

READER RESPONSE

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The somewhat enigmatic title of this paper refers to some important developments in the scholarly research of biblical texts. In the first part of this article I will discuss some of the fundamental changes in the exegesis of biblical texts which have occurred in the last few decades and which are still taking place. In the second part I will present an example of the way, in which an author of the New Testament reads and explains biblical texts. More specifically, an example will be given of the fascinating and unique way of dealing with a text as is done in *Hebrews*.

1. *Some recent important developments in the exegesis of biblical texts*

1.1. *From diachrony to synchrony*

In the late sixties and in the seventies scholarly exegesis of biblical texts, which was based on the historical-critical method, came under fire. Everywhere the principle of diachrony was employed: in the historical quest to find out whether all the events mentioned in the text had really happened, in literary criticism, in form criticism and in redactional criticism. Texts were considered as entities which had evolved into their final stage in the course of time. One had to know and even be able to reconstruct the historical development of the text before one could fully understand it.

In the sixties and seventies this obvious starting point was left behind. The principle of diachrony was replaced by the principle of synchrony. It was recognized that texts were meaningful outside the history of their development and that it was worth the effort to study texts as unities, existing at a given point in time. Especially French structuralism and the "école de Paris", of which A.J. Greimas¹ was

¹ Cf. among others, A.J. Greimas, *Du sens. Essais sémiotiques* (Paris, 1970); A.J. Greimas, *Maupassant. La sémiotique du texte: exercices pratiques* (Paris, 1976); A.J. Greimas, *Sémiotique structurale* (Paris, 1966); A.J. Greimas, J. Courtès, *Dictionnaire raisonné de la théorie du langage* (Paris, 1979), Tome 2 (Hachette, 1986).

the founding father, guided these developments in the beginning. The semiotic theories of A.J. Greimas have been developed by the Groupe d'Entrevernes² into a model for analysis, which has been found especially fruitful for the analysis of biblical narratives. In our country the study group of Semanet³, and the research group at Nijmegen University, which was working on the parables of the gospel of Luke,⁴ among other things, concentrated on the semiotic analysis of biblical narratives.

In these developments the meaning of the text was no longer sought in the history of the text before its final wording, but in the text itself. The text was seen as a tissue that could be studied as an independent entity by describing how the parts are linked, in their syntagmatic as well as in their paradigmatic dimensions. Already in the beginning of the eighties the text-immanent character of this approach was criticized. It became clear that, besides the syntactic and semantic attention, attention for the pragmatic aspects of the text was also needed. At that time the research group of Nijmegen University, mentioned above, sought ways to pay attention to the pragmatic dimensions of the text within the framework of semiotic analysis.

1.2. Attention for the reader

Meanwhile there were some quite different developments which invite us to shift the attention from the author-oriented research to the reader-oriented investigation. Thus the periodical *Semeia*⁵ devoted some instalments to a reader-oriented exegesis. The distinctions

² Groupe d'Entrevernes, *Signes et paraboles. Sémantiques et texte évangélique* (Paris, 1977). Groupe d'Entrevernes, *Analyse sémiotique des textes. Introduction. Théorie pratique* (Lyon, 1979).

³ Semanet edited by G. Laakken, *Semiotiek en christelijke nuttingsvormen* Hilversum, 1987. K. Joosse and P. de Maat, members of Semanet, produced the translation of the dictionary of A.J. Greimas and J. Courtés, *Analytisch woordenboek van de semiotiek* (Tilburg, 1979). There is also a translation in English by L. Crist, D. Patte and others, *Semiotic and Language. An analytical Dictionary* (Bloomington, 1982).

⁴ H. Welzen, *Lucas, evangelist van gemeenschap. Een onderzoek naar de pragmatische effecten in Lc 15,1-17,16* (Nijmegen, 1986); B. van Iersel, T. van Schaik, S. van Tilborg, H. Welzen, W. Weren, *Parabelverhalen in Lucas. Van semiotiek naar pragmatisch* (Tilburg, 1987); E.J. van Wolde, *A Semiotic Analysis of Genesis 2-3. A Semiotic Theory and Method of Analysis to the story of the garden of Eden* (Assen, 1989).

