does not attempt to subsume that lack of tidiness in some overarching theory of redaction. Meier, in his analysis of direct discourse in Jeremiah (1992), also recognizes this chaotic state of the text. Jeremiah, he says, 'is the most varied, unpredictable, and, quite simply, chaotic of any book in the Hebrew Bible' (p. 258) and 'the most difficult book in the Hebrew Bible with respect to discerning strategies in the marking of [direct discourse]' (p. 272). Such a book requires a theory of its composition which duly recognizes its inchoate and chaotic state. This ought not to be diminished or misrepresented by any theory proposing a neat, rational compositional mode.

B. The Laments in Jeremiah 11–20

The poems of lament or complaint scattered throughout chs. 11–20 together constitute one of the most contested portions of the book of Jeremiah. A considerable number of monographs were produced on this topos in the 1980s (Diamond 1987; Mottu 1985; O'Connor 1988; Pohlmann 1989: 1–111; Polk 1984; M. Smith 1990; also, in 1987, a reprint of Baumgartner's original 1917 monograph on the laments appeared in an English translation). The presence of these psalm-like poems in Jeremiah 11–20 and their similarity to certain poems in the book of Psalms (cf. Bonnard 1960) merits careful analysis, since it is very unusual for biblical prophets to use psalm-like poems as a mode of self-expression. With the possible exception of the psalm attributed to Jonah during his internment in the large fish in Jonah 2, no other psalms are attributed to any other prophet.

Most recent writers on the laments have found in the text reasons to date the pieces to the pre-exilic era and to attribute them to the prophet Jeremiah. As such, they embody Jeremiah's struggle to come to terms with his mission, and with the opposition generated among various social strata of his day, especially among the other prophets. Thus, the laments may be interpreted as part of the topos of prophetic conflict in the book. Holladay reads 12.1–5 this

way: 'It is altogether likely that they are Jrm's prophetic opponents, the optimistic prophets' (Holladay 1986: 370). Others have argued that the function of such laments in the Jeremiah tradition is to illustrate the people's rejection of Jeremiah's preaching of the divine word and 'to advance the movement of events by the prophet's intensifying cries for vengeance' (O'Connor 1988: 158). Still other scholars see the laments as 'confessions of Jeremiah', the presentation of 'Jeremiah's special identification with Yahweh as sign and symbol of Israel's relationship with Yahweh' (cf. M. Smith 1990: 64). While Mottu (1985) sees in these 'confessions' a protestation against suffering, it should be noted that such a protest undermines, where it does not actually deconstruct, the claims in chs. 2–20 that judgment is universally warranted from 'the least to the greatest' in Jerusalem, Judah and among the nations (cf. 25.30–38). The distinction drawn between 'the wicked' and 'the righteous' in the lament poems makes nonsense of the sweeping assertions in chs. 2–11 that everybody is wicked (cf. 5.1–6). The outcry of these laments on behalf of the righteous (whether Jeremiah's or others') admits to the presence in the community of those who are 'righteous', who turn to YHWH and who therefore do not warrant destruction. Already the tradition is undermining the force of chs. 2–6 by drawing distinctions among 'the wicked'. The issue of theodicy, which is so much a feature of the book of Jeremiah (cf. Carroll 1981: 66–73), is severely challenged by the explicit injustice embodied in the laments, which protest destruction of the 'righteous'.

Much of the highly contested debate about the nature, interpretation and import of the lament poems has to do with the generic analysis of the poems, the understanding of their relationship to the prophet Jeremiah and the interpretation of their role in the Jeremiah tradition. Whether they are regarded as 'laments' or 'complaints', 'confessions' or 'prayers' will substantially influence their interpretation and significantly gloss any reading of the book. Jones rejects the collective identification of the poems as 'confessions', but goes on to observe:

This is not an apt term, because only allusively are they a key to the inner consciousness of the prophet. They are from first to last, prophecy in the sense that they register the phenomenon of a prophet poised painfully between the twin prophetic duty of uttering the divine word and representing God's people in prayer and solidarity. Inspired by the psalm laments, these passages have been precipitated by his tortured situation and so become themselves a phenomenon of prophecy. (1992: 188)

It seems to me that no matter what interpretation is offered of the lament poems in the book of Jeremiah, there is always a surplus of meaning left over from integrating any such interpretation into a coherent and consistent reading of the book as a whole. This renders all interpretations inadequate as exhaustive treatments of the text. McKane acutely recognizes this when he writes *à propos* 15.10–14:

It is not inapposite that Yahweh's answer to Jeremiah's outburst should have a public orientation, since the relief of his inner, insupportable disarray will come from some mitigation of his hard destiny as a prophet of doom. This does, however, involve the admission that a remnant is contemplated, over against those passages where nothing less than total dissolution seems to be envisaged in Jeremiah's utterances. The comfort which Jeremiah receives, is a word of qualified hope for the future of his people. A remnant will survive to embrace a better future, but first of all the land will be ravaged by an invading army with all the sufferings and excesses which attend such a catastrophe. Yet the collapse of the old, with all its destructive aspects and the choking dust of demolition, is not simply a violent end, but a levelling of the ground and an uncovering of new foundations for the renewal of a common life in company with Yahweh (1986: 349-50).

McKane raises an important point about these poems. In their setting in the book of Jeremiah they sit uneasily with the poems of absolute judgment and represent a second phase of the interpretive development of the tradition. The destruction will not be (has proved not to have been!) as catastrophic as Jeremiah's words may have suggested. Reflection and recontextualization have brought about fundamental shifts in meaning and significance. After the catastrophe, survival. Hence it became necessary to introduce into the discussion a differentiating process whereby some people were recognized as 'wicked' but others had to be designated as 'righteous'. Among such righteous folk was the prophet Jeremiah (and whatever he may be said to represent). The laments vindicate Jeremiah as righteous, but they also vindicate strata within the nation as (equally) righteous. Survival underwrote righteousness (cf. Jer. 40-43; 45).

The theodicy thickens!

The approaches of Diamond and Polk to reading these poems have been somewhat different in focus and intent. They read the laments holistically in terms of their contribution to the representation of Jeremiah as an exemplary figure in the book (whether as real or fictional person is really unimportant: cf. Diamond 1987: 189-91). For Diamond the two cycles of poems (11.18-15.21; 18.18-20.18) constitute presentations of a dispute between Jeremiah and YHWH over the nature of the prophetic mission, and of a dispute between Jeremiah and the nation over the fate of that mission (pp. 177-88). Polk, on the other hand, is more concerned with the 'language of the self' in the construction of the figure of Jeremiah the prophet. His is a complex argument, but one which produces a multi-dimensional portrait of Jeremiah as a prophet:

Thus, a responsible language of the heart, and the exercise of the capacities entailed therein, give the self form and definition, depth and breadth. So it is with the prophetic persona's primary religious discourse. In it, we have seen, Jeremiah is engaged in the process of self-constitution.

Through it he also manifests a profound concept of himself, though it is a working, not a theoretical, concept. Further, it has been shown that his *differentiated* command of both the first-person singular and plural in such language instantiates a self not immediately and automatically reducible to the community of selves, yet a self which is capable of enacting an identification with that community. Finally, it was repeatedly maintained that the conventional or stereotypical quality of the language of the heart does not in itself negate the language's self-constituting character. It was in this context that we so often insisted upon respecting the normative logic of Jeremiah's prayers in both their intercessory and individual forms. (Polk 1984: 168)

The very sophisticated readings of the laments by Diamond and Polk help to point forward to newer strategies for reading Jeremiah which go beyond the traditional obsessions with history and the historical Jeremiah, to an understanding of the textualities of the book of Jeremiah and of the essential textuality of the Jeremiah figure represented by such textualities.

C. *Prophetic Conflict in Jeremiah*

The books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel both contain material focused against the prophets (Isaiah only has a few fragments directed against prophets), thus representing the period before the collapse of Jerusalem as a time of competing prophetic strategies. Major work on prophetic conflict in Jeremiah was done by Overholt and others in the period before the dodecade focused on in this review. More recently, both Hardmeier (1990b) and Seitz (1989b) have produced major monographs on conflict in Jeremiah in relation to the exilic period.

Hardmeier's densely argued redactional analysis (1990b) concentrates on the narratives of conflict in Jeremiah 37–40 (and 2 Kings 18–20). Seitz also includes some consideration of these narratives (1989b: 263–82), but these are narratives of conflict between Jeremiah, the king and the princes rather than between Jeremiah and the prophets. What is to be made of the two cycles of material in Jeremiah directed against 'the prophets' (23.9–40; 27–29)?

To the close reader of the Bible the focus on prophetic conflict in Jeremiah and Ezekiel is in striking contrast to the representation of the closing decades of the Judean monarchy in the Deuteronomistic History. Perhaps that History's refusal to employ for the period language drawn from the common biblical notion of competing prophetic discourses reflects its own ideology (see the work of Begg on the topos of *Prophetenschweigen* in the History [1985]). Whatever the differentiation between the prophetic texts and the History on this point may signify, it is clear that the topos of prophetic conflict is a dominant one in Jeremiah.

Most commentators seem content to accept the position that Jeremiah as prophet is to be exempted from all the criticism of the prophets found in the

book of Jeremiah, though some may be prepared to admit to some difficulty in discerning who Jeremiah's opponents among the prophets were:

Jeremiah's difficulties in distinguishing between true and false prophets show that there was no easy, external means of distinguishing between himself and the others. . . we should not read back into the situation the clear black and white distinction which history has bequeathed to us. For us the prophets are Jeremiah and the succession of which he was part, and our problem is to identify the prophets with whom he came into conflict. For the contemporaries of Jeremiah the prophets were the institutional prophets and their problem was to know what to make of the non-conforming, unpredictable, irrepressible Jeremiah. Jeremiah himself [in 23.9-40] shows that his quarrel was not with the prophets as an institution but with their abuse of their trust. (Jones 1992: 303)

In chs. 27-29, Jeremiah is represented as the protagonist against the prophets, especially against Hananiah, but in 23.9-40 there is nothing to warrant excluding Jeremiah from inclusion in the superscription 'concerning the prophets' (23.9). The logic of reading the book of Jeremiah as the production of Jeremiah and Baruch may function as such a warrant, but it is difficult to avoid the feeling that 23.9-40 proves equally destructive as a critique of Jeremiah's own performance. This is especially so when in 25.1-7 Jeremiah is represented as defending his own failure to turn the nation (cf. 23.22) in terms which he would not have permitted to the other prophets (Carroll 1986: 463; 1995b: 41-46; McKane 1986: 584 dissenting). In my opinion, the close proximity of 23.18, 22 and 25.3-7 still represents a glaringly deconstructive moment in the Jeremiah tradition. The prophet who has condemned all the other prophets for failing to turn the nation is himself guilty of failing to turn the nation. Most commentators prefer not to read the implication of the texts in such a thoroughgoing fashion, but Carroll's reading does permit the question about Jeremiah as prophet to be raised in the first place.

Carroll's work on Jeremiah overlaps with his work on prophecy in general and in the case of Jeremiah he has raised, along with Auld, the important question 'was Jeremiah a prophet?'. To some extent the difference between the LXX's representation of Jeremiah as prophet and the MT's much increased focus on him as such (cf. Auld 1983, 1984; Carroll 1986: 55-63) raises the question for readers of the Jeremiah literature. The full weight of the *Rezeptionsgeschichte* and also of the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the book of Jeremiah militates against any account of Jeremiah which would question his status as a prophet. But Auld's analysis is strikingly pertinent here and some explanation ought to be provided for the anomaly between the LXX and MT representations of Jeremiah as prophet. Given the fundamental obsession of the biblical writers with representing every major figure in the Bible as a prophet (cf. Barton 1986)—from A to Z as it were (Abraham the

prophet in Genesis 20 to Zechariah the priest who prophesied in 2 Chron. 24.20-22)—there is a *prima facie* case for asking the question, ‘was the original Jeremiah a prophet, or have the redactors created a Jeremiah in the image of a prophet?’. With very few exceptions, the posing of such questions by Auld and Carroll has been rejected out of hand by most writers on the subject, using proxy data from extra-biblical sources (cf. Barstad 1993; Laato 1996; Overholt 1990a, 1990b]. This, however, misses the point made differently by both these writers.

A comprehensive review of the current work on Jeremiah would have to focus on this issue and deal with it adequately, but within the confines of a brief review survey of recent work on Jeremiah it is not possible to pursue this topic because it raises too many fundamental principles and hermeneutical issues in biblical studies. Suffice it to say that both Auld’s and Carroll’s claims that Jeremiah’s original status was not that of a prophet have been rejected by the vast majority of writers on Jeremiah. Also, Carroll’s further point about the extreme difficulty of demonstrating that there is anything of a historically reliable nature in the book of Jeremiah—it is mostly ideological representation reflecting post-destruction of Jerusalem politics—has been rejected by virtually every writer on Jeremiah, so the issue of whether or not Jeremiah was a prophet is liable to disappear from the agenda of Jeremiah studies. Here is one example of the flavour of that rejection:

A more radical view has found expression recently in the works of R.P. Carroll. This is the view that this editorial setting [1.1-3] need not reflect any reliable historical information at all, that it is a fictional creation which may or may not reflect traditional beliefs or may indeed be imaginary. Accordingly the character of the book of Jeremiah is fiction, and it is not possible to proceed from the book to the Jeremiah of history. The fact that it is not possible to demolish this view does not mean that it is cogent. Probability is the guide in all such judgments, and probability, in my view, leads in a more positive direction. The hypothesis which is eventually seen to make sense of all the evidence is the one that will prevail. What we have is one of the largest and most powerful collections of prophetic tradition in the prophetic corpus. Such a tradition has a pedigree in the prophetic succession and comparisons may justly be made. Adequately to account for it, there must be a creative originator who generates a particular tradition. This tradition may span a long period, according to his influence and that of his successors. The name of the prophet covers the whole tradition, both that which he said and did, and that which he did not say and do. But the historical rootedness of this tradition is an integral element of the phenomenon. To dissolve it is to fail to understand the nature of the material and the process of prophecy. This is different from the attribution of psalms to David or wisdom sayings to Solomon or later legendary traditions to Jeremiah. Not to recognise this difference is a form of academic blindness. The historical figure of Jeremiah is necessary to the facts. To dispense with him is to leave the tradition without its inspiration or its explanation, and it is gratuitous to do so. (Jones 1992: 62-63)

Perhaps it would have saved a great deal of puzzled exegesis in the twentieth century if the Deuteronomistic Historian(s) had shown even the slightest knowledge of and interest in a prophet named Jeremiah who was active in the closing decades of the Judean kingdom. The thesis put forward by Auld and Carroll has more force to it than the dismissal of it by recent Jeremiah commentators would appear to acknowledge (see Collins 1993a; Jarick 1995).

D. Jeremiah 30–31

I have selected Jeremiah 30–31 for special comment because these chapters belong to the so-called ‘book of consolation’ (Jeremiah 30–33; what Fischer calls ‘das Trostbüchlein’ of chs. 30–31 [1993]) which has attracted a number of monographs (for instance, Bozak 1991; Fischer 1993; Levin 1985 on Jer. 31.31–34), and because they in effect polarize commentators in that some of them read the poems as coming from Jeremiah’s youthful period (cf. Lohfink 1981) and others read them as being post-Jeremianic (formal analysis in Holladay 1989: 155–71). Jeremiah 30–31 may also be read in conjunction with chs. 2–3, so that intertextual connections can be made between the two pericopae as the framing of the Jeremiah tradition. Given a different redactional arrangement (from those followed by LXX and MT) one could imagine a version of Jeremiah where chs. 30–31 formed an inclusio with chs. 2–3 (especially 2.2–3 and 31.21–22). Similarities between the rhetoric of chs. 30–31 and some of the tropes of Isaiah 40–55 also allow for more wide-ranging interpretations vis-à-vis the production of such ‘post-exilic’ literature.

Equally important in the exegesis of chs. 30–31 has been a quite dominant feminist attention to the text (cf. Kaiser 1987; Shields 1995; Tribble 1978). The book of Jeremiah, like the books of Hosea, Isaiah and Ezekiel, uses a considerable amount of feminine metaphors, especially about the city of Jerusalem as woman/wife of YHWH (cf. Galambush 1992: 53–57), in its rhetoric of judgment, destruction and renewal. One striking aspect of chs. 30–31 is the way the text moves back and forth between masculine and feminine forms of address (cf. Bozak 1991: 155–72). The woman so denounced in chs. 2–3 becomes the woman cajoled and solicited in chs. 30–31: that is, Jerusalem’s destruction is represented rhetorically in chs. 2–3 as a savage attack on a woman that is quite justified and as the violation of a whore—the language in Jeremiah is excessively violent (just as in Hosea 1–3 and Ezek. 16; 23)—whereas in ch. 31 there is a switch to the language of tenderness and renewal. But why such focus on the womanliness of the city/nation/land (or whatever Rachel represents in 31.15)? Bozak suggests that it was the experience of the diaspora, living among the Babylonians, which helped Judean writers to appreciate the greater social roles women could play:

Babylon, part of larger Mesopotamian culture, had developed in such a way that the woman played an important role in all aspects of society. Without ever attaining full equality with the male, she had an active part in the economic as well as the familial structures and thus gained a high level of independence (even if this independence did not touch equally all strata of society nor did it affect all women in each stratum). It would be hard to imagine that Israelite women, living side by side with the Babylonian/Mesopotamian, could have escaped the influence of these ideas of greater autonomy and a wider role in society. (Bozak 1991: 164-65)

Other explanations may be sought in language related to the notion of the patron goddess of a city as being married to the god, that is, YHWH and Jerusalem as lovers/husband and wife (cf. Isa. 54.5-8; 62.1-5; 66.7-11), and the rhetoric arising from such a dynamic relationship.

E. Feminine Imagery in Jeremiah and the Ethics of Interpretation

Symbolic language may be used negatively or positively. There is nothing inherent in feminine language which makes it necessarily negative, but there is in Jeremiah, as with various prophetic books, a considerable degree of obscene language (what Carroll [1986: 134] has called 'religious pornography') especially in relation to negative feminine images. Feminist readers of Jeremiah (and other prophetic books, not to mention the whole Hebrew Bible) have voiced very strong objections to this kind of language, especially to its use in texts deemed to constitute 'sacred Scripture' for so many religious communities (cf. Exum 1995). This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the feminist readings of the prophets (see Brenner [ed.] 1995; Brenner and van Dijk-Hemmes 1993; Becking and Dijkstra [eds.] 1996), even of Jeremiah, but it should be noted that the book of Jeremiah is one of the focal points of much recent feminist writing on the Bible. Carroll's identification of 'religious pornography' in Jeremiah has led to an exchange with some feminist writers on the problem of such pornographic texts (Brenner 1993; Carroll 1995a, 1996b). Here it is necessary to grasp the nettle of ideology in the book of Jeremiah: the great sweeping passages of prophetic pornography (Hos. 1; 3; Jer. 2-3; 5.7-8; 13.21-27; Ezek. 16; 23) raise many questions of interpretation as well as requiring an *Ideologiekritik* approach which will come to terms with the ideology underlying the text. Feminist interests in the text have to do with reader-response approaches of the twentieth century and are concerned with the deforming effects of reading the Bible in modern society. This point of view raises acutely the question of 'the ethics of reading' in modern society. Commentators on Jeremiah must be adjudged to have some responsibility to modern society in the matter of relating such ancient texts to contemporary thought. McKane's approach to Jeremiah suggests that he would deny any such responsibility, but then he denies any necessary connection between the words of the prophet Jeremiah

and what theologians would call 'the word of God' (1986: xcvi-xcix). It is, however, the theological commentators, who insist on reading the book of Jeremiah as if it were the word of God for our time (cf. Craigie *et al.* 1991: xxxi), who must answer directly for the problematic things in Jeremiah and who must explain how they should be read in contemporary society.

This question of 'the ethics of reading' will not go away, even though there is no room to deal with it here. Although many commentators on Jeremiah agree that the book has some bearing on modern thought (or living), it is far from clear that they are ever bothered by the problem of 'religious pornography' in the text or by the issues raised by feminist readers of Jeremiah (see Exum 1995 on this point). That is, in my opinion, a curious gap in sensibility and sensitivity in the reading of biblical texts. The Word Biblical Commentary certainly is of the opinion that sections of the text of Jeremiah have 'perpetual relevance', being 'as relevant in the 20th century' as when first stated (Craigie *et al.* 1991: 128 on Jer. 7.1-15):

But the judgmental theme also sheds light on a universe that is created in some mysterious sense with an inherent moral structure, a structure which in turn permeates the panoply of human history. And further it illuminates the prophetic faith in a passionate God, one who profoundly cares about human events and the fate of the chosen people. And it is these dimensions of Jeremiah's faith that still challenge the modern reader of the ancient book; somehow this vision of a prophet from the ancient world must be grasped and understood in our modern world. (p. 112 on 6.22-30)

I could wish for some argument to back up that claim, but I recognize it as reflecting the 'house ideology' of the commentary series in which it appears. However, at this point in my survey of the past twelve years of Jeremiah studies I feel that I have encroached on sensitive areas of biblical interpretation and, coming up against such a boundary marker as the reading of Jeremiah from within a specific theological tradition, I feel that I should draw to a conclusion this overly brief review of what in my judgment have been some of the more interesting features of an intensely busy period of excavating the book of Jeremiah.

VII. Conclusion

I am very conscious of only having touched on a few salient points in recent writing on Jeremiah. Because so much of the work has consisted of large commentaries and dense monographs, it has not been possible (outside of a book-length treatment) to give a detailed account of the multitude of different ways to read Jeremiah. I am equally conscious of the conflict of interpretations which has marked recent discussions of the reading of Jeremiah. While there may have been a surplus of meaning arising out of all the many studies on Jeremiah, there has also been serious conflict between

various readers of the text. While conflict may be an appropriate response to the reading of a book such as Jeremiah, itself so constituted by conflict, it has nevertheless been an unpleasant scholarly experience to encounter the degree of conflict generated in contemporary Jeremiah studies. This is not the place to analyse the sociology of biblical scholarship with reference to Jeremiah studies, but it would be false to give the impression that scholarly debate always stays within the bounds of courtesy and Enlightenment-style tolerance. Yet courtesy and toleration are fundamentally important values and the study of a book as disjointed, untidy and difficult as Jeremiah ought to instil such virtues in the participants in the conflict of interpretations arising out of the scrutiny of Jeremiah. Whitehead's point that 'perplexities of fact' make 'hard-headed clarity' and 'insistence on clarity' unwarranted ('sheer superstition') seems to me to be an admirable ruling applicable to all biblical studies and especially to Jeremiah studies.

At the same time, I would not expect to encounter again as magnificent or as comprehensive accounts of the book of Jeremiah as have been produced by the commentaries of Holladay and McKane. That level of prodigious work will never need to be done again. Beside them all other commentators pale into insignificance. I think that the day of the large-scale, comprehensive commentary is probably over (we await the production of Herrmann's massive commentary as the last in the series) and that the era of the more modest project is now dawning upon us.

Very many topics and issues in Jeremiah studies remain to be explored more fully and there is sufficient work for generations of scholars in the next century. The rise of feminism, reader-response interpretation and other postmodern approaches to the Bible will take Jeremiah studies off in many new, exciting and unpredictable directions. I shall not attempt to predict the directions in which that work will go, but at one level it will be an extension of the material described in this article. At other levels the work will be more imaginatively carried out by younger scholars now beginning to make their mark in the field.

CENTURY'S END: JEREMIAH STUDIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Robert P. Carroll*

Repeatedly calling upon direct observation, Jeremiah is a documentarian of distant yore who regards closely and firsthand a particular fallen world. Coles (1999: 22).

When asked if all this didn't make him depressed, Jeremiah replied, '*It's being so cheerful as keeps me going*'. Surprisingly, he says that Israel will return. 'Jerusalem will be re-established'. He said. 'A descendant of David will sit on the throne of Israel. God will save us. *Only not yet*'. Page (1998: 97).

I. Introduction

This brief article, with extended bibliography, is a follow-up to my 1996 survey of recent writings in Jeremiah studies published under the title of 'Surplus Meaning and the Conflict of Interpretations: A Dodecade of Jeremiah Studies (1984–95)' in this journal (Carroll 1996d). It is intended to conclude that partially completed survey piece, to put current Jeremiah Studies into perspective at the end of the twentieth century and especially to update the bibliography. Whatever may or may not be happening in Jeremiah studies, it is quite clear to me that the production of commentaries, books, articles, chapters in books and reviews of books on the book of Jeremiah continues apace and shows no sign whatsoever of drying up. The twenty-first century will, in my judgment, continue to see a thriving field of activity in Jeremiah studies, even though I think that the great age of *innovation* in Jeremiah studies represented by the last two decades of the twentieth century probably has now come to an end. The new structures of thinking about Jeremiah are in place and the older mainstream approaches

* Editor's note: Robert Carroll's untimely death, prior to the publication of this article, has deprived the scholarly community of one of its most creative and energetic members. He was a fine scholar and a personal friend. Like so many of my colleagues I will sorely miss his clever wit, his sharp mind, his candor, and his gentle but incisive way of asking the hard questions. We are all the better for having known him. AJH.

have been consolidated, so that the twenty-first century will inevitably see more of the same while, I would hope, allowing for some further broadening out of newer approaches to and developments of radical rethinking about the book of Jeremiah (see Holladay 1986; McKane 1986, 1996b).

At the twentieth century's end it is fair to say that the great commentaries of Holladay (1986, 1989) and McKane (1986, 1996b) now represent the twin boundary poles of the sub-discipline's focus, with varying points on the spectrum constituted by Holladay and McKane marked out by lesser commentaries. Herrmann's major BKAT commentary (1986; 1990a) does not now look as though it will be completed, certainly not in the twentieth century, and probably not by Herrmann himself. The repackaged commentary on Jeremiah by Brueggemann (1998) appears to be holding the floor in the United States as *theologically* the most acceptable form of exegeted reading of the book of Jeremiah (cf. Stulman 1998), though Holladay's great work is also clearly very influential (cf. Bandstra 1999: 332). The evangelical point of view on Jeremiah also remains well to the fore with J. Thompson's 1980 commentary and the *six-authored* Word Biblical Commentary (Craigie, Kelley and Drinkard 1991; Keown, Scalise and Smothers 1995). Bright's seminal Anchor Bible volume on Jeremiah (1965) is about to be rendered obsolete by its replacement in the Anchor Bible series by Lundbom's first volume of a two-volume commentary on Jeremiah (1999). However, in my judgment, Bright will retain an honoured position in the memory of Jeremiah studies relating to the second half of the twentieth century. Toward the McKane end of the spectrum of Jeremiah studies may be assigned the 1986 commentary of Carroll, reprinted in Britain (1996a) but now out of print in the United States. However, Carroll's thinking on Jeremiah has changed from the period when the OTL commentary was written in the early 1980s (cf. Carroll 1999a, 1999b, 2004). In general, there will be a continuing need to keep up to date with changing developments in the various sub-disciplines of reading Jeremiah, as new currents continue to appear and assert their influence. So, as the new century and millennium begin, the situation of Jeremiah studies may fairly be described as being in a most interesting state, constituted by a dialectic of conservative reinterpretation and radical rethinking.

The combination of Holladay and the new Lundbom, with Brueggemann as some sort of theological affirmation of the text *as stated*, and religious back-up of the mainstream American approach, suggests that in the West, the dominant voice of Jeremiah studies in the twenty-first century will be theirs, even though McKane's voice will be a powerful antidote to their voice (for all who have the ability to read him, and the good fortune to encounter his magnificent two-volume work [1996b]). McKane represents a polar position on the spectrum, at the inconcinnity end of that scale, compared with the other major commentators, all of whom appear close to the

concinny end of the spectrum of Jeremiah studies. Such would be my reading of the situation in Jeremiah studies as a new millennium dawns. The second volume of Lundbom's Anchor Bible (2004a; 2004b) will then make for a rolling-over of the conservative consensus in the mainstream of American scholarship on Jeremiah. Things will, of course, be different in European scholarship, where the radical critique of the Bible, started in the Enlightenment, will continue at a sharper pace and deeper level than has been the case in the United States.

Yet, there are radical voices to be heard in Jeremiah studies in America. The work of Biddle (1996) on the polyphonic Jeremiah seems to me to hold the most promise there for the systematic rethinking of conventional readings of Jeremiah. At the same time, feminist readings of the book of Jeremiah will continue their contributions to the radical rethinking of the reception of Jeremiah in biblical studies. Throughout the 1990s, the SBL Consultation on 'The Composition of the Book of Jeremiah' produced many papers and orchestrated some very engaged meetings, which must be regarded as constituting the best airing of all the different positions on Jeremiah (cf. Diamond, O'Connor and Stulman 1999). Out of this work will come much of the rethinking, reevaluation and reinterpreting of the issues involved in reading the book of Jeremiah in the early stages of the twenty-first century. Eventually, the great theoreticians and conservative commentaries on Jeremiah will be replaced by the work of their own disciples, and the business of reading and interpreting Jeremiah in the twenty-first century will become subtly different from, yet continuous with, the twentieth century's reading of Jeremiah. In my judgment, the work of McKane on Jeremiah will prove to be the equivalent in the twenty-first century of the work of Duhamel on Jeremiah (1901) in the twentieth century (cf. Carroll 1999c). However, in order to see how the developing trends of the past two decades of Jeremiah studies have impacted on the field at the end of the twentieth century readers are advised, for example, to compare and contrast the name indexes to the two editions of Bogaert's edited volume on *Le livre de Jérémie* (see Bogaert [ed.] 1997 for reprint of the article originally written in 1981; cf. also Bogaert 1997a), and to note the differences in the second edition index.

As one of the regular participants in the SBL Consultation on Jeremiah meetings, my sense and assessment of that series of encounters would have to be one of reporting a great admixture of conservative and radical voices vying with each other to advance the discussion on Jeremiah in various different directions. No sense of consensus was ever produced, and the disparity of the distinctive voices arguing very different readings of the text, its context and reception, was, for me, the most important and distinctive feature of the Consultation (the sense of the debate is very well represented by Diamond 1999). Such disparity will almost certainly come to shape, as well as reflect, the twenty-first century's readings of Jeremiah: the debate

will continue along the fault-lines represented by McKane's notions of inconcinnity and rolling corpus, and the much more traditional readings of the book of Jeremiah as essentially a work of concinnity (McConville 1993; cf. Stulman 1998). Other factors will also help to shape the discussion, especially in terms of the aspect of the inconcinnity of Jeremiah, because, in biblical studies as the twentieth century ends, there is an emerging element of postmodernist approaches to the Bible. Such approaches will not (cannot) leave intact the older ways of reading the Bible for, as one writer on a particular aspect of current postmodernist thinking about the Bible has put it, 'ideological criticism sounds a necessary warning that the previous enclosure of biblical studies is crumbling' (Pippin 1996: 68). If this claim is in any sense true—which I believe it to be (in some senses)—then holistic claims about the book of Jeremiah, including all the canonical criticism approaches which have a tendency towards holism, will become subject to dismantling under postmodernist terms. Any and all such postmodernist approaches to reading Jeremiah, especially in ideological critical terms (cf. Carroll 1999a), will move the debate towards the inconcinnity end of the spectrum of reading Jeremiah.

It is always arguable, of course, that 'the previous enclosure of biblical studies' is *not* 'crumbling' and so a new consensus will emerge which will represent a return to *pre*-McKane (and Carroll) ways of reading the book of Jeremiah. My take on such an emergent claim would be that, while it may possibly have some truth to it, there is at the end of the twentieth century a new reality in Jeremiah studies that must be faced: *some things in Jeremiah studies have changed forever now*. While a broad consensus of *historicist* readings of Jeremiah may be emerging as the dominant voice in Jeremiah studies, there are also real and serious minority voices emerging, which are advocating very different approaches to reading Jeremiah. These voices are not likely to disappear, even though they may prove to represent only limiting cases within the domain of Jeremiah studies in the twenty-first century. I am inclined, however, in my worst moments, to think that the dominant structures (Pippin's 'previous enclosure') in Jeremiah studies have not yet really crumbled, but have been renovated or further bolstered up by the work of Holladay, Brueggemann, Clements, Jones, McConville and Lundbom (among others)—a case perhaps of 'saving the appearances'—so that Brueggemann can conclude his reading of the book of Jeremiah with the claim 'Jeremiah is exactly right' (Brueggemann 1998: 495). I must disagree with this reading of Jeremiah, because in the light of what subsequently happened, Jeremiah was *more frequently wrong than right*: for example, the writing off of the communities in Jerusalem and Egypt was just wishful thinking, which never materialized in actuality. How wrong can you get! So the phrase 'exactly right' is exactly wrong. Thus, for Brueggemann, everything remains in place. No cause for alarm, excursion, warning

or worry there. The text has been domesticated and incorporated *as it stands* into a late twentieth-century set of *theologized* readings, readings which will disturb nobody's theological or ecclesiastical positions and which will yield absolutely nothing to a postmodernist sense of the text or its modern reception, and which also resolutely refuse any ideological critical readings of that text. Crumbling of the enclosure there may have been, but not at this level of theological commentary.

And yet, and yet... I really do feel that in current Jeremiah studies the firm centre is proving to be rather fuzzy-edged—all the way through! In my judgment of the matter, a few cracks have begun to appear in the structures of mainstream Jeremiah studies, in that even the most confident of traditional readings of the texts have not quite been able to keep all sounds of an agnostic note out of their readings of Jeremiah. For example, although McConville can write confidently about how he imagines the book of Jeremiah came to be written as a totality by Jeremiah *himself*—a point of view which would be supported by J. Thompson, Holladay, Jones, and so many other readers of and commentators on Jeremiah—the cracks in his confidence keep showing through, as the following citation clearly demonstrates:

The full story of the growth of the book is *probably* impossible to tell... I would suggest, however, that it occurred in the context of the prophet's ongoing ministry, and in his latter years, *possibly* in the context of repeated communications with the exiles. Quite how, and whether, he could have continued to do this from Egypt is *hard to know*... The view which we have taken in this book, however, is that MT, *or at least the substance of it, may be* the latest stage in the prophet's own manifesto of hope for the exilic community. (McConville 1993: 181; emphases added)

The traces of an admission of ignorance or agnosticism in that citation are sufficient to help to support the case (made by others) that *there is much which is not known* about how the book of Jeremiah came into being. The belief that the book represents Jeremiah's 'own manifesto' is quite clearly asserted by McConville, but it remains only a belief. There is no evidence for it—whether archaeological, historical or rational argument. The story of the growth of the book of Jeremiah 'is impossible to tell' (full story or otherwise) and it is indeed 'hard to know' how the prophet (or his amanuensis Baruch), from his isolation in the land of Egypt, could have produced such a lengthy book, or the sources which gave rise to its varying Greek and Hebrew forms. Such levels of agnosticism will certainly allow for the provision of foundations, however shaky (but clearly no shakier than conventional beliefs about Jeremiah), for alternative accounts of the origins, growth and reception of the book of Jeremiah in Jeremiah studies in the twenty-first century. Other factors are, of course, involved in this discussion, and some of them have a direct bearing on larger epistemological and

theological debates relating to how the Bible is to be read in our time, especially in relation to history (cf. McConville 1999). Such a larger debate about 'Bible reading and history' is well beyond the range of this more modestly focused article and, while recognizing and acknowledging its importance, I propose to ignore it here.

The major feature missing in my 'Surplus Meaning and the Conflict of Interpretations' article (1996d) was any analysis of McKane's second volume of his ICC commentary on Jeremiah (McKane 1996b), because it did not appear until after I had written the review article. Elsewhere I have reviewed this volume warmly (Carroll 1999c), but its substance and importance warrant further comment here. The second half of the book of Jeremiah (chs. 26–52) offers modern readers an easier task of understanding than does the first half of the Book (chs. 1–25), so McKane's *Jeremiah 2* is, in my opinion, an easier read than his *Jeremiah 1* (McKane 1986). It is a thoroughly historicist reading of Jeremiah, but also an intensely argued dissection of the text of Jeremiah in terms of what may 'safely' be attributed to the historical Jeremiah, and what should be assigned to the developing tradition of the words of Jeremiah. McKane does, however, directly dissociate himself from any approach which would seem to entirely expunge any biographical value from the material in chs. 26–29, and chs. 34–45 (McKane 1996b: cxxxiv); so perhaps a considerable gap should be placed between him and Carroll on this particular point—it all depends on whether the 'biographical' material is to be treated as historical or constructed. At various places throughout *Jeremiah 2*, McKane explicitly distances himself from Carroll's approach to reading Jeremiah (cf. McKane 1996b: clxxi and *passim*), on the grounds that he does not believe that 'Historicity and Exegesis' should be divorced in such a fashion:

If the prophetic literature is so totally divorced from history as to be essentially a non-historical genre, 'Historicity and Exegesis' is an irrelevance and there is no point in trying to correct the bad history which is in the text and has been taken into the exegesis. (McKane 1996b: 945)

The notion of 'bad history' in that citation is patient of considerable interpretation, debate and disputation. It is by no means an uncontentious phrase, nor is it an easily assimilable notion. Is bad history *history* or is it *fiction*? Postmodernists might well want to pose the further question 'What's the difference between (bad) history and fiction?' The debate will resurface, but the citation itself is typical of McKane's essentially historicist way of reading the book of Jeremiah.

Throughout his *Jeremiah 2*, McKane concerns himself with questions about the 'literary coherence' of each section of the text, often devoting a section to such a discussion. The following lengthy comment on ch. 44 may be taken as being typical of McKane's scrutiny of the text:

The general case which I am arguing is not that a slimmed-down version of chapter 44 will regain its coherence. The question is whether there ever was such an original consistency to be regained: whether this is not a deplorably long and inconsequential pastiche on 'idolatry' which has taken as its particular topic the idolatry of Judaeans in Egypt, but which sometimes, as Duhm noted in connection with v. 8, is almost overwhelmed by the Deuteronomic stereotypes of idolatry in Judah. Thus to say that there are intrusions which stick out like a sore thumb is not necessarily to acquiesce in a view that there is a core which can be disengaged, which is attributable to Baruch, and which deals with a historical episode involving Judaeans, especially women, and the prophet Jeremiah. It may be that by shortening the text of MT, whether in accordance with Sept. or conjecturally, we shall arrive at a slimmer and better narrative, but it would be misleading to regard this as a 'core', given the assumptions which have generally attended the various attempts to define a core or nucleus of chapter 44. (McKane 1996b: 1084-85)

If I may be permitted a personal observation here, while I have absolutely no wish to steal, borrow or poach any of McKane's thunder, and while recognizing and acknowledging the magisterial quality of his work on Jeremiah, the vast differences between our two approaches to Jeremiah as well as the qualitative distinctions between our two commentaries, I am damned if I can see what is so very different about the results and conclusions we come to in our different ways of reading Jeremiah. For a very different reading of ch. 44, which equally explicitly disagrees with Carroll on reading Jeremiah (though for rather different reasons), see the much more *theologized* and *canonical* reading of the text in Brueggemann (1998: 403-13).

I cannot, of course, advance here an argument for an approach to reading the text of Jeremiah which takes as its focal point the principle of 'disagreeing with Carroll on Jeremiah'. I just mention these kinds of disagreement about interpretation and reading because they do reflect a major element of contemporary Jeremiah studies (as was especially the case in the SBL Consultation on the Composition of the book of Jeremiah throughout the 1990s) in the closing decades of the twentieth century, and they also constitute an argument for reading all the different commentaries, because at times they are so very different. Yet, McKane and Carroll do seem to agree on quite a number of similar conclusions, even if for very different reasons. For this reason, I tend to assign them to the same end of the spectrum of Jeremiah studies. Intriguingly, throughout *Jeremiah* 2, indeed throughout his two volumes, McKane never once refers to Brueggemann on Jeremiah.

Space limitations do not allow me to do justice to McKane's magnificent oeuvre on Jeremiah, but I would have to say this by way of a sweeping judgment on his work: his two volumes are a fine example of the opportunity taken by McKane to make an infinite number of fine discriminations and distinctions in the exegesis of the Hebrew text of Jeremiah and

the versions associated with it. A lifetime's work is to be found distilled in these volumes, and many readers could save themselves a lifetime's work by reading McKane on Jeremiah. One further point may be mentioned here from McKane on Jeremiah, because it holds promise for future discussion about the signification of the book of Jeremiah within the canon of Scripture and in the context of any discussion of the theological significance of Jeremiah. In all the recent scholarly discussions about the biblical prophets as inspired intermediaries between this world and the other world (or however such a distinction is to be made by linguistic means), only McKane seems to have stated the obvious—what I have elsewhere called Philosophy or Theology 101 (Carroll 1999d: 442-43)—‘God does not speak Hebrew’ (McKane 1998: 23). This position is also enunciated by him in the Introduction to his Jeremiah commentary (McKane 1986: xcvi-xcix), and ought to be a major item of discussion in Jeremiah studies. As a statement of the obvious, it would put McKane at the opposite end of the spectrum of Jeremiah studies to that occupied by Brueggemann, whose recent magisterial *Theology of the Old Testament* (1997b) appears to display a quite opposite certitude about the relationship between biblical discourse about YHWH and conventional Christian theology (speech about god). As a general point of principle for reading biblical prophecy, McKane's premiss that ‘All language is human language and God does not speak’ (McKane 1986: xcix) should make a good starting-point for serious discussion about the book of Jeremiah in the twenty-first century. As it now stands, it is also a fine point at which to end the twentieth century's radical rethinking of how to read Jeremiah or any prophetic book in the Bible.

Writing these survey articles on Jeremiah studies, as seems to have become my habit, just before important books on Jeremiah appear (e.g. Lundbom 1999; Hill 1999b), I find it difficult to provide an adequately up-to-date account of current research on Jeremiah. One important volume (Diamond, O'Connor and Stulman 1999) landed on my desk the day before I posted off the first draft of this article. It was therefore too late to interact with it in that first draft. While I have discussed it in this final draft of my paper, new works in Jeremiah studies continue to appear regularly. I have factored its contents into my bibliography. Thus, I find that there is little I can do in this particular article, except by way of indicating some minor trends, to provide a comprehensive account of what is currently going on in Jeremiah studies.

The current state of play in Jeremiah studies is so well featured in the volume of papers from the SBL Consultation on ‘The Composition of the Book of Jeremiah’, published as *Troubling Jeremiah* (Diamond, O'Connor and Stulman 1999), that all readers are referred to it as a first-class source for the current state-of-play in Jeremiah studies. In addition, one of the most useful recent books on Jeremiah to come my way is Stulman's *Order amid*

Chaos: Jeremiah as Symbolic Tapestry (1998). Written, in my judgment, in a fashion approximating more to a Brueggemannesque approach to reading Jeremiah than, say, to a McKanean approach, it is still a very fine piece of writing, representing a totalizing reading of Jeremiah as a 'symbolic tapestry'. Taking up the elements of inconcinnities and concinnities in the book of Jeremiah, Stulman provides a very good discussion of the different ways of treating the chaos element detected by so many contemporary readers of Jeremiah, and offers a way of incorporating both notions of chaos and order in an account of the book's structure. Heavily influenced by Brueggemann's reading of Jeremiah, and by the work of Clements on prophetic matters (1996a, 1996b and 1996c), Stulman offers this judicious but rather strong reading of how the problems may be resolved by a superimposed structure of 'destruction and renewal':

The bifid structure of judgment and deliverance in Jeremiah is in many respects internally reductionistic. That is to say, the book, as we have seen, is far too complex to be placed under any single structural or ideological rubric. Jeremiah perhaps more than any other prophetic book in the Bible is thematically discordant and fraught with contradictions and conflictual tensions. Its literary environment is harsh and strange, defying unifying strategies of any kind. Nonetheless, in the extant architecture of Jeremiah, the discordant voices of the text are contained and reconfigured within a framework of 'judgment and deliverance'. And so, Jeremiah 1–25 and Jeremiah 26–52 hang together as a liturgical 'call and response'. The first scroll calls out in anguish in light of the dangerous events associated with the year 587. The second scroll responds and answers with a 'message' of hope and moral vision for the future beyond the dismantling. (Stulman 1998: 118)

Stulman, who has done some very fine work on Jeremiah in the past two decades, has here written a book which will appeal to many contemporary readers of the book of Jeremiah. Readers who want resolutions to problems, the tidying up of the untidy and the ordering of disorder, so that order is brought forth from chaos, will benefit greatly from reading Stulman on Jeremiah. While I am inclined to read him as being somewhat overly optimistic in his strong readings of Jeremiah as a book whose 'enduring testimony bears witness to order amid chaos and to a suffering God who sculpts new beginnings and fresh shapes out of the rubble of fallen worlds' (1998: 188), I can also recognize the imaginative appeal such a series of readings is likely to have for modern, especially ecclesiastical and theological, readers of the book of Jeremiah.

What Stulman's book does for me as a rather different reader of Jeremiah is this: starting from McKane's stark position on the subject of 'God' in relation to humanly produced texts, I do think that there is a considerably long road to be travelled in theological discussion (my own preference for the term 'ideology' over 'theology' is not intended to block god-talk; rather, I think the terms are interchangeable, or, as Overholt has it, 'virtually

synonymous' [1999: 364]) relating to the book of Jeremiah, but such a discussion must include where *we are now* (that is, the end of the twentieth century) in all such discourse, and not just rely on imagined reconstructions of what certain biblical writers may be thought to have thought about such matters relating to *theology* (cf. Carroll 1999d: 435-39). After the darkness of the twentieth century, we cannot go on reading the book of Jeremiah as if it were still set in the sixth century BCE *for us*, without also possessing a long reception history (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) taking us from the trope of the lost children of Rachel in Jer. 31.15 to the reality of the lost children of Rachel in the death camps of the *univers concentrationnaire* of the Third Reich (cf. Fackenheim 1990: 71-99). At this end of such a reception history, the theology of the book of Jeremiah takes on a very different hue, because the ideology of a sovereign deity is seriously called into question by such death camps (as it is also seriously questioned by the books of Job and Qoheleth in the Hebrew Bible itself). Who could translate the discourses about Nebuchadrezzar in Jeremiah into *equally* meaningful discourses about YHWH's role in raising up such imperious figures as Hitler and Stalin, Eisenhower and Mao, Pol Pot and Saddam Hussein in the twentieth century? Or to use the language of the book of Jeremiah: YHWH has taken on the features of his servant and the dragon Nebuchadrezzar, and the equation Jerusalem *equals* Babylon has to be sustained (cf. Hill 1999b: 201-202). This is not the place to discuss such matters, but to every reader of 'Carroll on Jeremiah' I would want to say the following: please do not imagine that I am trying to silence the text on its theological level (cf. Brueggemann 1999b: 411-13). On the contrary, while I would very much like to hear more silence about the mythic god as represented by one strand of the book of Jeremiah, I would want to hear much more talk from writers on Jeremiah about their *own* views of god, especially from the theologians whose take on the twentieth century seems never quite to be incorporated into their own work on Jeremiah (for a quite different reading, yet not entirely a million miles from my own, see Brueggemann 1999b: 415-22). Discourses about god (i.e. *theo*-logy) are always difficult to launch and sustain in these post-Enlightenment and postmodern times, especially as the twentieth century modulates into the twenty-first century. *In my judgment*, the biblical theologians will need to do a lot more work on their readings of the biblical text of Jeremiah and on their own theology before they can produce anything even remotely approaching a satisfactory account of both in relation to each other for these dark days or, indeed, for the coming millennium.

II. Reception History

At the present time, more interest is being shown in the reception history of the book of Jeremiah. The topic itself is a colossal one, with a wide

range of data available for analysis (cf. the very brief treatment of Carroll 1999d: 434-35). The beginnings of its potential contribution to the discussion may be seen in the fine work edited by Curtis and Römer (1997). It also ought to be recognized, however, that the book of Jeremiah has been profoundly influential in the shaping of much human thought since the Bible became part of Western culture (also perhaps part of global culture). When a reviewer of an entirely different book can write as follows:

Yet Freud and Kafka in their very denial of all transcendence appear as heirs of a *Jewish revolt against outwardness and authority that goes back as far as Jeremiah*. Kafka's covenant of pure writing emerges as the late, bleak corollary of Jeremiah's New Covenant of inwardness (Bernhardt-Kabisch 1990: 482; emphasis added).

then a line of focused thought is drawn connecting ancient times with our own times. The ancient and the modern come together, and the figure of Kafka becomes, to invert a Borgesian trope, 'a precursor of Jeremiah' (cf. Borges 1970); or, for those who prefer their scholarship to be less paradoxical or oxymoronic, Jeremiah is enrolled in the category of 'Kafka and his precursors', to use Borges's notion as stated. How many such lines could be drawn from the aesthetic, artistic, intellectual, literary and religious traditions of many nations and centuries? And ought not all such lines of connectedness between the biblical past and our own very different present to be more fully investigated in a proper reception-history of Jeremiah than they have been hitherto?

At the other end of the spectrum are all those books on the Bible that reflect popular piety, and which may lack scholarly quality altogether, but which are enormously popular in their 'spiritualized' readings of the Book of Jeremiah (cf. Richards 1998 as a *pars pro toto* sampler). I would not dare even begin to map the range and scope of such an approach, because I am all too deeply aware of the vast rolling landscapes of pious, personal and spiritual readings of Jeremiah, which have illuminated people in their personal quests for meaning over the long centuries of Jewish and Christian appropriations of the Bible. One example will have to serve here as notice of this dimension to reading the book of Jeremiah: the Christian philosopher Nicolas Wolterstorff, in giving testimony about his own personal spiritual growth, says, 'There's more to God than grace; or if it's grace to one, it's not grace to the other—grace to Israel but not grace to Jeremiah' (1993: 275). Outside the realm of biblical scholarship, there is a huge world of spiritual writing that incorporates and internalizes Jeremiah in this vein, but seldom seems to attract the attention of academic researchers into the Jeremiah traditions. Of course, much of this writing on Jeremiah is questionable in all sorts of ways. As an example of such questionability, I would instance the book by Coles on *The Secular Mind* (1999; from which a brief citation is used as the first epigraph to this article). Coles reads Jeremiah as a religious

figure fighting *the secular forces of his own day*. Unfortunately for Coles, the biblical text clearly represents the opponents of Jeremiah as being *all too religious*, only in all the wrong ways! For a very different contemporary reading of Jeremiah, see Berrigan (1999).

The more I investigate the history of the reception of Jeremiah (book, character, imagery, thought and tropes) directly and indirectly, the more I find reflections on and transformations of Jeremiah constituting the content of another world of thick description and dense analysis relating to the Bible and the history of human experience and reflection. For example, an academic seminary essay on Jeremiah by the young Martin Luther King Jr (1992) or Dietrich Bonhoeffer's use of Jeremiah (especially Jer. 45) in his prison writings (1971; see Stockton 1999) must be factored into any account of the history of the reception of Jeremiah in the twentieth century. Here is where reading and action are combined by figures of immense moral authority in the twentieth century, in ways which scholars (such as myself) cannot gainsay (or hope to emulate, either). Modern writers who think of themselves in relation to the biblical prophets enroll themselves in the reception history of the prophets, even if only in terms of the vexed discussion about the place of prophets in modern society. Such a social phenomenon is reflected in the following evaluation of Weber, which associates him directly with the long line of biblical prophets from Jeremiah and Isaiah in ancient times to our own time:

If the older Weber identified himself with Jeremiah in the humanist tradition of illusion, he knew well that he was in truth no prophet. When urged by an admiring young intelligentsia to expound his faith, he rejected their pleas, asserting that such confession belongs to the circle of intimates and not the public. Only prophets, artists, and saints might bare their souls in public. For Weber, modern society is godless, and prophets as well as saints are singularly out of place. He only offered Isaiah's suggestion: 'He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come' (21.11-12). (Gerth and Mills 1970: 28)

At another level, the many lines connecting reflection on the book of Jeremiah to discourses about the death camps of the Third Reich (*univers concentrationnaire*) are rapidly constituting a formidable network of a rather different reception history. For example, Seybold writes about Jeremiah as the Paul Celan of the prophets: 'the zone of death is his territory... Jeremiah was the Celan of the prophets' (1993: 169, 203; cf. Felstiner 1995: 236-38). Thus, strong connections are made between one of the major poets of our time, who wrote out of his experience of the death camps of the Third Reich, and the ancient prophet represented in the book of Jeremiah as one of the great elegiac, lament-writing poets of the Bible.

I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that, for myself, at least *weekly* I stumble across such connecting factors between Jeremiah and the world in which I live. For example, recently reading Noam Chomsky's book (1999) about current struggles between the US, Israel and the Palestinians, *Fateful Triangle*, I noticed that *The Boston Globe* had described the book as 'a jeremiad in the prophetic tradition' (back-cover of Chomsky 1999). The allusion to Jeremiah inherent in the English technical word 'jeremiad' (meaning: 'a long mournful lamentation or complaint') renders the ancient prophet part and parcel of our everyday language. At the same time, the implied identification of a Chomsky as a kind of 'modern Jeremiah' is a highly suggestive and appropriate linking of a very fine critical contemporary voice with that of an ancient prophetic critical voice of comparable status. Even more recently, reading a major intellectual weekly (*The Times Literary Supplement*), I encountered this sentence: 'Habermas is no Jeremiah' (Rosen 1999: 4). Here we have a clear allusion to the mythical image of the prophet Jeremiah as a deeply negative and critical figure from the past, who was contrasted with Jürgen Habermas, because of the German philosopher's positive view of the future of reason and democracy.

The task of writing this kind of reception history of Jeremiah is only in its infancy, but I firmly believe that the twenty-first century will have to make a very serious attempt to write such a comprehensive reception history of the book of Jeremiah, even though scholarly purists will object very strongly to mixing 'pure' scholarship with such a wide-ranging sweep of reception history trawlings of each and every resource available for intellectual history, especially popular non-scholarly uses of Jeremiah. But in these postmodern times, what other kind of reception history would be worth writing?

III. *Feminist Readings of Jeremiah*

There has been a continuous stream of production of articles and short pieces on the book of Jeremiah in the academic and theological journals of the Guild and the Churches. This never-ending succession of further pieces of analysis of Jeremiah is inevitably beyond the capabilities of any writer to incorporate into a brief article such as this. For example, feminist voices continue to produce valuable work on Jeremiah, especially of the critical kind which does not so easily side with the text against its readers. I point here to the notable work of Bauer. The dominant tropes used in the early chapters of the book of Jeremiah (esp. chs. 2–5) are so focused on sexual and erotic discourses that it is inevitable that late twentieth-century feminist and other scrutinies should attend to the text in the most searching and critical way. Much of the material in Jeremiah 2–5 provides huge resources for feminist and intertextual analyses. N. Lee's excellent treatment of the

subtext of Jer. 2.1-9 as featuring the Cain and Abel story is powerful evidence of the intertextual depths of Jeremiah as text (1999; on intertextuality in Jeremiah, see Carroll 1999a: 223-32; cf. Carroll 1996b). Weems pertinently sets up the discussion of the imagery of these early chapters with her analysis:

2.2-3 sets the tone for the rest of the book in that the prophet allows the romanticization of Israel's past to conjure up a range of emotions, attitudes, and values that had to do with marriage, family, and romance against which all subsequent images, scenes, and counterarguments in the book would be weighed. (Weems 1995: 94)

Much debate follows from this kind of discourse, because such 'romanticization of Israel's past' in the book of Jeremiah has posed many interpretative and ethical problems for modern readers, including notions of the erotic relationship between Israel and YHWH (e.g. 'the linen girdle' of Jeremiah 13: see Eilberg-Schwarz 1994: 100-107). It seems to me that Bauer makes the point most clearly with her concluding remarks on her analysis of female imagery in Jeremiah, when she writes:

Thus a reading of the female imagery throughout Jeremiah refocuses perspectives on constructions of the book as a whole. Across various textual divisions, female images and metaphors have substantiated the literary-theological movement through remarkable reversals. Further, attention to the functions of gendered voices, especially their female manifestations in male contexts, highlights rhetorical strategies operating in a complexity that challenges traditional understandings of Jeremiah. (1999a: 305)

IV. Conclusion

Too true. I have ended this brief survey on a feminist note because such readings have been one of the most radical and far-reaching innovations in Jeremiah studies in the closing decades of the twentieth century (cf. Diamond and O'Connor 1996; Sawyer 1999; Shields 1995), with much still to offer by way of challenging traditional approaches to the book of Jeremiah. Equally, I think, Biddle's notion of 'Jeremiah as hypertext' will also contribute strongly to such a rethinking of the book (1996: 115-28). As the century ends and a new one begins, traditional readings and understandings of the book of Jeremiah will never be quite the same again. Recent treatments of the book have rightly come to the conclusion that the book of Jeremiah still has a 'capacity to surprise' (J. Hill 1999b: 218). Beyond the sense of change, which is fully in place now, and in keeping with Hill's point about 'the book's capacity to surprise', I would not wish to venture any further specific predictions about the state of Jeremiah studies. I am convinced, however, that elements in the sub-discipline of Jeremiah studies are still venturing out into the uncharted waters of new reading strategies

and theoretical appropriations of the text. I would very much like to think that such venturings will become a major feature of the twenty-first century's focus on Jeremiah. Thus, readers of the book of Jeremiah, in conjunction with whatever efforts they may make to keep up with ongoing contemporary research in Jeremiah studies, should also keep expecting to be surprised by contemporary receptions of an ancient text unfolding in so many different ways in a new millennium.

THE JEREMIAH GUILD IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: VARIETY REIGNS SUPREME

A.R. Pete Diamond

‘Those who assume hypotheses as first principles of their speculations... may indeed form an ingenious romance, but romance it will still be’.
(Roger Cotes, ‘Preface’ to Sir Isaac Newton, *Principia Mathematica*, 2nd edition, 1713; citation from *Quicksilver* by Neal Stephenson)

I. Introduction

Come! Gather up your worn copies, this side of Duhm (1901), Mowinckel (1914), Bright (1965), and Thiel (1973; 1981), of that harvest of Jeremiah commentary represented in the watershed publications of Holladay (1986; 1989), Carroll (1986; 1996a; 2000) and McKane (1986; 1996b). It is time to take stock again of the Jeremiah guild and its interpretative activities this side of the millennial turn (Carroll 2000).

The scroll of Jeremiah (henceforth, *Jeremiah*) remains under interpretative siege, beset on every side by a plethora of passionately diverse expert voices. In other words, it is business as usual in the guild—executed with technical skill, creativity, and erudition!

We attempt to wring meaning from the scroll with strategies akin to alchemy’s exertions for the fabled Philosopher’s Stone. And, like the old alchemists, the guild of *Jeremiah* cannot agree upon the compositional makeup of its fabled elixir, nor the quicksilver process for its sure production.

Historicist-biographically oriented readers continue to spin Jeremiah ben Hilkiah’s romance oblivious of the Peter Rabbit principle (see p. 236 below). All *Carrollesque* skepticism about the coherent historicity of the scroll is shoved to the side as episodic academic extremes. Historicist readers of alternative bent, redaction critics continue to proliferate compositional agents for the scroll. Sharing epistemological optimism with the preceding readers, they too leap from text to originating event and/or agent in order to concoct a legend—only, in this case, for the scroll instead of the prophet. Readers undaunted by McKanesque strictures about the readability of the ‘rolling corpus’ in its final form continue to distill order out of McKanesque aesthetic vision. All the while, theologians (equally

undaunted by McKanesque or Carrollesque advocates of a *via negativa* for *Jeremianic* god-talk) wave their hands, as they must, over the antique deity textually embodied in *Jeremiah* in the effort to produce a Yahweh more palatable to modern sensibilities.

For the sake of non-specialist readers, with the adjective Carrollesque, I refer to readings of *Jeremiah* inspired by the commentary of Robert Carroll (1986), who fundamentally questioned all-too-easy assumptions about the historicity of the *Jeremianic* traditions. He argued instead for a fictional prophetic figure, largely the symbolic construct of conflicting ideological interests in the production of the scroll. With this emphasis, his reading anticipated McKane's focus upon inconcinnity and non-systematic composition. The adjective McKanesque, in turn, refers to readings of *Jeremiah* inspired by the commentary of William McKane (1986, 1996) who stressed in his concept of a 'rolling corpus' a compositional process characterized by extreme inconcinnity, lacking in any overarching, systematic editorial rationale. Naturally, not all who have followed their line of approach have agreed in every detail or pressed conclusions to the same extreme. Nevertheless, the work of these two scholars has shaped the texture of Jeremiah scholarship and created a recognizable approach shared by many.

In the context of such business-as-usual within the guild, any efforts in recent scholarship (2000–2004) to fundamentally reexamine the reading assumptions at play in the guild of *Jeremiah* are to be roundly applauded no matter what the results and conclusions offered. *Jeremiah*, ironically, still constitutes a source of deep instability in our knowledge of *Jeremiah*—the elixir of our desire.

II. *Historical-Biographical Romances*

For many, the meaning of *Jeremiah* continues to lie in fable—i.e., the continued exposition of the life and times of Jeremiah ben Hilkiyah (henceforth, JEREMIAH), with the scroll a safe crucible in which to concoct biographical and historical romance (e.g., Chisholm 2002; Glatt-Gilad 2000; Hoffman 2001b, 2001c; Holladay 2003; Lundbom 1999; 2004a; 2004b).

Two things have not changed for this line of reading, the first more important than the second. First, no new historical data about JEREMIAH have become available. Second, no new argument in favor of this way of reading is offered in current reiterations of JEREMIAH's romance. If you have not already been convinced about the substantial historical reliability of the prophet portrayed in *Jeremiah* and also of a substantial JEREMIAH/BARUCH agency for the existing scroll, it is not likely that any of the current reiterations of this position will prove convincing—no matter how ably written.

In the continuing vacuum with respect to external contemporary non-traditional historical sources about JEREMIAH, whatever one alleges about the prophet portrayed in *Jeremiah* remains vitiated by profound circularity. Reconstruction is still no better than slightly modified paraphrase of what the scroll offers. One is left in the vacuum of corroborating external evidence with the appeal to plausibility and credibility. For these practitioners of hermeneutical arts, a represented, fictional Jeremiah remains too incredible to contemplate.

Why should that be so? Why should it be seen as preferable to hold out for some historical figure? Even grant, for the sake of argument, that we know as an assured result of criticism that JEREMIAH wrote *Jeremiah*, on what basis do we judge that he tells the truth in his self-representation? A hall of representational masks would still confront the reader in spite of JEREMIANIC agency!

And it is precisely the implications of textual representation (textuality) that complicate the leap from text to external 'event' or 'person'.

The plausibility of that leap for biographically oriented readers rests primarily upon a too infrequently stated assumption—namely, that positing a historical Jeremiah ben Hilkiyah as instigating impetus best accounts for the creation of so expansive a tradition in all its interests, obsessions and developments (Clements 2004). The existence of the tradition demands the existence of a JEREMIAH as historical catalyst to account for its production. Why invent such a figure from scratch? There must be a historical-cultural cause sufficient for its literary effect.

This is not impossible or unreasonable, and it clearly continues to offer a compelling attraction for many. Neither should it be too quickly set aside. Yet, it is a perilous gambit to take, for *Jeremiah* offers its own deconstruction of it. Even if we grant our ability to identify a distinctive core of (presumed) oracular poetry in Jeremiah 2–20—distinctive in poetic style, diction and theme—a Carrollesque observation cannot be evaded. The connection of said core oracles with JEREMIAH is *only* possible because of their present context in the attributed tradition.

Further, our subservience to the hegemonic control of traditional attribution is complicated by a *Jeremiah* variously represented by LXX and MT transmutations. A reader's experience of what JEREMIAH is supposed to have said is a matter of shifting presentation, shaping, and slanting. Instructive in this regard are the patterns of alteration practiced upon oracular tradition in Jeremiah 27. What represents JEREMIAH's authentic oracular speech in the LXXV (Hebrew precursor to the Septuagint [LXX]) becomes in the MT (Masoretic Text) false prophecy in the mouths of his opponents (v. 14). What was JEREMIANIC unconditional announcement of doom upon what remains of the Jerusalem community and cult in the LXXV becomes in the MT alternative preaching that envisions an assured restoration, differing from JEREMIAH's

opponents only in the time-table assumed (vv. 17-21). More than one prophet lays claim to JEREMIAH in *Jeremiah*, and it is not clear how they would have recognized each other! Likewise, in the absence of objective criteria at present, how are we to recognize JEREMIAH and award his crown to the variant characters portrayed in the scroll?

Signs of re-contextualization, alteration, and invention of tradition repeatedly deconstruct confidence in our ability to leap from textually embodied figure to historical personage. These transactions are pervasive in *Jeremiah*, not just a poetics of the prose, or between prose and poetry. Whether it is in the variant *Jeremianic* postures gathered around Babylon, yet set within the same historical occasion (e.g. contrast Jeremiah 27-29 to 51.59-64), or in the presumed core oracles in chs. 2-20 (Sharp 2003: 2-3; Parke-Taylor 2000: 296), a prophetic figure appears to speak against itself around substantial common concerns. Recall, for example, oracular statements that flatly deny adjacent pronouncements of total, absolute national destruction (cf. in context, Jer. 4.27, 5.10, 5.18). Or again, oracular invitations to national penitence in the face of oracular assurances of irrevocable, ineluctable doom (e.g. contrast Jer. 4.3-4, 14; 6.8, 16-17 with 4.11-12, 18, 23-26, 28; 6.11-12, 18-19). It is worse than that! Jeremiah exhibits a highly intertextual character among different parts of the scroll, and with other prophetic collections (e.g., the war oracle traditions in Jeremiah 4-6 and 46-51). The motility of oracular attribution to specific prophetic agency and/or occasion is on clear display, and deconstructs our desire for stable authorial agency, ownership, and identity.

The assumption of a sufficient historical cause to catalyze the production of *Jeremiah* seems increasingly ill-considered when it too quickly embraces a historical personage as the best or most plausible solution (Fretheim 2002: 11-16; Lundbom 1999: 106-120; Sharp 2003: 1-27; Carroll 2004; Clements 2004; De Moor 2001; Barstad 2002). The assumption underestimates the inventiveness and creativity of human culture. It too narrowly conceptualizes the idea of catalyzing event for symbolic, literary processes by limiting this to a romantic vision of the great historical personality as the only plausible rationale for the creation of 'biography'. It evades well-documented (Diamond 2002: n. 6; Floyd 2003; Ben Zvi 2003) folkloristic processes in the ancient world (not to mention our own [Diamond 2003a: nn. 5-7; Diamond 2003b: 546-47]) that are as capable of serving up historicized fictional characters, as they are of fictionalizing historical figures.

In practice, the historicist-biographical readings of *Jeremiah* make literary verisimilitude stand in for independent, diverse historical sources. But verisimilitude can never bridge the gap between textuality and event, absent the presence of extrinsic comparative controls. There has been a failure to pay sufficient attention to the Peter Rabbit principle (see below) on the part of these hermeneutical practitioners.

While the ‘Tiglath Pileser’ principle (Halpern 2001: 126) argues that royal annalists, apparently, cannot egregiously lie when they seek to persuade contemporary social elites to their vision of cultural reality (would that contemporary American presidents had been tutored so!), the Peter Rabbit principle invites us to wrestle with fictionalized historical event and person on a continuum both with fantasy worlds and characters, on the one hand, and historicized fictional persons and events, on the other. Absent sufficient comparative controls, clarity of discernment becomes difficult, with hermeneutical choices a matter of complex personal predilections and cultural necessities (Carroll 1996a; Sharp 2003: 1-27).

The *Tale of Peter Rabbit* (B. Potter 1902) invites a quest for the historical rabbit! Why invent such a character wholesale? There must be, at least, a historical kernel upon which such symbolic energy, production and devotion relies. After all, this beloved account sustains multiple editions, linguistic translations and global distribution.

History has preserved the author’s home with a wealth of primary biographical resources that dwarf to insignificance the type of data to which the guild of *Jeremiah* is accustomed. Potter’s autobiographical remains clearly attest eyewitness knowledge of the rabbit. Numerous archeological finds guarantee narrative veracity. The historical society in Potter’s, and Peter’s, original village have faithfully recovered Mr. McGregor’s garden! One can even touch the water pail, or wriggle under the very fence. Fabric remnants of a small jacket hang nearby. This reviewer has seen it with his own eyes. If you wish, I can send photographs. Peter clearly was a historical rabbit. If no such figure existed, then the quality of Potter’s literary legacy would force us to invent him!

No doubt (good reader) you may judge I have lost my senses. But are you so sure that rabbits do not talk, wear clothes, or sip camomile tea? Their vegetarian thefts in our gardens are well documented. No, I say, your historical skepticism about the rabbit is too extreme! Surely Peter’s persona in Potter’s tale preserves something of the rabbit’s historical reality, even if there has been symbolic license and artistic elaboration. There is too much credible detail in Potter’s tale to dismiss its historicity outright! Rest assured. Peter was well loved by his mother.

Is this parody unfair? I do not mean it to be. Rather, I intend dramatization of the complexity of textual figuration and representation as well as the vulnerability of critical judgments about it—especially when negotiating the leap from textual artifact to its supposed, mirrored reality. Let us make it harder then, and less playful. Imagine the immensity of the hermeneutical task in distant millennia for the reader who rediscovers Melville’s *Moby Dick* (1851) or Twain’s *Tom Sawyer* (Clemens 1876), then deciphers the long dead English language only to encounter these realistic accounts with all their richness of cultural detail and verisimilitude. Absent sufficient

contemporary external resources, how will they distinguish artistic cunning from historical representation? Let us make the hermeneutical challenge closer to home. Shall we seek the historical Enoch, or Baruch the scribe, within the pages of their respective literatures? If all the second temple traditions about JEREMIAH and BARUCH were telescoped and contained within *Jeremiah*, what reliable critical criteria would we be able to deploy to effectively sift the fictional, legendary elaboration from the supposed historical—so that we could convincingly claim we know something of JEREMIAH?

Practitioners of redaction critical arts on *Jeremiah* (Carroll 1986; Duhm; Gosse; Kiss; Lange 2002; McKane 1986, 1996b; Mowinckel 1914; Parke-Taylor 2000; Pohlmann; Sharp 2000, 2003; Sommer; Stipp 2000; Thiel 1973, 1981), in fact, suggest that this is precisely the hermeneutical task with which we are faced by the extant scroll, even if it is not to the same degree of apocryphal elaboration as envisioned in the hypothetical scenario above.

In light, then, of postmodern sensitivity to the textuality of history, and to the complexity of textual representation—even of realism's variety (Montrose 1989: 20)—and in light of the textual complexity, variety and cunning on display within *Jeremiah* and literatures of the ancient world, why should Carroll-esque hypotheses about the fictionality of Jeremiah-portrayed (whatever one assumes about JEREMIAH) be considered so incredible (e.g. contrast Hoffmann 2001b, c; Fretheim 2002: 12; Lundbom 1991b to Carroll 1996: 3, 21-22)?

I do not claim to disprove Jeremiah's historicity, nor even argue to that end. Nor do I argue that nothing of JEREMIAH, or oracles stemming from JEREMIAH, are to be found in the scroll. Instead, I argue that the creativity of cultural memory, the complexity of causes for symbolic processes, and the inventiveness of vested ideological engagement renders verisimilitude a poor bridge from the textual world to the 'mirror-world' to which we hope it refers. Thus, to argue for easy knowledge of JEREMIAH from the scroll alone does not instill much confidence. Further, I mean to suggest that recent portrayals (Lundbom 1999: 107-20) of the life of JEREMIAH engage in a level of invention that they, ironically, so strenuously abject (Kristeva 1982), or deny to our beloved scroll.

III. *Fables of Compositional History*

Surprisingly, whether we trust in JEREMIAH or not, we all appear to agree that the *Jeremiah* to which we attend complicates, if not frustrates, our attempts to read by virtue of the scroll's embrace of inconcinnity. Thus, the guild must seek to concoct a second fable—the life and times of *Jeremiah* (the oracular scroll) (Carroll 1986; Duhm; Gosse; Kiss; Lange 2002; McKane 1986, 1996; Mowinckel 1914; Parke-Taylor 2000; Pohlmann 1978, 1979,

1999; Sharp 2000, 2003; Sommer 1999; Stipp 2000; Thiel 1973, 1981). Even those experts who know JEREMIAH also acknowledge complexity of literary production for the tradition—while seeking to minimize the multiplication of literary agents (e.g. Fretheim, Lundbom). For those practicing redaction critical analysis this side of Thiel (1973; 1981), however, the compositional fable turns instead to an increasing proliferation of literary agents to account for the inconcinnity of *Jeremiah* (e.g., Gosse 1999; J. Hill 2002; Parke-Taylor 2000; W. Schmidt 2003a; Sharp 2003; Stipp 2000).

For many, resorting to a hypothesis of multiple literary agents, and the resultant search for editorial seams, continues to prove irresistible as a solution for the final form of *Jeremiah* (e.g., Gosse 1999; J. Hill 2002; Parke-Taylor 2000; W. Schmidt 2003a; Sharp 2003; Stipp 2000), based as it is on the assumption, under-expressed, that the conflicted ideological battlefield reflected in the topography of the scroll is better ascribed to multiple agents, rather than to a single, profoundly confused or incoherent writer. Ironically, recourse to this approach renders the present form of *Jeremiah* invisible.

There are plenty of inducements to deploy the redaction critical model, not the least of which are the tantalizing hints and ‘empirical’ allegations offered by the recensional quality of LXXV and MT relationships (e.g. see the prior discussion on Jeremiah 27; for further reference, see Lundbom 1999: 1-63; Fretheim 2002: 25-26; Parke-Taylor 2000; Renaud 1999; Shead 1999, 2002; Stulman 2004a; Tov 1999; Wijesinghe 1997, 1999; Freedman and Lundbom 1999; Diamond 2003b: 547-48; Bogaert 1991a, 2001, 2003b). Nevertheless, the kind of compositional fables capable of production in the contemporary guild remain predictable and routine. Though proposals differ in detail, they share a common solution-type: ideologically conflicted, plural elite scribal agency, geographically (Jerusalem, Babylon, Egypt) and temporally (Neo-Babylonian, Persian, Hellenistic) distributed, engaging with the *Jeremianic* tradition and productive of it. Socio-political party strife best accounts for the inconcinnity of the scroll (M. Smith 1987c).

Compositional imaginations differ along a continuum of options between Thiel and McKane—i.e., whether editorial engagement has been systematically executed with coherent principles and thematic foci (Thiel 1973; 1981), or instead with piecemeal, haphazard engagements limited to local contexts within the scroll (McKane 1986; 1996). Recent studies suggest more attraction to the piecemeal ‘rolling corpus’ (Parke-Taylor 2000; Sharp 2003), rather than a model of systematic overarching composition (whether Deuteronomistic or not), though the jury is not completely out on the latter (Stulman 2005; Diamond 2003b).

Parke-Taylor’s study (2000) is salutary for its rich comparative catalogue of *Jeremiah*’s topographical features so germane to the development of any editorial theory for *Jeremiah*. Sharp (2003) extends Pohlmann’s pro-Babylonian gola thesis (i.e., portions of the 3rd person prose narratives in

Jeremiah betray the ideological elite interests of Judeans deported to Babylon—namely, that they represent the true future of Israel and sustain privileged rights to the land on their repatriation—as opposed to groups who either ended up in Egypt or remained in Palestine after the fall of Jerusalem, and whose claims to the land and Israel’s future should be discounted in the view of these returning Babylon-based Judean elites [Pohlmann 1978]) by fundamentally questioning the criteria used to characterize so much of *Jeremianic* prose tradition as Deuteronomistic (cf. Weippert 1973; Holladay 1986; 1989). This does not free her to attribute the prose to JEREMIAH or BARUCH (cf. McKane 1986). Instead, Sharp attempts to re-characterize prose traditions in *Jeremiah* as Deutero-Jeremianic, more thoroughly and extensively affected (even reaching into the manipulation of oracular poetic tradition) by the ideological conflicts already adumbrated in Pohlmann’s earlier thesis. Her failure to sketch out a politically and sociologically realistic portrait for the ideological opponents to the agenda of the Babylonian gola (community of Judeans deported to Babylon) seriously weakens her thesis. One is left without a clear or credible picture of concrete political objectives beyond opposition.

On the other hand, redaction critical readers like Stulman (2004a) and Diamond (2003b), while concurring with the assumption of conflicted ideological scribal engagements in the tradition, remain more interested in the ‘readability’ of the final form, and either move beyond the inconcinnity on display in the textual battlefield to find symbolic coherence in spite of it (Stulman 2005), or embrace inconcinnity as a deliberate artistic strategy, as productive of meaning in the scribal artifact as it is destructive of it (Diamond 2003b). Their work remains open to the complaint of over-reading literary and symbolic coherence (more on this below).

Thus, from the redaction critical model, two major—and inadequately addressed—problems emerge for the guild of *Jeremiah*. The first problem is that the more we multiply editorial agents and scenarios, the more this averts our eyes from the final form of the scroll, rendering its complex topography invisible (e.g. Stipp 2000; Carroll 1986; McKane 1986, 1996; Sharp 2003; Parke-Taylor 2000). We restructure reading *Jeremiah* as an engagement with serial editorial presentation and re-presentation. Thereby, the guild’s theoretical weakness manifests itself. We demonstrate an inability to conceive of composition and literary production in cultural terms different from our own. We do not understand the canons of beauty and intellectual pleasure—the aesthetic—that could produce a scroll like *Jeremiah*.

Thus, we map out hypotheses of a conflicted scribal process, on the one hand, and, on the other, a complex scribal artifact that is in need of profound reconsideration and assessment. What level of precision and detail, given the thinness of external controls, can we hope credibly to achieve by populating the ancient world with more and more anonymous scribal agents,

by inference from and in response to every ideological twist and turn in *Jeremiah*? Does this approach offer a culturally and sociologically realistic model for literary production, dissemination and consumption within the first millennium BCE?

How are we to suppose that the literary scribal production of *Jeremiah* was to be experienced, accessed, and consumed? Was there a battle of the stylus around a common table, or across town? Did vested parties trade shot and counter-shot, draft and re-draft? How did these conflicted parties know what each other's *Jeremiah* was like? How did they get access to each other's productions in order to introduce the literary and ideological inconcinnity that troubles the guild of *Jeremiah* so? Was the literary road between Babylon and Jerusalem crowded with conflicting shipments of the 'Good News for Babylonian Exiles Jeremiah' moving against the stream of the 'Jerusalem Survivors' Annotated Study Edition Jeremiah'?

Was the over-written scroll, inconcinnities intact, ever read? Or was it merely a container for the deposit and withdrawal of ideological proof texts? In short, do we have an adequate theory of literary production and the sociology of reading in the first millennium that can help us imagine how the scroll of *Jeremiah*—with its complex literary topography intact—might have been visible in the ancient world, and thus serve as an artifact for reading in its own right?

Will broader social-scientific analysis of the late Jerusalem monarchy and of colonial Yehud prove useful resources for the guild in adjudicating our competing editorial reconstructions? More work will have to be done in this area before we will know (plagued as it will continue to be by the thinness of 'empirical' data). Have we restricted our hypotheses too narrowly in sociological terms? The only recent alternative to the party conflict model of M. Smith (1987) to appear has been that of Ben Zvi (2000; 2003), with respect to Micah and the prophetic canon in general. We have yet to see it worked out and evaluated in specific detail in relation to *Jeremiah*.

The second problem emerging from the routinely deployed redaction critical model is that notions of literary coherence, unity, and their opposites, implicate us all in the problems, weaknesses, and strengths of ethnocentric readings. One culture's, one person's, one guild member's editorial seam or literary inelegancy is another's art. Again, theoretical deficiency emerges in the guild of *Jeremiah*. We do not yet have criteria (and analyses for that matter) that are adequately sophisticated to aid in our debates over literary discernment.

Ironically, the recensional qualities of LXXV and MT *Jeremiah* contribute to a lack of confidence in overly precise and/or exhaustive reconstructions of *Jeremiah*'s compositional legend. Turn again to the variant topographies on display in Jeremiah 27 (see above). Two 'coherent', yet alternate, speeches are on display. But if we remove either the LXXV or the MT variant account

from our knowledge—would we have suspected the other's recensional existence? Absence of disjunction is no argument for absence of editorial activity. Unity of composition can be a mask for compositional artistry. The semblance of textual innocence offers a point of seduction for redaction critical naïveté. Meaningful editorial engagement is as much on display in the alternate representations of Jeremiah's oracular poetry as in the prose traditions (Diamond and O'Connor, 1996). A compositional fable for the scroll cannot be produced by recourse to 'disjunction' alone. Further, how do we judge when the critic is over-reading disunity and disjunction or vice versa? Absent a windfall of new comparative historical literary data, I see no help in this regard except by recourse to more sophisticated use of contemporary literary theory (see below).

IV. *Theological Substitutions*

As well it should, theological engagement with *Jeremiah* offers the most treacherous of interpretative strategies, for both the theologian who performs it, and for the audience who witnesses their performance. For whose deity do we really concoct? JEREMIAH's, or *Jeremiah's*, or our own, substituted under the one name?

Like stained-glass windows, theological readings re-present, for the sake of confessional communities. There is the desire to render *Jeremiah's* divine symbol more palatable, more meaningful, and more serviceable to modern needs and tastes. Theological readings must take symbolic possession of *Jeremiah's* Yahweh so that the latter's voice echoes the divine voice of local communal conviction and becomes useful to local ways of world-making (e.g., Boers 1999; Bracke 2000a, 2000b; Brueggemann 2000, 2002; Dearman 2002; Ferry 1999; Fretheim 2002; Katho 2001; MacWilliam 2002; P.D. Miller 2001; Pixley 2000b; Wittenberg 2001, 2002; Wurst 2001).

Thus, theological readings in the grand tradition of the Biblical Theology Movement continue apace this side of Carollesque and McKanesque ('All language is human language and God does not speak' [McKane 1986: xcix]) apophatic strictures (Amesz 2004; Dubbink 2004; Clements 2004; Fretheim 2002; M. Kessler 2003; O'Connor 2001; Stulman 2005). In particular, the recent commentary length theological readings produced by Fretheim (2002) and Stulman (2005) are as creative, rich, suggestive and rewarding as anything produced by the old masters (Eichrodt 1961; von Rad 2001, etc.). But the increasing pluralism of method and literary theory brought to bear on reading *Jeremiah* complicates evaluation of such theological performances—not to mention the plurality of both parochial (religious, faith-community) and non-parochial contexts of theological performance and audience reception, for both the theological performer of *Jeremiah* and the theological audience.

We all read from and for the sake of some communal identity (a complex, layered, yet fragmented, oft-contested reality). Thus, contemporary theological engagements commit symbolic transformations of *Jeremiah* with hermeneutical arts not unlike the symbolic, cultural processes generative of the ancient scroll in the first place.

In particular, theological readings can mask the ideological voices, the vested interests, the struggles for cultural power that everywhere project themselves into *Jeremiah*'s rhetoric and symbols—both prophetic figure and divine. Our theological performances can hide those political dynamics that penetrate *Jeremiah* as symbolic structure—after all, we must ask whom the text seeks to help, and whom it seeks to harm. Theological readings have a penchant for creating a sense of innocence about *Jeremiah* for the theologian's audience—confessional or otherwise—even as we project our own issues of cultural power into *Jeremiah*'s poetics.

It is time for the guild to become more sophisticated in self-evaluation, as readers standing within the transmutational, reception history of *Jeremiah*, and not just as critics standing outside the creative process. How, then, do we develop the theological aesthetic to judge our own artistic performances, our re-representations of the divine symbol in *Jeremiah*? Will we use *Jeremiah*'s many Yahwistic representations to critique our own, and vice versa? What does it mean to do that with critical rigor and artistic maturity?

I do not protest that we find reservoirs of meaning (Ricoeur; see Hahn 1995) in *Jeremiah*'s figurations of the divine symbol. Rather, I argue, we all too often evade incisive evaluation of our theological transactions. But then, what criteria will suffice for this task in the guild's professional public space?

Fretheim's (2002) frequent unmasking in the midst of his theological performance—to consider the reliability of Yahweh's alterity *vis à vis* modern theological and ethical tastes—is a salutary beginning, for it wakes critical distance even as desire hungers for Yahwistic meaningfulness. It also renders the interpretative point of view polyphonic (a commendable strategy, as well, from a redaction critical perspective; cf. Sharp 2003: 166-69) within the genre of 'biblical commentary'—a fitting increase of sophistication in theological readings that masquerade god in *Jeremiah*'s discourse. How can future theological readings proceed beyond simple unmasking to perform their constructive theological work, and yet leave visible the political agencies, the poetics of power at work in the scroll's many voices, as well as their own?

Nevertheless, theological desire remains susceptible to reductionism in the effort to domesticate, sanitize, and render palatable *Jeremiah*'s many gods. For theological performance must foreground some features of *Jeremiah*'s discourse, background others, and flatly deny still others when all else fails, in order to produce the Yahweh of its desire. Hence, Fretheim

resists a punitive deity (2002: 31-33), or, in Stulman's case, a vindictive deity (2005: 21-27), both highlighting a theology of divine passion (cf. Heschel 2001: 103-39, 221-78; and Bruggemann 1998: 4-6) that suffers and inflicts suffering for the sake of love. Does this adequately perform the many *Jeremianic* representations of the raging patriarch, or the greedy imperial aspirant ready to ravage family, or intoxicate the rest of the world with war in his lust for blood and cosmic throne (see Schlimm 2004 for an excellent analysis of shifting views on YHWH and divine alterity)?

Invoking the passion of god to mark a divinity capable of suffering alongside a suffering humanity is an understandable theological strategy, faced as we are with the carnage of human history across the 20th and 21st centuries. But as a reading of the psychological-metaphorical construction of Yahweh (or better Yahweh against Yahweh) in *Jeremiah*, it is too much an attempt to domesticate the myth of the Israelite deity for the sake of modern sensibilities and needs. For it must jettison too much detail in *Jeremiah's* own performance of that myth. It loses the psychological complexity, even the passionate pathological dangers of the deity represented by the tradition. It obfuscates Yahweh's alterity. It masks metaphorical representation deeply indebted to ancient Near Eastern mythic-symbolic processes in the representation of the divine.

Jeremiah's Yahweh is an ancient Near Eastern deity. *Jeremiah's* achievement is the creation of an internal psychological 'landscape' for Yahweh that internalizes the symbolic battlefield of cultural interests of the day at the same time that it mythologizes those interests. The inconcinnities of the scroll have been folded into the complex psychological characterization of the Yahwistic symbols. An alien deity remains embodied in *Jeremiah's* textual spaces. Indeed, Yahweh is the *central* contested symbol among the voices staged within the scroll, for more than one deity lays claim to the name 'Yahweh' (Diamond 2002). How are contemporary theological performances to mime *Jeremiah's* Yahwistic voices, and yet not efface the alien deity textually embodied there? When we commit contemporary theological rehabilitations of *Jeremiah's* Yahwistic symbols, must we admit our creative role—that we invent another god under the one name? How are contemporary theological performances of *Jeremiah* to continue, and yet take more seriously than ever before the mythic, symbolic, and social processes at play in the creation of *Jeremiah's* complex divine persona(e)?

V. *Art of the Final Form*

Cognizant of the tenuous fable concocted by redaction critical analysis, many recent studies turn instead to render the coherence and meaningfulness of the scroll of *Jeremiah* in its 'final form' visible (O'Connor 2001; Diamond 2003b). Particularly rich in this regard are the commentary by

Stulman (2005), and the 2004 collection of essays under M. Kessler's editorship (I am grateful to their respective publishers for the opportunity to gain access prior to publication). Clearly, my sympathies (let the reader beware!) lie here with strategies focused upon the *Jeremiah* we have—a complex, even unstable notion in light of LXX and MT relationships!

These moves beyond redaction criticism (though not necessarily against it) are beginning to propose some common or at least complimentary results in their search for 'an overall plan and a theology that keeps the canonical book together' (M. Kessler 2004: xii). To summarize, in general:

- [1] key chapters offer structural previews/post-views of themes explored in the traditions they encircle, e.g., 1, 25, 45, 50-51;
- [2] some themes are foundational to the tradition, creating literary clusters and exhibiting trajectories of coherent development (e.g., 'to tear down and uproot // to build and to plant', 'prophet to the nations', 'foe from the north');
- [3] the figure of the prophet serves to bind together the complexity of the traditions, offering in his characterization a complex persona capable of lending coherence to them (e.g., the confessions, pro-/anti-Babylonian postures);
- [4] the prose sermons (e.g., Jeremiah 7, 11, 25) offer more than elaboration and response to pre-existing traditions; they supply structural guides for reading the less ordered poetic oracles.

But for all their effort to render a macro-structural, theologically coherent scroll visible, to tease out, as it were, the 'art of coherence' employed in the poetics of *Jeremiah*, the presence of inconcinnity remains as a deeply embedded feature of equal macro-structural effect alongside those factors pressing for coherence in the scroll (e.g., 'thus far the words of Jeremiah' 51.64—and yet the reader must still surmount Jeremiah 52!). All those practitioners of hermeneutical arts who desire to lay hold of *Jeremiah*'s coherences can ill afford to push inconcinnity into the background of their attentiveness to the poetics of the scroll.

For even as we celebrate attempts (O'Connor 2001; M. Kessler 2003; 2004; Stulman 2004a) to read the 'final' form of *Jeremiah* beyond our methodological debts to historicist critical theory and methods—as well as the forms of biblical theology built on top of them—nevertheless, in this arena of 'literary' readings, the standard strategies at play could also inhibit future innovation. For, once we place *Jeremiah* in 'final form' at the center of our hermeneutical quest, then issues of poetics, aesthetics, literary theory and critical practice become crucial topics for reflection, analysis, and debate. The conversation on these levels is, all too often, still too thin. In this regard, a good deal of these readings of the 'final' form exhibit a limited repertoire of strategies for teasing out the poetics of the scroll.

Essentially, coherence-producing patterns must be discovered through deployment of 'close' reading strategies. This is the all too familiar translation of the practices of New Criticism (cf. Eagleton 1983; Wellek and Warren 1980) into biblical studies as rhetorical criticism. Complexity of authorial agency and inconcinnity as features in the scroll may be acknowledged, but such features are backgrounded, in practice, in the effort to demonstrate a larger space for coherence in the scroll than would normally be acknowledged by McKanesque or Carrollesque readers. Then, readings productive of theological coherence—that there is an over-arching message and thematic development in the scroll—build on top of these elucidated rhetorical patterns, which serve macro-structural organizing functions for the complex traditions.

Indeed, rhetorical criticism continues to make invaluable contributions (Lundbom 1999, 2004a, 2004b; M. Kessler 2003) to our perceptions of *Jeremiah's* literary topography. But the complex landscape of modern literary theory and critical practice renders reliance upon that method alone too limiting. For inconcinnity in *Jeremiah* poses unique critical challenges to those who seek only an art of coherence in the scroll—especially when the presence of inconcinnity is downplayed.

Macro-structures may help us perceive an overall order or even outline for the scroll, but the experience of high inconcinnity within macro units fights against the perception of coherence—'water courses under the straw' (ARM 26 197, cited and translated in Nissinen 2003: 28)! More importantly and ironically, it continues to accept McKanesque aesthetic judgment—i.e., inconcinnity in the scroll prevents meaningfulness, should be left uninterpreted in literary terms, and constitutes accident, the fallout of multiple authorial agents. Though these readers (e.g. M. Kessler 2004; Lundbom 1999, 2004a, 2004b; Stulman 2005) of the 'final' *Jeremiah* disagree with McKane's claim of the absence of an overarching plan and symbolic coherence for the scroll, yet in practice they *leave out* the inconcinnity, so manifest, as an object of interpretation.

Rhetorical critical assumptions and practices for discerning literary unity, structure, and coherence are ill-equipped to deal with inconcinnity in literary composition. Without an enrichment of 'close' reading techniques by engagement with broader currents in literary theory (of both modern and post-modern varieties), their proposals remain vulnerable to deconstruction by the very inconcinnity they seek to overcome (e.g. M. Kessler 2004; Stulman 2005).

Thus, such readings are often too formalistic, disintegrating into description without sufficient analysis. The method applied to *Jeremiah* is more persuasive when deployed to local literary contexts (B. Becking 2004), but less convincing, too selective, often appearing arbitrary when it turns to macro-structural analysis of the scroll (e.g. Lundbom 1999; M. Kessler 2003).

Critical criteria that distinguish 'patterns' of macro structural effect from repetitions of common rhetorical style and theme, but that play no obvious macro-structuring role, have not been sufficiently developed. The highly intertextual characteristics of *Jeremiah* are easy to document (Parke-Taylor 2000); but are we to multiply discovery of inclusio upon inclusio, chiasmus upon chiasmus, in response? Shall we invent macro-structuring inclusions in response to the oracular duplications between *Jeremiah* and other prophetic scrolls? The guild needs more careful reflection on the use and misuse of inference from the intertextual characteristics of *Jeremiah* to demonstrate compositional, architectonic coherence. Even more inadequate is the deployment of rhetorical analysis to infer compositional development (Lundbom 1999: 68-84, 92-100). For, present literary function offers no sure guide to literary genesis, as the topography of LXX and MT relationships illustrate.

In that regard, though I find persuasive the argument for seeing Jeremiah 1, 25, 45, 50-51 as key structural scaffolding for the scroll (M. Kessler 2004: 66), the LXX still exists to deconstruct the literary exertions of the MT. Thus, LXXV donates its own dissonant voice into the polyphony *Jeremiah* offers. That polyphony deeply embraces inconcinnity. It intrudes an intransigent opposition to the art of coherence, fully capable of deconstructing every effort to produce a coherent performance (Carroll 2004). Again, though I find persuasive Stulman's (2005: 13) proposed governing role for key prose speeches as 'colonizers' of the counter voices in the poetry, those counter voices are still present and capable of deconstructing the desire for literary power evident in the prose speeches. In our effort to elucidate the art of coherence, we may obfuscate the polyphony between prose and poetry, not to mention within each as well—i.e., prose against prose, poetry against poetry. What critical criteria can we articulate to justify the privileging of one of *Jeremiah's* voices among all the others?

Rhetorical critics (are all readers of *Jeremiah* not in some sense dependent on such 'close' reading strategies?) in the guild of *Jeremiah* need to engage more deeply with the debates and developments in literary theory, and critical practice this side of the New Criticism and Muilenburg's donation of it to biblical studies.

Thus, Lundbom's expansion (1999: 68-84) of 'rhetorical' to take in the classical concept of persuasion is salutary, though in practice his unfolding commentary does not fully exploit the possibilities of reading opened by the appeal. Does Lundbom's commitment to the historical-biographical model unnecessarily inhibit analytical exploitation of *Jeremiah*, including JEREMIAH and *Jeremiah's* implicit audiences, as rhetoric for persuasive ends? Indeed, I would encourage a turn not just to classical theory and rhetorical practice, but also to modern and post-modern theories of communication, including the study of propaganda, along with social-scientific theories about the construction of social reality and authority, in our quest to wring

meanings from the scroll. What kind of world does *Jeremiah's* rhetoric invent? What kind of communal identity does it seek to empower? How does it negotiate the circulations of social power? What renders *Jeremiah's* rhetoric reliable? How does it create credence? How is it open to exploitation both as object and subject?

Jeremiah as a literary symbol and cultural artifact requires growth in our own literary competency, both in theory and critical practice. Our literary readings of the 'final' *Jeremiah* suffer from a deficit of theoretical reflection. How are we to construct a literary aesthetic and poetics of the scroll by inferential means? I know no way to pursue this with sophistication except by greater engagement within the guild of *Jeremiah* with the giants of literary and social theory in the (post-)modern world.

VI. *Benediction & Alchemical Desires*

To that end, I would suggest that the guild take up an additional heuristic question: Should *Jeremiah's* inconcinnity be dubbed 'dissonant art', and thus a 'deliberate' aesthetic strategy at play in the poetics of the scroll? To the extent that we might answer in the affirmative, then we would need to declassify inconcinnity as merely literary accidents of rolling interventions by plural historical agents.

In that regard, this makes so intriguing the essays by Smelik (2004a, 2004b; cf. Sharp 2003: 166), who discovers a complex artistic strategy in the clash between pro-/anti-Babylonian oracular postures, or Carroll (2004), who surveys the rich polyphony of *Jeremiah* to deconstructive artistic effect (cf. O'Connor 2001 and Stulman 2005, who also make much of the polyphonic character of *Jeremiah* to fruitful affect). To exploit, more fully, the latter reading, the guild could turn to the theory and critical practices on display in Bakhtinian analysis (Diamond 2002). To exploit more fully Smelik's sense of complex artistic dissonance in the scroll's production of a polyphonic prophetic figure (and Yahweh, for that matter!), the guild could turn to the theory and critical practices on display in the work of Julia Kristeva (1982). Thus, we would begin to wrestle with the complex psychological characterizations (fictions) of the two central personae invented in the scroll.

Further, J. Hill's (2004) exploration of the symbolic world created by *Jeremiah* for post-exilic readers offers additional avenues for elucidating both *Jeremiah's* art of coherence and art of dissonance. In that regard, the guild would do well to ask once again what it would mean for the theological/ideological reader today to take the concept of myth (in its anthropological sense) seriously. How might we more ably elucidate the myth of Israel and Yahweh on display in the literary symbol, *Jeremiah*? What is its symbolic logic, and what governs its aesthetic tastes?

Such explorations—inspired by modern approaches to metaphor, symbol and myth—are under way in various pockets within the guild (e.g., Baumann 2002; K. Hayes 2002; Van Den Eynde 2001). I celebrate such attempts and commend attention to their efforts as offering promising, innovative directions that will enable the guild to move beyond its reading routines.

Particularly fruitful work in this regard, though still in early stages of its development, is the turn to metaphor studies within working groups ('Metaphor in the Book of Jeremiah'; 'Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible') at the 2003 International meetings of SBL and EABS under the leadership of Holt (Holt 2003b; B. Becking 2003; Diamond 2003a; Labahn 2003; Nielsen 2003; Van Hecke 2003), and under the leadership of Van Hecke (unpublished papers: e.g., Aaron 2002; Baumann 2002; Bockler 2002; Diamond 2002; Holt 2002; Hunziker-Rodewald 2002; Labahn 2002, 2004; Nielsen 2004; Szlos 2002; Van Hecke 2002).

Such strategies are no less alchemical, relying as they must upon voices of modern literary theory and critical practice. No doubt what will provide a troublesome twinge of 'academic' conscience is whether such experiments at reading the 'final' *Jeremiah* beyond current routines constitute anachronistic acts transfiguring the scroll into a 'form' of modern or post-modern literature. Practitioners of historicist hermeneutical arts, do not cheer! For why should we assume ancient readers ever accessed *Jeremiah* like you?

EZEKIEL AMONG THE CRITICS

Katheryn Pfisterer Darr

I. Introduction

In 1880, critic R. Smend could pen with confidence the following assertion about the book of Ezekiel:

The whole book is...the logical development of a series of ideas in accordance with a well thought out, and in part quite schematic, plan. We cannot remove any part without disturbing the whole structure. (1880: xxi; translated in Zimmerli 1979: 3)

S. Driver concurred, attributing the complete work to a sole author ('No critical question arises in connection with the authorship of the book, the whole from beginning to end bearing unmistakably the stamp of a single mind' [1913: 279]). Smend's and Driver's assessments accorded with orthodox Jewish and Christian belief, but they were not without critical precedent as well. Already in 1841, for example, Ewald had declared that the scroll, though not composed in a single stage or from a sole stratum, nonetheless owed its final form to Ezekiel himself (1868: 207).

Over a hundred years later, Greenberg, in language largely congruent with earlier assertions, confidently champions coherence of design and Ezekielian authorship, noting that

the present Book of Ezekiel is the product of art and intelligent design... A consistent trend of thought expressed in a distinctive style has emerged, giving the impression of an individual mind of powerful and passionate proclivities... The persuasion grows on one as piece after piece falls into the established patterns and ideas that a coherent world of vision is emerging, contemporary with the sixth-century prophet and decisively shaped by him, if not the very words of Ezekiel himself. (1983: 26-27)

But the field has not lain fallow these two Jubilees. To the contrary, challenges to majority views were already appearing in the late 1800s and early 1900s, though such outposts were far from secure. During the years between early and recent critical claims for Ezekielian unity, scholars have traversed the landscape's every acre. Indeed, the current scene still rocks with tremors not unlike those that altered Ezekielian scholarship in the years following Smend's and Driver's confident claims. Though this essay surveys the

contemporary vista, the foundations of many a current hypothesis date back to early stakes and settlements.

II. Common Ground Yields

Hölscher's 1914 *Die Profeten* initiated one significant advance against Ezekielian unity of authorship and design, an attack further fortified in *Geschichte der israelitischen und jüdischen Religion* (1922) and *Hesekiel, der Dichter und das Buch* (1924). Having established the ecstatic character of Ezekiel's authentic prophecies, Hölscher distinguished between his utterances and those of later redactors whose efforts threaten to obfuscate the oracles of Ezekiel the prophet/poet:

By freeing the poetry of Ezekiel from the dry prosaic pattern in which the redaction has woven his poems, the poet Ezekiel appears once again in a clear light, with his brilliant, imaginative and passionate rhetoric. From a religio-historical point of view also the picture of Ezekiel changes completely: he is no longer the stiff priestly writer and pathfinder of a legalistic and ritualistic Judaism, for which he has been held, but a genuine prophet of Jewish antiquity, a spiritual companion of the authentic Jeremiah. (1924: 5-6; translated in Zimmerli 1979: 5)

Under Hölscher's hand, all but about one-seventh of the book lost its claim to 'authenticity', attributed instead to an early fifth-century, Jerusalem-based Zadokite redactor. Hölscher found authentic material only in the first 32 chapters, from which he deleted chs. 6-7, 10, 12-14, 18, 20 and 25-26. In the remaining chapters, only certain sections were considered genuine, and the genuine material was more than ten verses long only in chs. 8, 16, 23 and 27. Of the book's 1273 verses, only 144 were accepted as genuine (Zimmerli 1979: 5).

Several years after Hölscher's commentary appeared, Hertrich denied the scroll's own claim that Ezekiel resided among the Babylonian exiles of 597 BCE, averring instead that his prophetic ministry took place in Jerusalem (1933). Was he actually exiled in 587? In any event, deportation silenced Ezekiel; his earlier prophetic utterances were subsequently edited by a 597 deportee in order to advance the latter's claim that true prophecy traveled into exile with his own elite community. Hertrich attributed chs. 40-48, as well as material in earlier chapters, to this editor.

In subsequent critics' theories, Ezekiel has traveled the route between Jerusalem and Babylon more than once. Fischer, for example, accepted Ezekiel's 597 BCE deportation, but postulated a return to Jerusalem, followed by a second trip into exile (1939). Matthews (1939), by contrast, believed that Ezekiel's ministry took place in Palestine, was reworked first by an exilic editor in Babylon, and later by an apocalyptic school.

Only a decade after Hölscher's commentary, then, and beneath the cumulative force of critical inquiry, Cooke could speak of a transformation in Ezekiel studies: 'In recent years the study of Ezekiel has undergone something of a revolution. . . . It is no longer possible to treat the Book as the product of a single mind and a single age' (1936: v). Torrey's *Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Original Prophecy* (1930) had certainly helped fuel the fires of Cooke's 'revolution', advancing the audacious claim that Ezekiel's book was in fact a pseudo-epigraph, penned in the Hellenistic period (c. 230 BCE) against the fictive backdrop of Manasseh's rule and only subsequently reworked and set in Babylon by the Chronicler's school. Smith's *Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (1931) urged, from the opposite direction, that Ezekiel's prophecy was actually the work of a Northern Israelite who spoke to the Northern Kingdom's demise while at home, and later among the diaspora (734 BCE), only to return to Palestine in 691 and resume prophesying there. A later redactor transformed the work into the ostensible product of a Judean exile.

In a 1953 lecture, Rowley assessed Ezekiel studies to his own day. He surveyed the astonishing variety of hypotheses regarding the book's unity, its date of composition and Ezekiel's location(s) at the time of his prophetic 'ministry'. But Rowley also offered careful assessments of where the future of Ezekiel studies lay. First, he noted that though the text undoubtedly contained some secondary elements, they probably were not present in large quantities. Second, he claimed that Ezekiel, a gifted poet, could not be ruled out as the author of prose passages as well; and that no compelling evidence discredited the scroll's own claims regarding the locus of his prophetic activities. Third, Rowley pointed out that the ostensible need to resort to psychological explanations of Ezekiel's behaviors and words was largely mitigated by appropriate consideration of the literary genre (for example, visions). Rowley's address fitted well with the tenor of *Die Hauptprobleme des Buches Ezechiel* (1952), a commentary in which Fohrer called for a return to serious reckoning with the scroll's own assertions concerning *situ* and source. According to Zimmerli, '[Fohrer] came to the conclusion that we can certainly no longer speak in the old manner of the complete unity of the book of Ezekiel but [also] that the work on this book has first to start from its own claims as to the time and place of Ezekiel's activity' (1979: 8). Similarly, Howie, in his dissertation (1950), attributed the work largely to Ezekiel, prophesying in Babylonia at the time specified in the book of Ezekiel. Today, many—though not all—critics agree with Fohrer's decision to take seriously the scroll's witness concerning its author and origins.

III. *Two Commentaries on the Contemporary Landscape*

Rowley delivered and published his review of Ezekielian scholarship more than a decade before Zimmerli's two-volume commentary on Ezekiel

appeared in the *Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament* series (1969). Available in English as part of the *Hermeneia* commentary series (1979, 1983), Zimmerli's mammoth study constitutes a significant juncture in Ezekiel studies, for no subsequent critics—whether accepting or critical (or some combination of both) of his presuppositions and methodology—can gainsay his contributions. Zimmerli's approach lay between the extreme positions of Smend and Driver on the one hand, and Hölscher and Herntrich on the other. Thoroughly conversant with the politics and culture of Israel's sixth-century BCE world, Zimmerli placed Ezekiel's ministry solely within Babylon, attributed the scroll to the prophet and his 'school', postulated that Ezekiel himself returned to and updated earlier oracles, and located the book's composition largely within the exilic period.

An exhaustive and discerning text critic, Zimmerli both labored with the MT and resorted to the versions to reconstruct an original text freed from later accretions and scribal error. Zimmerli's careful analyses of textual cruxes had their predecessors in works by Hitzig (1847), Merx (1883) and Cornill (1886). Jahn (1905: iii) privileged the LXX over the MT, writing:

There is scarcely a book in the whole of world literature which has been so mishandled as has Ezekiel by the Soferim, and it will remain a characteristic typical of literalistic belief that even in the most recent times this text is held to be original. The Soferim have removed the fangs of the most passionate prophet, and they have made him into a senile pulpiter. (translated in Zimmerli 1979: 3)

Among contemporary commentators, Wevers relies heavily on the LXX (1982).

Zimmerli also wielded methodological tools, especially form and tradition-historical criticism, with skill, sensitivity, and verve. He isolated forms and speeches lying behind the text's final shape; indeed, he dared return certain passages to their 'original' forms (see, for example, his rewrite of Ezekiel 16 [1979: 347-48]). But he did not shirk the task of tracing the diachronic processes whereby earlier versions of texts attained their final forms. Though willing to attribute problematic textual features to inept redactors, he nonetheless dealt seriously—though separately—with the results of their efforts. Zimmerli describes a process of *Fortschreibung* whereby 'kernel elements' underwent further development through additions to the theme at hand, and materials were reworked to reflect later events (for instance Yahweh's decision to hand Egypt's wealth over to Nebuchadrezzar as compensation for his promised, but unrealized, victory over Tyre).

Mining his own rich veins of knowledge, Zimmerli illumined the origins of those traditions, myths, and legends on which the priest/ prophet drew, tracing their subsequent growth and development in a variety of other biblical and extrabiblical literary contexts, and discerning the prophet's own, often daring innovations on them. Throughout, he remained remarkably

attuned to Ezekiel's literary artistry, rhetorical strategies, and theological objectives. His knowledge was encyclopaedic, his insights innumerable.

Of course, Ezekiel will have the final word, even in dialogue with the twentieth-century doyen of his field. Critics sometimes question Zimmerli's resort to the LXX to remove repetitions and difficulties in the MT. They ask whether his presuppositions and methodological moves (as well as BKAT's five-stage sequence of analysis—*Text, Form, Ort, Wort* and *Ziel*—rendered in Hermeneia as Text, Form, Setting, Interpretation and Aim) obfuscate, as well as disclose, the objects of his scrutiny—both author and book. Because he deals with 'primary' verses before moving on to secondary accretions, for example, it can be difficult to grasp the final unity and dynamic of the text *qua* text. His 'purified' passages read smoothly, but are they congruent with Ezekiel's actual literary style? (Carley [1975] and Boadt [1978] argue that repetitions and redundancy characterize Ezekiel's literary technique.) And are such creations properly the principal objects of interpretation? Uncertainties notwithstanding, serious Ezekiel scholars laud Zimmerli's accomplishment: 'Truly a book to be read, to be owned, and to be annotated by serious students of the prophets', Boadt said of *Ezekiel 1* (1981: 635). And Klein wrote that 'after Zimmerli, Ezekiel studies will never be the same' (1980: 276).

They will never be the same after Greenberg, either. In *Ezekiel 1–20* (1983), the first of a two-volume commentary for the Anchor Bible series, Greenberg differs sharply with Zimmerli on many points. Unlike the latter, who labors to recover the original corpus by disassembling later accretions, Greenberg seeks to make sense of the book, textually and structurally, in its received (MT) form. He sticks with the Masorah until he has exhausted every possible clue to its meaning, resorting to biblical and early postbiblical Hebrew usage (and the solutions posed by premodern Jewish commentators), rather than to the LXX. For each of nineteen segments, Greenberg moves from 'Comment' (on textual, grammatical and lexicographical issues) to 'Structure and Themes' (the section one reviewer has called the 'distinctive meat' of the commentary [Barrick 1986: 143]). Greenberg's 'holistic' interpretations of the texts before us reflect a dissatisfaction with the anachronistic criteria of recent methods (for example, he claims that common literary criteria used to recover the original Ezekiel 'are simply *a priori*, an array of unproved [and unprovable] modern assumptions and conventions that confirm themselves through the results obtained by forcing them on the text and altering, reducing, and reordering it accordingly' [Greenberg 1983: 20]). His interpretations show a deep appreciation for what texts reveal about themselves when patiently probed. As noted earlier in this essay, Greenberg thinks that careful and receptive study of Ezekiel discloses 'a coherent world of vision...contemporary with the sixth-century prophet and decisively shaped by him, if not the very words of Ezekiel himself' (1983: 26–27).

Critical appreciation for Greenberg's contributions runs deep. 'Some of his discoveries', Levenson flatly declares, 'are brilliant' (1984: 216). Levenson contrasts Zimmerli and Greenberg:

Whereas Zimmerli sees the book of Ezekiel as a puzzle which the exegete must put into an intelligible order, Moshe Greenberg sees it as a subtle work of art and the exegete's task as the demonstration of its intelligibility. Where Zimmerli is a plastic surgeon, Greenberg is a midwife, carefully uncovering ever more order and symmetry in a text before which he stands in obvious reverence. (p. 213)

But is there no middle ground between Zimmerli's complex, multiple-piece puzzle and Greenberg's piece of art? Scholars surveying the field with both commentators' methods in view can learn from each approach. The role of redactors, for example, requires modification in both perspectives, since it does not suffice either to disassemble their contributions or to discount the possibility that they may, over time, have enhanced the author's original achievement. As Levenson observes, 'the redactors may have had more literary skill than either Zimmerli or Greenberg recognizes' (p. 217).

Zimmerli envisioned a process by which Ezekiel's words were converted from oral to written form, from plain pronouncement to subsequent reflection, from the prophet to his 'school'. Critics laud Zimmerli's masterful and judicious use of form criticism in recovering that process, but sometimes question the original orality of Ezekiel's oracles. For Davis, Zimmerli's avoidance of a traditional form-critical agenda signals the fallacy in imputing to Ezekiel a means of communication traditionally ascribed to his predecessors

The chief weakness of Zimmerli's commentary is his persistent recourse to form critical method without asking whether the context which he posits for Ezekiel's work is susceptible to illumination by that method. The goal of his analysis is to isolate the self-contained speeches which he assumes to lie at the base of the present text. Yet it is telling that Zimmerli cannot answer the form critic's fundamental question about how these speeches functioned in their original oral settings. Instead of trying to coordinate the speech forms with social practice in classical form critical manner, he traces their development through a purely literary process. Zimmerli is concerned only with identifying a compositional setting, which he calls 'the school of the prophet', where these supposedly simple speeches grew into their present complex forms... Rather than anchoring the prophet's language in the forms of community life, Zimmerli argues for its place in Ezekiel's overall rhetorical and theological purpose. (1989: 16)

For Davis, Zimmerli's portrait of Ezekiel as an orator using straightforward speech forms to proclaim divine oracles fails to consider his signal role in moving prophecy from oral proclamation to literary work. (Greenberg, for all his differences with Zimmerli, shares his presupposition that Ezekiel's

oracles were first delivered orally.) From Davis's perspective, Zimmerli's notion of *Fortschreibung* is better conceived as literary, even scholarly, activity.

Davis's portrait of Ezekiel as writer has deep roots within the discipline. Ewald said of him, for example, that 'he was more an author than a prophet, and his great book arose almost entirely out of literary effort' (1868: 207; translated in Zimmerli 1979: 3). Smend's similar view was tinged with romanticism ('[Ezekiel] wrote down in the eventide of his life his whole view of the current position of Israel, as well as its past and future' [1880: xvi; translated in Zimmerli 1979: 3]). Reuss denied Ezekiel any oral ministry:

There is not a single page in the whole book which we must suppose to have been read or proclaimed publicly. Ezekiel was not an orator; he was a writer. What he gives us are literary reflections, the product of private study and the fruit of retirement and contemplation. We should have to shut our eyes to the evidence to arrive at the view that he had ever had occasion to interfere actively in affairs, and to go out from his retreat to appear on the scene where passions are aroused and events take place. (1877: 10; translated in Zimmerli 1979: 4)

Confining Ezekiel to a private place, removed from aroused passions and contemporary events, strikes me as a formidable undertaking, one far from mitigated by recourse to prophetic 'signs' that may to some degree have limited Ezekiel's ability to move freely among his contemporaries (Ezek. 4.4-8). Yet written composition need not rule out public proclamation of texts (a fact Davis acknowledges but fails to explore sufficiently); to the contrary, the presence of certain devices (for example repetition, striking visual metaphors, formulaic refrains) suggests a mode of delivery both congruent with past proclamation and audience expectations, and innovative enough to respond to the needs of a community in transition:

It is the common failing of all modern studies ... that they do not treat the functional aspects of Ezekiel's status as a writer. There is no inquiry into how this new mode of prophetic activity might correspond to changing social circumstances, in what way the shift to writing represents an attempt to deal with new problems faced by the first prophet of the exile and sets new conditions for the reception of the prophet and his message by the community. (Davis 1989: 23)

For Davis, Ezekiel's literary mode both permitted him to play the roles of social critic and visionary in his own day, and set the course for transforming prophecy from current word to written record. Loosed from its moorings to a particular speaker, time, and place, *literary* prophecy ultimately replaced oral proclamation as a permanent source of authority within reading, reflecting communities.

Some critics fault Davis for too easily abandoning oral delivery as an Ezekielian mode of proclamation. (In fact, a certain opacity of writing style

sometimes makes it difficult to determine precisely her stance on this issue.) Her interpretation of Ezekiel's sign acts as literary devices, rather than actual performances, has a hollow ring, particularly when the text suggests that what Ezekiel *said* and *did* on given occasions provoked immediate audience response (cf. Ezek. 24.18-24). Against Davis, I have argued that Ezekiel's ingestion of the scroll (2.8-10) functioned not simply to signal a shift from oral to written prophecy, but rather to emphasize that his utterances derived from an inscribed text bearing words he did not author and could not control. Eating the object functions as part of Ezekiel's defense against charges of false or seditious prophecy (Darr 1989: 245).

Reservations notwithstanding, critics applaud Davis's return to early insights concerning the literary quality of Ezekiel's book, braced now by contemporary theories of written discourse. She has helped balance emphasis on oral speech forms on the one hand with the composition and subsequent growth of *literary* texts on the other, highlighting the scroll's role in the transition from oral pronouncement to written prophecy. In so doing, Davis has brought fresh insights to persistent cruxes (for instance, the function and significance of Ezekiel's speechlessness, and the elusive 'thirtieth year' in 1.1).

IV. *Scanning the Lay of the Land*

Thus far, I have identified early trends in Ezekiel studies (many with contemporary reformulators and advocates), characterized briefly two major commentaries of substantial import for present inquiry and the future of the field, and introduced the knotty problem of Ezekiel's original literary mode. At this juncture, I turn to several additional, ongoing areas of investigation: the text-critical task, efforts to reconstruct the book's redactional history, the implications of social status and intellectual acumen for understanding Ezekiel (author and scroll) and audience, and influences on the book's language and thought.

A. *'Fixing' the Text of Ezekiel*

Text critics agree that Ezekiel is difficult Hebrew; they disagree, however, concerning the reliability of the MT. Close analysis of the LXX suggests that the translation practices and theological agendas of the Greeks hold important clues to the book's compositional history. Hence, the venerable text-critical task persists. Essays appearing in the first section of Lust's *Ezekiel and his Book* (1986), for example, represent fresh advances in this area.

Moreover, the scroll is a repository of terms found nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible; Zimmerli counted over 130 *hapax legomena* (1979: 23). Comparative philological analyses, appearing often in journal articles, illu-

mine terms peculiar to Ezekiel. For example, though Aramaisms are not so numerous as was once thought, Greenfield interprets *slt* (Ezek. 16.30) on the basis of its nuances in certain Aramaic texts (1982). Görg (1982) identifies *maklul* in Ezek. 27.24 through recourse to the Akkadian *mak/qlalu*, and Elat identifies Ezekiel's 'ūzal with the Hittite *Usawalas* (1983). Using Sumerian and Akkadian sources, Waldman (1984) offers an alternative translation of *gbh* and *yr'h* in Ezek. 1.18. Such studies promise to enhance our understanding of Ezekiel's sometimes elusive language.

B. *Archaeological Levels of the Text*

In the spirit of Hölscher, Garscha (1974) and others (for example Schulz [1969], Hossfeld [1983] and Bettenzoli [1979]) continue the task of reconstructing Ezekiel's redactional history. According to Garscha, only about 30 verses of Ezekiel derive from the prophet himself (17.2-10; 23.2-25). The book's basic structure and ostensible unity are the product, rather, of a redactor at work between 485 and 460 BCE. Garscha uses the term 'Deutero-Ezekiel' to refer to a subsequent redactional layer (400–350 BCE) characterized both by acrimony against those never exiled and by various forms of the phrase 'You shall know that I am Yahweh'. Later still (300 BCE), a 'sacral law stratum' contributed the book's priestly caste. Finally, additional features were added; and the work was completed by about 200 BCE.

Yet the very factors that have long led critics to speak of Ezekielian unity signal the need for caution as one assesses the reliability of minute criteria for distinguishing between redactional strata. Likewise, the widely differing results of investigators using such criteria suggest the need for serious reconsideration of the text's own claims regarding both authorship and literary unity. Inconsistencies cannot always be taken as clear-cut signs of redactors at work, since Ezekiel himself could have argued in different ways on different occasions, having different purposes in mind.

C. *Ezekiel among the Cognoscenti*

The biblical witness is clear: the deportees of 597 BCE were not mined from the bottom of Judean society, but lifted from its top. Not surprisingly, then, the book of Ezekiel reveals an author of unusual intellect, sophistication, knowledge and literary gifts, and we should assume that his audience, Judah's cognoscenti, was equipped to understand him. Together, Ezekiel and his audience shared a complex web of cultural, social, political, economic, military and social knowledge. His book cannot be apprehended apart from those realities, or in purely theological terms.

Ezekiel's sophistication shows in myriad ways—technical vocabularies, political commentary (he has an agenda) and glistening, two-edged tropes. His oracles against foreign nations and rulers (25.1–32.32; 35.1-15), for example, reveal knowledge of events occurring and conventions pertaining

in societies not his own, while his adoption of metaphors both appropriate to the subjects at hand and vulnerable to disadvantageous turns of interpretation (from the perspectives of nations and their rulers!) demonstrates Ezekiel's literary adroitness. Scholars have sometimes mined such oracles for historical data alone, but literary critics like Newsom remind us of what Ezekiel's audience undoubtedly knew: a well-turned phrase wields great power (1984).

Ezekiel's oracles are treasure troves for students of metaphor. Historically, however, metaphors have not been the focus of protracted study and debate among Old Testament scholars. Hence, Miller, in 'Meter, Parallelism, and Tropes: The Search for Poetic Style', advocated greater attention to biblical tropes:

What is missing [from contemporary studies of Hebrew verse] is a more extended focus on the figurative dimension of poetry... Our contemporary focus on formal characteristics, figures of speech more than figures of thought, and parallelism has served to obscure the role of figures in biblical poetry. (1984: 103-104)

Recent monographs on figurative language, including Galambush's *Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel: The City as Yahweh's Wife* (1992), have demonstrated the rewards of patiently probing a selected metaphor's ancient associations (a task, by the way, of *historical* recovery), its meanings and functions within a given literary context and against a larger backdrop of biblical and extrabiblical literary usage. Galambush explores how, through the imagery of sexual impurity, Ezekiel presents the pollution of Jerusalem and its temple. Her analyses profoundly affect our construal of Ezekiel 16 and 23, among the prophet's most troubling texts.

V. Influences upon Ezekiel and his Book

Ezekiel contains language and ideas sharing affinities with other biblical literatures, for example priestly vocabulary and concepts (including priestly case law) and Deuteronomistic elements. In its final form, moreover, the book appears to be in a polemical dialogue with aspects of the Isaianic tradition.

Critics proffer various explanations for its priestly elements: they derive from the prophet/priest himself; Ezekiel introduced them, but they were later expanded by redactors; they derive wholly from a redaction subsequent to the prophet's own oracles (Garscha 1974). The issue is of particular importance for our assessment of passages sharing traits with portions of the so-called Holiness Code in Leviticus and of Ezekiel 40-48, a unified composition from Greenberg's perspective (1983), or as a combination of Ezekielian elements with later, redactional accretions, as held by Zimmerli, Tuell (1992) and others.

Ezekiel's language is scarcely so saturated with characteristic Deuteronomic vocabulary and phrases as that of, say, Jeremiah. But scholars increasingly recognize his affinities with aspects of Deuteronomic thought. No reason exists for ruling out the possibility that Ezekiel was influenced by the Deuteronomists and their successors.

VI. Conclusion

In *Divine Initiative and Human Response in Ezekiel* (1989), Joyce writes of a 'polarization' in recent Ezekiel scholarship: on the one hand, critics continue mining what the scroll can reveal about Israel's history, including its own redactional history. On the other hand, a number of scholars choose to analyze the text in its present form as literature. Devotees of both methodological approaches sometimes speak as if the two were antithetical. Literary critics, for example, might argue that interpreting the book of Ezekiel as literature requires no knowledge of a historical setting and situation other than the critic's own contemporary world. To my mind, however, extreme stances on either side diminish the potential of Ezekielian scholarship. After all, biblical scholarship yields historical and diachronic data that can shed light not just on a dimension behind the text but also on the text itself. And literary criticism need not (indeed, I would argue, should not) be an ahistorical enterprise. To the contrary, the study of ancient literary texts—their stock images, characteristic formulae, conventions and so on—discloses an important aspect of ancient Israel's history, its *literary* history. Finally, reading Ezekiel in its final form surely demonstrates that the whole is bigger than the sum of its original units. Future Ezekiel scholarship must tend both sides of the field.

EZEKIEL AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

Risa Levitt Kohn

It is doubtful that there can be found five consecutive verses [in the book of Ezekiel] on which all critics agree that they stem from the sixth-century exilic prophet. (Greenberg 1997: 396)

I. Introduction

The twentieth century was most eventful for the scholarly study of the book of Ezekiel. Klein, in a recent essay, notes that the century began with:

Richard Kraetzschmar's detecting two parallel recensions of an original text in Ezekiel. By 1924, Gustav Hölsher concluded that only 144 of the book's 1,273 verses contained the words of the prophet himself. And in 1930, Charles Cutler Torrey claimed that the book was a pseudepigraph from Jerusalem of the third or second century BCE and that it was originally purported to have been written under Manasseh but was subsequently rewritten in Judah with a Babylonian setting. (2000: 11)

It is no wonder, then, that critical scholarship on the book through the first half of the 1900s seemed rather lackluster when compared with the other major biblical prophets. Indeed, the book of Ezekiel, perhaps because of the exilic setting of the work, or the bizarre behavior recounted in the text, or perhaps the conflicted priestly versus prophetic persona of Ezekiel himself, received considerably less scholarly attention than most of the prophet's biblical predecessors (Sweeney 2001: 2-3). As Boadt notes, 'readers and commentators alike were struck by Isaiah's soaring visions and Jeremiah's deep anguish...and were often a little embarrassed that Ezekiel seemed more a victim of hallucinations and fantasy than sound theology' (1999: 4).

This trend changed dramatically with the appearance of Zimmerli's two-volume commentary, published in German in the 1960s, and subsequently in English in 1979 and 1983. Zimmerli's mastery of form, text and redaction criticism, along with his traditio-historical analysis, made his commentary the new starting point for serious Ezekiel scholars. Even so, Zimmerli also ultimately deemed the bulk of the prophetic text to be secondary, written by the followers of the prophet.

Also appearing in 1983 was the first volume of Greenberg's Anchor Bible commentary on Ezekiel. In *Ezekiel 1–20*, Greenberg, in contrast to Zimmerli, illustrates his view that the general shape of the book is the result of representation of the prophet's unique vision in its received form. With his emphasis on biblical and early Jewish commentators, Greenberg's holistic method of textual and structural interpretation helped elucidate the sixth-century matrix of the prophet himself.

In the 1994 volume of *Currents*, Pfisterer Darr surveyed the state of the field of Ezekiel studies, focusing primarily upon the commentaries of Zimmerli (1979, 1983) and Greenberg (1983), and on Davis's work on the textuality of Ezekiel (1989). In this article, I identify and examine several emerging trends in Ezekiel scholarship since the publication of Darr's study, with particular attention to studies published since 1994, as well as some not mentioned in Darr's survey.

Since the publication of Zimmerli's and Greenberg's commentaries, significant strides have been made in the study of the historical circumstances surrounding the Israelite Exile. Archaeological, sociological and anthropological analyses have illuminated what had been a dark age in biblical history, and have helped reveal the vivid theological struggles among both the local and Diaspora populations that have come to characterize the exilic period. As a result, the book of Ezekiel has gained both renewed interest and respect. As a prophet of the Exile, Ezekiel has come to be viewed as an important and liminal figure in the evolution of Israelite thought and theology.

II. *Commentaries*

Several commentaries of varying depth and scope, serving a variety of audiences, appeared in the last decade of the 1900s. The Word Biblical Commentary Series published a two-volume work (*Ezekiel 1–19* [1994], and *Ezekiel 20–48* [1990b]), by Allen. Volume 1 replaces and expands upon the first Ezekiel commentary in this series by Brownlee. This earlier work was published posthumously and was incomplete in several areas. After Brownlee's death, Allen wrote the textual notes for the first 16 chapters of Brownlee's 1986 volume. Allen adopts the middle ground between the methods of Zimmerli and Greenberg, concluding that 'the oral and literary work of the prophet provides the substance' of the book, though it also 'shows evidence of much editorial activity undertaken by Ezekiel and his successors' (1994: xxvi). The commentary, written from an Evangelical perspective, includes an extensive bibliography, Allen's own translation, critical textual notes, a section called 'Form/Structure/Setting' addressing form-critical issues, a verse-by-verse commentary, and an 'Explanation' section summarizing modern theological relevance of the text.

Yet another commentary illustrative of the middle ground between the skeptical and the holistic approach is Clements's Westminster Bible Companion volume (1996). Primarily designed for Christian laity, Clements's volume emphasizes the role of Ezekiel as an important theological link between Israelite thought and what would become Judaism and Christianity.

The New International Commentary, also an Evangelical series striving to balance standard critical method with 'humble respect, admiration and even affection' for the text (Block 1998: xii), has published a large two-volume commentary by Block (1997, 1998). In addition to the standard commentary fare (translation, textual notes, redaction criticism, etc.), Block interprets the text with careful attention paid to the emerging new fields of rhetorical analysis, literary design and inner-biblical exegesis. Ultimately, Block views the book as evincing a meticulously unified and well-planned agenda, reflecting the historical setting of the prophet himself, with virtually no text dating to any later than 539 BCE. In this respect, Block has been influenced by the recent studies of Greenberg (1983) and Davis (1989), both of whom emphasize the impact of the catastrophic reality of the Exile on Ezekiel's message.

Greenberg's second volume of the Anchor Bible commentary, treating Ezekiel 21–37 (1997), picks up and continues the interpretive stance laid out in his first installment. Most notable is, of course, his 'holistic' treatment of the text, which argues for the integrity of the received Masoretic version of the book as the product of 'an individual authorial mind and hand' (p. 396). In addition, much of Greenberg's analysis of Ezekiel's prophecies evinces what Greenberg views as the prophet's utter and complete familiarity with 'almost every genre of Israelite literature known from the Bible' (p. 395), as well as his familiarity with ancient Near Eastern culture and literature. Greenberg continues his unique use of premodern and medieval Jewish commentators to help elucidate the prophetic text.

Perhaps the most striking contrast to Greenberg's volume can be found in Pohlmann's commentary on the first 19 chapters of Ezekiel (1996). Published as part of *Das Alte Testament Deutsch* series, Pohlmann's work exhibits the influence of the radical Marburg school of *Literarkritik* (see, e.g., Jeremias 1983, 1995; Kaiser 1981), with boldface type used to illustrate 'early' texts, while standard and italic types are used to indicate subsequent textual additions. Suffice it to say that there is virtually no boldface in Pohlmann's translation. Pohlmann asserts that the book attained much of its present shape in Babylonia in the hands of generation upon generation of exiles, leaving but a hint of Ezekiel's original message.

III. *Literary Relations*

Since the work of Graf in 1866 and Wellhausen in 1878, scholars have recognized that the language and content of Ezekiel bear striking resemblance to

that of the Priestly Source (P) of the Torah, and especially to the laws found in Leviticus 17–26, the Holiness Code (H) (Graf 1866: 81–83; Wellhausen 1878: 386–87). Because the book of Ezekiel is representative of Israelite theology at a crossroads—between pre-exilic and post-exilic Israel—and since the dating of P and H remains controversial, the extent and direction of the relationship between the two continues to be an intriguing line of investigation.

A. Linguistic Studies

Until the late 1960s, the scholarly debate regarding the relationship between Ezekiel and the Priestly Source focused on establishing that one was dependent upon the other. The ‘evidence’ used to argue for priority in either direction consisted of stylistic similarities, but the actual determination of the ‘earlier source’ was often based on rather circumstantial assumptions or general impressions. Hurvitz was the first to alter the focus of the debate by recognizing that biblical Hebrew underwent grammatical and lexical changes over time, and that it was possible to distinguish between classical biblical Hebrew (pre-exilic) and late biblical Hebrew (post-exilic) (1982: 20–23).

The debate regarding the type of Hebrew found in the book of Ezekiel continued through the 1970s and 1980s, but appears to be losing steam of late. The only recent addition to this debate is the work of Rooker (1990a, 1990b). Treating the text as a single original unit, Rooker considers Ezekiel to be ‘the best representative of the mediating link between pre-exilic and postexilic Hebrew and hence the exemplar of Biblical Hebrew in transition’ (1990a: 186). His findings are therefore in agreement with those of Hurvitz.

B. Biblical Influences

Discussion regarding the relationship of the language, context and imagery of Ezekiel to other material in the Hebrew Bible has been primarily focused on the issue of the book’s relationship to Priestly traditions. These discussions have concentrated on determining the chronological priority of one over the other. This trend, however, is beginning to change. Fishbane’s 1985 work offers perhaps the first comprehensive analysis of what has come to be known as ‘inner-biblical exegesis’ (pp. 7–17), and illustrates the dynamic interplay among the various traditions of the Bible, particularly between the prophetic books and the Pentateuch. Fishbane’s analysis of Ezekiel, in particular, helped to shift the focus from the issue of simple chronological priority to an examination of the way in which authoritative biblical texts were reinterpreted in the face of new historical circumstances: ‘when divine words had apparently gone unfulfilled as originally proclaimed (as in various promises and prophecies); or when new moral or spiritual meanings were applied to texts which had long since lost their vitality’ (p. 14).

Fishbane's analysis, along with Greenberg's, in the two volumes of his Anchor Bible commentary, have led to a wealth of new research into the way Ezekiel utilizes, and in some cases reformulates, earlier biblical traditions (e.g., Matties 1990; McKeating 1994; Cook 1995a; Patton 1996, 1999; Milgrom 1997; Rooker 1998; Kutsko 2000a; Levitt Kohn 2002). Greenberg notes that, while Ezekiel frequently alludes to the 'language, the figures and the stories' found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, 'there is almost always a divergence large enough to raise the question, whether the prophet has purposely skewed the traditional material, or merely represents a version of it different from extant records' (1983: 29).

What has emerged from these new investigations is a new-found appreciation for Ezekiel as a creative author and a shaper of Israelite traditions. As Patton (1999), Levitt Kohn (2002) and others argue, it is no longer tenable to speak of a Deuteronomistic redaction of the book of Ezekiel, or even of a 'Deuteronomistically influenced' redaction of the book. Rather, Ezekiel adapts Deuteronomistic motifs and expression to illustrate the prophet's new and original assessment of Israel in light of the Exile.

Several other studies have focused on the way in which Ezekiel 20 refers to the exodus traditions found in the Pentateuch. The structure of Ezekiel 20 is reviewed and analyzed anew by both Allen (1992) and Eslinger (1998). McKeating (1994) cites numerous parallels between the prophet Ezekiel and Pentateuchal traditions about Moses. McKeating suggests that the two prophets' careers run parallel to one another. Both have three key visionary experiences where they ascend a high mountain, see a vision of the sanctuary and behold the glory of God (1994: 100). Both receive regulations concerning Temple worship, priesthood and apportionment of land. McKeating ultimately suggests that:

The shaping of the Ezekiel traditions and the shaping of the pentateuchal traditions about Moses were going on in tandem, and probably in the same or related circles...the elaborators of the Ezekiel traditions were not drawing on the pentateuchal traditions in the form in which they are familiar to us... these traditions were built into the book of Ezekiel quite early in the exilic period, before the pentateuchal material had got very far towards receiving its final form. (1994: 108-109)

Patton (1996) argues that, in Ezekiel 20, the prophet uses earlier exodus traditions to react to the fall of Jerusalem, and in order to prepare the reader for the new laws revealed in Ezekiel 40-48. In this sense, Ezekiel portrays himself as a 'new Moses':

It is clear that the author of Ezekiel 40-48 considered himself a legitimate mediator of the law. He believed Israel's history was still open to the possibility of the revelation of new law...the experience of the destruction of the temple rendered Moses irrelevant... The book of Ezekiel manipulates the legal and historical traditions at hand in light of the...experience of loss, defeat and abandonment. (Patton 1996: 78)

Levitt Kohn (2002) notes, on the basis of an analysis of various terms and expressions found in Ezekiel 20 and elsewhere in the book, that Ezekiel's visions concerning the redemption and future restoration of Israel interweave Priestly and Deuteronomic concepts together with many of the prophet's own ideas. These visions, of Judah restored, amount to nothing less than a 'Second Exodus', this time not from Egypt, but from Babylonia. Indeed, even Ezekiel's role as a 'new Moses' is a confluence of Priestly and Deuteronomic traditions. Ezekiel functions as prophet, priest and legislator; he is a prophet by calling, a priest by birthright:

Like Moses in P, Ezekiel is warned that his mission will fail due to the strong resolves and hardened hearts of others. D foretells the coming of a prophet like Moses, who will be raised up 'from *among* the Israelites' and in *whose mouth* Yahweh will place *his words* (Deut. 18.18). Ezekiel's mission, regardless of its success or failure, will signify to Israel that there was 'a prophet *among them*' (Ezek. 2.5). Then Ezekiel *eats a scroll containing Yahweh's words* (Ezek. 2.10–3.1). Moses receives a design of the Tabernacle in P; Ezekiel receives a vision of the new Temple. Ezekiel is transported to a high mountain (Ezek. 40.2) and shown this plan in a manner closely resembling Moses seeing the land of Israel from Mount Nebo (Deut. 32.49–52). Both Moses and Ezekiel receive laws relating to festivals and sacrifices. Ezekiel hears Yahweh speaking directly to him from the restored Temple, just as God speaks to Moses inside the Tabernacle in P (Num. 7.89). Ezekiel consecrates the new altar, instructs the priests and oversees the cult, like Moses in P (Exod. 29.36ff.; Lev. 8.1, 14ff.; 9.1ff.). Ezekiel may only see in visions the land about which he has preached. Like Moses in P, he is not permitted to settle there (Num. 27.12–13; cf. Deut. 32.49–52). (Levitt Kohn 2002: 111–12)

Levitt Kohn concludes that Ezekiel, like the later Pentateuchal redactor, endeavored to create a new theology that was neither independent of its sources nor a simple composite of them (p. 119).

C. Ancient Near Eastern Influences

Ezekiel is the first biblical prophet who sees visions of Yahweh outside of the land of Israel. Though some have argued that Ezekiel's oracles were not delivered in exile, or that at least a portion of the book was composed in Judah, the current and prevailing view is that Ezekiel, though familiar with the geography of Jerusalem, functioned exclusively in the Diaspora (McKeating 1993: 44).

As a result, numerous scholars over the last century have suggested that the book of Ezekiel shows both linguistic and cultural influence of various Mesopotamian traditions. Bodi provides an exhaustive review of studies suggesting Babylonian philological, iconographic and thematic influences on the book of Ezekiel (1991: 35–51). Bodi's own work examines several motifs common to Ezekiel and the Akkadian Poem of Erra, leading him to

conclude that Ezekiel is literarily dependent upon and actually emulates the poem in numerous notable ways (p. 315).

Sharon suggests that Ezekiel's temple vision in chs. 40–48, though unique in the biblical text, bears striking structural and contextual resemblance to Sumerian temple hymns, and to the Gudea Cylinders in particular (1996: 99). This hymn, written in 2125 BCE, speaks of a vision received by Gudea, King of Lagash, where he sees the plan of a temple he is to build to the god Ningirsu:

It is as though the authors of both texts hope against hope that if all proceeds are revealed, if every cubit is measured, if every molded brick is perfect, then the divinity will be mollified, disaster will be averted and abundance and blessing will flow from the cosmic center. (Sharon 1996: 109)

In some cases it appears as though Ezekiel may have used Babylonian traditions polemically, to ridicule Mesopotamian religious ideas, while also arguing for the supremacy of Yahweh. Kutsko argues that Ezekiel utilizes an array of Mesopotamian traditions regarding idolatry both to denounce non-Israelite gods, and to argue for Priestly ideology, which views humans as created in God's image (2000a, 2000b). Similarly, Block suggests that Ezekiel's concept of Yahweh's abandonment results in part from the prevalence of this motif in Babylonian literature and iconography. He suggests that Ezekiel uses this imagery in order to attack Babylonian theology while arguing for the ultimate supremacy of the Israelite god (Block 2000).

Malamat (1997) compares three images found in Ezekiel: the power of God's hand, the stick idiom of Ezek. 37.19, and prophesying by means of eating a scroll, with similar images found in recently published prophetic letters from Mari. De Thomasson sees similarities between the sign-acts of Ezekiel 2–5, and those found in Babylonian *šurpu* (exorcism) texts (de Thomasson 1992). Malul suggests Ezekiel was familiar with Mesopotamian legal adoption texts in his description of Yahweh's adoption of personified Jerusalem in Ezekiel 16 (1990).

IV. *The Psychology of Ezekiel*

There is no question that the book of Ezekiel sheds rather a strange light on the priest/prophet. His behavior, as depicted throughout the book, is unconventional and often utterly bizarre. Indeed, Broome, writing in 1946, diagnosed Ezekiel as exhibiting the symptoms of a paranoid schizophrenic. Broome's attempt at prophetic psychoanalysis received little serious consideration at the time. Indeed, most scholars rarely offer any clear explanation as to why Ezekiel lies paralyzed, is commanded to eat human excrement, binds his tongue, shaves his head with a sword and does other odd things to his body (Ezekiel's 'sign-acts', as they have come to be known).

Recently, the psychology of the prophet has generated renewed interest, owing largely to the publication of Halperin's *Seeking Ezekiel: Text and Psychology* (1993). Halperin's primary interest is to re-examine and revise Broome's initial psychoanalysis through close reading of several texts, primarily Ezek. 8.7-12. In this passage, Ezekiel has a vision where he is returned to Jerusalem. Once there, he 'digs through a wall' leading him into the Temple precinct, where he witnesses the performance of several 'abominations'.

Halperin suggests that the action of 'digging' symbolizes sexual intercourse (first suggested by Broome). This description is, according to Halperin, 'a description of Ezekiel's inner landscape rather than anything that actually went on in the Temple' (1993: 3). He then sets out to 'map' this landscape in psychoanalytic terms. The result: the prophet imagines himself having intercourse, but once 'inside', he is filled with dread and disgust. This 'female loathing', read alongside similar reactions in chs. 16, 23 and 24, betrays a pattern to Halperin. Add to this Ezekiel's assertion in 20.25-26 that Yahweh ordained child sacrifice, the images of mothers offering their children to their lovers (Ezek. 16.20-21; 23.37-39) and the 'phallic' scroll in 2.8-3.3, and we are left with a virtual Freudian smorgasbord. Halperin's Ezekiel's is:

very far from being a lovable person. He emerges in these pages as an extreme exemplar of morbidity that afflicts many and perhaps all of human societies. This sickness...has effected the subjection and humiliation of the female half of our species. (1993: 5)

Halperin's conclusions have elicited a variety of responses. Perhaps one of the most detailed is that of Smith-Christopher (1999). While Smith-Christopher admits that the prophet's behavior is far from conventional, he faults Halperin for failing to recognize what he believes to be a more pragmatic explanation of Ezekiel's psychological state. Rather than dig (no pun intended) deep into the prophet's elusive childhood, why not look to the sociopolitical events of his adult life? According to Smith-Christopher, Ezekiel's behavior is best understood in light of the traumatic circumstances in which he lived; namely, in light of the Exile.

Read this way, Ezekiel, a witness of the capture and destruction of Jerusalem and a refugee in exile, likely suffers from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, a condition that has only recently come to light (1999: 135-37). Smith-Christopher argues that:

Many of Ezekiel's 'bizarre' actions modeled the trauma of the fall of Jerusalem. This can be true whether Ezekiel was acting on personal knowledge, on the knowledge brought to him by recent refugees, or whether the texts were redacted to reflect these realities. (p. 143)

In sum, Smith-Christopher faults Halperin for 'blaming the victim' by suggesting that Ezekiel struggled with his sexuality as a result of some hypothetical

childhood trauma, while Halperin ignores the circumstances and social reality of the Exile (p. 144).

V. Ezekiel's Sign-Acts

The so-called 'sign-acts' in Ezekiel have also been studied using the relatively new method of rhetorical analysis. Friebel analyzes these acts as forms of non-verbal communication, distinguishing them from prophetic narrative (1999). In analyzing these acts as rhetorical tools, Friebel isolates three elements: the rhetorical situation of the act; the strategies employed; and the effect these acts had upon their intended audience. He also compares the various techniques employed by Ezekiel with those used by Jeremiah. Friebel views both prophets as what he calls 'suasive' or interactive communicators who used non-verbal behavior to 'communicate graphically specifiable message-contents' (p. 466). So, he suggests that after Ezekiel ate unclean food, the exiles would have been consciously reminded of the act and its implications whenever they ate (p. 252).

Odell (1998) suggests that the symbolic acts in Ezek. 3.16–5.17 should be considered in the context of the prophet's call (Ezek. 1.1–3.15). She interprets the entire textual unit as an 'account of prolonged initiation in which Ezekiel relinquishes certain elements of his identity as a priest to take on the role of prophet' (p. 229). According to Odell, it is significant that Ezekiel is identified as a priest in Ezek. 1.2, but he only assumes his prophetic role at the beginning of ch. 6. The sign-acts in Ezek. 3.16–5.17 are part of a transitional process or a 'liminal state', a concept developed by V. Turner (1969), which Odell defines as 'a situation in which one has separated from one's old identity but has not yet been fully invested in a new one' (Odell 1998: 235). Thus, when the prophet is commanded to lie on his side for 430 days (Ezek. 4.4–8), Odell suggests the number could refer to 'the length of time it would take to perform this act and the interval between the book's first two dates (1.1, 8.1)' (1998: 234).

The second phase of this 'transitional process', again according to V. Turner, is referred to as 'leveling' (Odell 1998: 247). Once one's identity has been relinquished, recognizing one's commonality with the rest of the community follows. Odell notes that the sign-acts in Ezekiel force the prophet to engage in 'anti-priestly behavior' (1998: 247): he shaves his head, he eats impure siege rations. By doing so, Ezekiel

is abandoning a particular dimension of his priestly identity...the very act of doing so further binds him to his people as he demonstrates that he shares their faith. As he prepares to take on the arduous task of *nabî*, he does so not as one who stands apart pure, unaffected by the events, but as one who is a full partner in the community. (p. 248)

VI. *Ezekiel, Metaphor and Gender:*
Adulterous Jerusalem in Ezekiel 16 and 23

In Ezekiel 16 and 23, the city Jerusalem is personified as Yahweh's unfaithful wife who is ultimately punished at the hands of her lovers. Ezekiel uses this metaphor to portray the defilement of both the city and the Temple, and to condemn the inhabitants of the city for breaching the covenant. These texts have generated an array of feminist scholarship highlighting the prophet's metaphorical use of sexual abuse and violence. The following is but a small sampling.

In *Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel: The City as Yahweh's Wife* (1992), Galambush argues that the metaphor extends beyond chs. 16 and 23 to the entire book. She suggests Ezekiel's metaphor is influenced by the ancient Near Eastern concept of capital cities as wives of the cities' patron gods, and by the fact that women and their sexuality were controlled by the males in their lives. Consequently, in Ezekiel 16 and 23, Jerusalem is depicted as Yahweh's wife, while the Temple is her vagina and uterus. The abominations associated with the Temple, according to Galambush, constitute defilement linked to menstruation (1992: 97). Similarly, alliances between the inhabitants of Jerusalem and foreign nations constitute adultery. Thus, the metaphor 'provides a convincing vehicle by which to depict (and justify) the intensity of Yahweh's outrage against the city' (Galambush 1992: 159). According to P. Day (2000a), these 'pornographic' images 'titillate, enrage and unite male hearers or readers', while persuading them 'to identify with what the text presents as Yahweh's position vis-à-vis an unspeakably lewd and promiscuous wife' (p. 286).

Van Dijk-Hemmes analyzes the metaphorization of woman in Ezekiel 23 in light of 'modern pornographic depictions of female sexuality' (1993: 163). Following Setel's article (1985) on similar imagery in Hosea, she notes that in both prophetic literature and contemporary pornography, female sexuality is a symbol of evil. In Ezekiel 23, Van Dijk-Hemmes posits that Ezekiel's use of metaphor 'transforms' the people of Israel into Yahweh's wives:

Both sexes are forced to see the shameless stupidity of their political behaviour and the absolute hopelessness of their situation... The impact of that insight... can only be communicated by such (gender-) specific metaphorical language. (1993: 169)

Patton argues that the metaphors used by Ezekiel in chs. 16 and 23 are not meant to legitimate Israelite violence against women, but rather were utilized by the prophet to shock his audience (2000). She argues that the prophet pitched sexually violent metaphors to his exiled audience who, according to her, had themselves 'survived an emasculating defeat' at the hands of the Babylonians (p. 237).

P. Day (2000a) rejects the traditional scholarly interpretation that the punishment pronounced against Jerusalem in Ezek. 23.35-43 depicts elements of the actual punishment for adultery practiced in ancient Israel. She suggests that these scholars have interpreted the punishment literally rather than metaphorically. P. Day argues that the four features most commonly associated with the Israelite punishment for adultery are: stripping (Ezek. 23.37, 39); the jury assembled to try the woman (23.40); stoning (23.40); and dismembering of the adulteress's body (23.40) (P. Day 2000a: 289). She concludes that there is little biblical or extrabiblical evidence to support the theory that these features accurately depict the lawful treatment of an adulterous woman in ancient Israel. Rather, 'metaphors presuppose dissonance' (p. 291):

In making sure the little whore got what was coming to her, the commentators have not only put her to death for adultery, they have also killed the metaphor. It is cold comfort to be able to say, on the basis of available evidence, that adulteresses in ancient Israel did not suffer the same fate as that invoked in Ezekiel xvi upon personified Jerusalem. (P. Day 2000a: 308)

She concludes that the prophet's description of punishment here depicts the consequences for breach of covenant—the literal transgression with which Ezekiel faults the people of Jerusalem.

VII. *Ezekiel 18: Corporate or Individual Responsibility?*

In the early part of the twentieth century, it was generally accepted that early biblical texts emphasize Israel's corporate identity with respect to its relationship with Yahweh, while late biblical texts place greater weight on the individual and specifically individual responsibility in relationship to God. The book of Ezekiel, and specifically Ezekiel 18, was often viewed as one of the first texts espousing the notion of moral individualism over corporate responsibility (see Halpern 1991: 14-15; Lindbloom 1963: 387; von Rad 1962: 392-93). This evolution to a more individualistic theology was in turn viewed as a progression from a simpler to a more sophisticated mode of thought. In the last dozen years, several scholars have suggested that, at least with respect to the book of Ezekiel, and most notably Ezekiel 18, this 'developmental' theory may no longer be tenable.

Joyce (1989) suggests that in Ezekiel 18, the prophet is not concerned with identifying specific 'units' of responsibility *per se*, but rather is illustrating 'the urgent need for his audience to accept responsibility as such' (p. 187). Since it is corporate Israel that is responsible for the calamities that have befallen them, this chapter, according to Joyce, is primarily concerned with Israel's national repentance and subsequent corporate fate (pp. 42-44).

Matties (1990) argues that although there is some emphasis placed upon the individual, Ezekiel 18 is primarily concerned with the service of this individual in pursuit of a 'larger goal—the reconstitution of Israel as the people of God' (p. 124). Since the individual and the community are never fully independent of one another, Matties envisions Ezekiel as promoting the concept of the 'social self', an individual who cannot become divorced from the moral community. It is this new orientation of community, or rather the interdependence of the individual and the group, that the prophet sees as carrying the people towards future restoration (p. 150).

Similarly, Kaminsky (1995) contends that corporate responsibility need not be viewed as subordinate to individual retribution. With respect to Ezekiel, he suggests:

rather than viewing Ezekiel 18 as a superior theology that has come to displace the older corporate ideas, one can affirm the importance of both sets of ideas and come to understand how they qualify and thus complement each other. (p. 189)

VIII. *Ezekiel 40–48: Utopian Vision or Religious Polity?*

Like the rest of the commentaries on Ezekiel, scholarly analysis of chs. 40–48, the prophet's final vision, usually falls somewhere between that of Greenberg (single author, unified source) and Zimmerli (multiple redaction). There is also little scholarly consensus as to whether the temple vision found in these chapters constitutes an apocalyptic or a utopian dream, or whether the plan represents some form of historical reality.

Tuell (1992) suggests that although the text does exhibit what he views as a definitive shape and function, it is not the work of a single author (p. 175). Tuell's analysis indicates the existence of two sources within these last nine chapters. The first is Ezekiel himself, who is responsible for the 'core vision' of Ezek. 40.1–43; 44.1–2; 47.1–12 and 48.30–35. The second is the work of an author, or authors, who inserted into the prophet's vision a legislative layer ('Law of the Temple'), containing rules for: (a) worship, (b) priesthood, (c) the civil ruler, and (d) the reapportionment of land (p. 176). This expansion did not occur gradually, but was rather 'a single, purposive redaction, aimed at producing a religious polity for restoration Judea' (Tuell 1992: 18).

For Tuell, Ezekiel's 40–48 represents:

the religious polity of the Judean Restoration, a present tense description of the authors' self-conception and their conception of God. The final form of the text is built on an authentic vision of Ezekiel, chosen by our editors as the perfect statement of their society's foundation and end. (1992: 14)

He suggests that the text attained its present shape in the Persian period, during the reign of Darius I (521–486 BCE).

Duguid, in contrast, views Ezekiel's vision as a utopian vision calling for a 'total re-ordering of society, with implications for every element of the community' (1994: 133). Through an examination of various leadership groups found in the text (kings, princes, priests, Levites, prophets and lay leaders), Duguid posits that the prophet's plan for the future with respect to each leadership group is directly related to Ezekiel's critique of their past behavior. As a result, Duguid identifies an 'antithetical interconnection' (p. 139) between the historical past as assessed by the prophet and Ezekiel's idealized vision of the future. The Zadokite priests will receive increased power and greater prestige as a result of their past righteousness, while the Levites will be demoted to a lesser place in society because of their unfaithfulness. The prophets and lay leadership are entirely excluded in Ezekiel's future plan, as their behavior is singled out as particularly reprehensible. Ultimately, Duguid views chs. 40–48 and the book as a whole as the work of a single author writing in the Exile.

Yet another view regarding these last nine chapters is proposed by Stevenson (1996). She sees the prophet's final vision as 'territorial rhetoric' (p. 3). Using rhetorical analysis alongside the idea of territoriality as espoused by human geographers, Stevenson suggests that the primary intention of this text is to 'create a new human geography by changing access to space' (p. xvii). Since every society, according to the theory of human geography, is organized in space, any kind of modification of spatial organization transforms the society. Ezekiel's vision is nothing less than 'a new society organized according to a new set of spatial rules. It is a temple society with controlled access to sacred space based on a spatial theology of holiness' (p. xviii). Stevenson views these chapters as organized by Ezekiel's 'territorial rhetoric' where he reasserts the supremacy of Yahweh and Yahweh's sole claim to Israel's kingship in direct response to the spatial violations which led to the Exile.

IX. Conclusion

It is clear that a new generation of scholars, not unlike the famous Talmudic Rabbi Hanina ben Hezekiah, have spent countless hours burning the midnight oil in an effort to reconcile and comprehend the challenging book of the prophet Ezekiel. As a result, this ancient text has been given new life in the many interesting, innovative and challenging studies that have been produced over the last decade.

While much of the recent critical work on the text continues to find itself wedged somewhere between the two pillars of Zimmerli and Greenberg, several new postmodern modes of investigation have opened new venues of research. Gender analysis, the psycho-historical approach, rhetorical criticism, anthropological studies and other methods, have all helped to bring the book of Ezekiel into the twenty-first century very much alive and kicking.

EZEKIEL UPDATE

Risa Levitt Kohn

In the few years since the last ‘snapshot’ of Ezekiel scholarship, the field continues to be enriched by the work of a gifted generation of scholars engaged by the challenge of this puzzling and often cryptic prophet and his words. While several areas of study are at the center of ongoing discussion, new avenues of research have also emerged.

I. *Commentaries*

Three commentaries have appeared recently, each with its own approach to the study of the book of Ezekiel. Duguid (1999) writes for the *NIV Application Commentary*. After presenting a detailed examination of historical background, Duguid provides the NIV translation, and comments on the text in three categories: original meaning, bridging contexts; and contemporary significance. The last two headings deal in particular with the book’s significance for a contemporary Christian audience. In general, Duguid sees the book as the product of the prophet himself, suggesting that Ezekiel may also have edited his own prophecies. C. Wright’s theological exploration of the book (2001) deals with the text thematically, rather than by chapter and verse. Several themes are explored, appealing primarily to a confessional audience. Volume VI of the NIB commentary contains sections on Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, in addition to the Letter of Jeremiah, Lamentations and Baruch. A section by Darr (2001) is devoted to Ezekiel, guided primarily by her own previous work on the prophet.

II. *Literary Relations*

Several interesting studies continue the investigation into possible influences on the prophet with respect to the book’s language, relationship to other biblical prophecies, as well as possible ancient Near Eastern influences evident in the text.

A. *Linguistic Studies*

Over the last several years it has become evident that the book of Ezekiel provides a great deal of linguistic fodder for the examination of the evolution

of biblical Hebrew. If, in fact, the language evolved in two identifiable stages—pre-exilic and post-exilic—the language in Ezekiel should exhibit evidence of both periods. Rooker (1990a, 1990b) is certainly an advocate of this view. His claim is critically challenged by Naude (2000, 2003), who examines Ezekiel's text from the perspective of the linguistic theory of language change and diffusion.

B. Biblical Influences

Of particular interest recently is the question of the relationship between Ezekiel and the prophet Jeremiah. Were the two prophets personally acquainted? Are their writings influenced by one another? If so, what is the direction of literary dependence?

Holladay's suggestion (2001) that the possibility of the two prophets' knowing each other before the Exile could 'modify one's mental image of these prophets as solitary figures...fostered at least in part by figures on the facades of medieval cathedrals and depictions in stained glass windows' (p. 31). Focusing on the evidence of Jer. 15.16, 'Your words were found, and I ate them' (Jer. 15.16), and the similar passage in Ezek. 2:8–3:3 that describes Ezekiel's consumption of a scroll, Holladay posits that Jeremiah may have encountered Ezekiel, a young and impressionable priest in Jerusalem. Accordingly, Holladay speculates that Ezekiel, once in Babylon as a prophet, 'transformed Jeremiah's metaphor of Yahweh's words placed in the prophet's mouth into phraseology of sensory stimulus' (p. 34).

Leene (2000; 2001) argues, in contrast, that the prophet Ezekiel influenced the author(s)/editor(s) of the book of Jeremiah. In both articles, he examines parallel passages (for example; Jer. 6.9–15//Ezek. 13.1–6; Jer. 6.16//Ezek. 33.1–9; Jer. 18.18–23//Ezek. 7.23–27), ultimately concluding, through what he refers to as 'diachronic analysis' and 'synchronic description,' that the text of Jeremiah is patterned after that of Ezekiel. Similarly, though less chronologically problematic, Tuell (2000) illustrates the way in which selected post-exilic literature, including Daniel, Third Isaiah, Haggai and Zechariah, were influenced by Ezekiel on a variety of levels, including but not limited to, the dating formulae and redactional formation.

C. Torah

Of particular note in this area of research is the work of Bergsma and Hahn (2004), who attempt to identify the laws which are described as 'not good' in Ezek. 20.25–26. After detailed analysis and examination of previous scholarship, the authors argue that the prophet is referring to those of the book of Deuteronomy. Specifically, Bergsma and Hahn propose that the Deuteronomic emphasis on cult centralization leads in part to changes in the laws governing the sacrifice of the firstlings. Unlike the Holiness Code, Deuteronomy permits (1) profane slaughter of non-firstlings, (2) substitution

of other animals to be purchased and sacrificed in place of the firstlings, and (3) human consecration of the firstlings (pp. 213-17). Furthermore, the protocol for handling blood in Deuteronomy is deficient when viewed from the standard of the Holiness Code. The Holiness Code insists it has to be sprinkled on the altar, while D permits it to be poured on the ground. These laws, according to the authors, are the precepts that so disturbed Ezekiel. There is likely much more in D that Ezekiel disliked as well, even if he recognized it as authoritative.

D. Ancient Near Eastern Literature

The influence of ancient Near Eastern literature on passages in the Old Testament is always an intriguing avenue of investigation. Odell (2003) has focused on the prophet's elaborate call vision in ch.1 as having been influenced by Assyrian iconography. Odell finds striking similarity between Ezekiel's vision and Assyrian royal iconography. Uehlinger and Truffaut (2001) employ rich illustrations from Mesopotamian and Egyptian cosmological symbols to elucidate the complex imagery of Ezekiel's call, and of Ezekiel 10.

III. Ezekiel as Priest: Ezekiel as Prophet

Is it possible to function as both a priest and a prophet? This is a question any critical reader of Ezekiel must confront. Though in the book Ezekiel appears to function primarily as a prophet, does he do so from a priestly perspective? What would such a perspective have been, especially in light of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple and the Exile? Is it even possible to operate as a priest in Exile? These are just a sampling of the questions that have emerged in recent scholarship.

Fechter (2004) notes that priesthood is discussed primarily in Ezekiel 40–48, while the rest of the book has little to say about the institution. Thus, it is not until his hypothetical restoration period that Ezekiel resumes his priestly role. By consecrating the altar and offering sacrifices, Ezekiel elevates the Zadokites over the Levites. Duguid (2004), in contrast, suggests that the entire book of Ezekiel exemplifies what priests roles' looked like in Exile. He focuses primarily on the task of Torah instruction (see also Mein: 2001; Sweeney: 2000). Duguid notes that in his vision of the future, Ezekiel foresees a time when each category of Israelite will fulfill their proper position in society. Ezekiel's role as prophet, then, is simply an expansion of his priestly job, adapted to the reality of the Exile. Patton (2004) examines the way in which Ezekiel portrays himself ultimately as servant of God. In this sense, though he does not appear to perform any of the rites typically associated with the priesthood, and offers no sacrifices, he is still first and foremost a priest.

Schwartz (2004) rejects all of this analysis. While recognizing the prophet's priestly heritage, he argues that there is virtually no textual evidence that illustrates Ezekiel performing priestly rites in Babylonia, or earlier. Even the priestly responsibility of Torah instruction as Schwartz understands it does not speak to his priestly role:

Ezekiel does not rehearse the laws of worship, nor does he exhort his listeners to do so. Similarly, though he speaks about the Sabbath...he does not instruct his listeners on how to observe it or even exhort them to do so; his intent is to cast blame. (2004: 67)

IV. *Ezekiel and Gender*

As noted earlier (Levitt Kohn 2003: 19-20), Ezekiel's personification of Jerusalem in chs. 16 and 23 has generated lively discussion, primarily among feminist scholars attempting to get to the root of the prophet's rather nasty portrayal of the defilement of the city and the Temple in feminine terminology. Lenchak (2000) sees this portrayal as 'shock treatment' for a people behaving so contrary to what their god expected of them. Thus, while the language follows a long-standing biblical tradition of portraying Israel as Yahweh's spouse, the harlotry and adultery are the prophet's way of provoking a deeply outraged response from his audience. P. Day (2000b) argues that the metaphor in Ezekiel 16 has been misunderstood to the degree that scholars' literal reading of what in fact is sexual metaphor has, in Day's view, skewed interpretation of the text. Stiebert (2000; 2002) understands both chs. 16 and 23 through a sociological lens of 'deviance amplification', arguing that the imagery speaks more to the turbulent historical conditions in which they were written than to the particular views or biases of the prophet himself.

V. *Ezekiel Beyond the Exile*

Boccaccini's *Roots of Rabbinic Judaism* (2002) sets the stage for a new avenue of Ezekiel scholarship. He traces the roots of rabbinic Judaism back to the post-exilic period, when competing priestly groups sought to establish themselves as the legitimate purveyors of Israelite religion and theology. The book of Ezekiel helped a nascent Zadokite movement proffer its view over and above 'Enochic Judaism', and what Boccaccini refers to as 'Sapiential Judaism'.

VI. *Conclusion*

It seems fitting to end with the work of Boccaccini, who views the writings of Ezekiel as the theology that bridges ancient Israelite thought with some

of the foundational ideologies of early Judaism. In this sense we have come full circle over the past hundred plus years of research.

It was Wellhausen who first argued that the prophet was a truly liminal figure. The Exile, according to Wellhausen, triggered a sudden concern with the theoretical side of Israelite worship (Wellhausen 1899: 416). While more recent Ezekiel scholarship may not support the entire view put forward by Wellhausen, the work of the last century has highlighted the importance of the writings of this Exilic prophet. Ezekiel's ideas shed light on the prophetic reflections of earlier Israelite ritual and theology, the formation of the redacted Torah, and inter-textual dialogue among the prophets of the early Exile, Restoration, and beyond.

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