⁵ R. Detweiler (ed.), *Reader Response Approaches to Biblical and Secular Texts* (Atlanta, 1985) = *Semeia* Nr. 31; E.V. McKnight, *Reader Perspectives on the New Testament* (Atlanta, 1989) = *Semeia* nr. 48.

made by W. Iser⁶ and U. Eco⁷ were applied to the exegesis of biblical texts. The most important starting point is that in a reader-oriented exegesis the focus is not on the actual reader, but on a "reader in the text", that is to say the role the actual reader is supposed to play in giving meaning to the text. The text as it were gives instructions to the reader, who constructs a meaning of the text with the help of these instructions. This reader who is supposed to be in the text, is called "der implizite Leser" by W. Iser.

It is important here to see the enormous changes in the presentation of the question. It is not the intention of the author which is the central point, nor the structure of the text, but the interaction between text and reader. As far as there is a question of an author in a reader-oriented exegesis, it is an implied author, that is to say not the author of flesh and blood, but the author who is implicitly present in the text as a participant. The role of the narrator is a more detailed specification of the implied reader.

To illustrate the distinction between the author and the readers of flesh and blood on the one side, and the implied author and the implied reader on the other side, I will use the example of *Il Nome della Rosa* by Umberto Eco⁸. Eco is the author in the empirical world, the author of flesh and blood, who from the author's side is responsible for the empirical process of communication. On the reader's side there are the millions who have actually read Eco's book. Thus on the reader's side it is they, who are responsible for the empirical process of communication. In the book itself there is an agent, viz. the narrator, who initiates the communication within the book. This text-immanent participant is Adson, who, in his old age, looks back on the adventures which he experienced as a novice. The textual participant addressed by Adson is the fictional, implied reader. Actually in narratives these text-immanent participants are often unnamed. The distinctions we have made leave open the possibility that the author of flesh and blood and the text-immanent narrator are the same. But this is not always the case. From the systematic point of view we have to distinguish them.

⁶ W. Iser, *Der implizite Leser. Kommunikationsformen des Romans von Bunyan bis Beckett* (München, 1979); W. Iser, *Der Akt des Lesens. Theorie ästhetischer Wirkung* (München, 1976).

⁷ U. Eco, *The Role of the Reader. Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (London, etc., 1983).

⁸ U. Eco, *Il Nome della Rosa* (Milano, 1980).

B. Latagan⁹ wonders whether the real point of contact in the interaction between text and reader concerns the implied author and the implied reader. The most usual starting point is S. Chatman's¹⁰ model of communication, which consists of the following terms:

real author → implied author → (narrator) → (narratee) → implied reader → real reader.

However, B. Latagan thinks it more probable that for the description of the communication between the author and the reader one has to start from two movements in opposite directions. "The real author, when writing is reaching out for the implied reader (as no other reader is present at this moment). The real reader, when reading, is reaching out for the implied author (as no other author is present)." The real author can only direct himself to whomever he thinks or supposes the reader is. The real reader can only reach the real author via the implied author, that is to say via the signs and the instructions given by the implied author.

B. van Iersel¹¹ also proposed changes in the communication model of S. Chatman. Put on the right track by R. M. Fowler¹² en P. Danove¹³, he actually speaks of two directions as well. The implied reader shows how the author has visualised his readers, when producing the text of the narrative. The reader, on the other hand, has his eye on the author and the narrator; and this, of course, on the basis of the data in the text which are provided by the real author. Actually the real reader has a double position. He is involved in the process of reading the written text, both in a receptive and in a productive sense. In a receptive sense the reader is touched by the text. In a productive sense the reader is involved in the process of reading when he is attributing meanings to the text. One of the meanings which the reader can generate on the basis of the signals present in the text, is an impression of the narrator and the implied author. There is much discussion concerning the activity of the

⁹ B. Latagan, "Coming to Grips with the Reader" in: *Somnia* 1989 nr 48, pp. 3-17, especially pp. 10-11.

¹⁰ S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, Ithaca/New York, 1978, p. 151. This model is the starting point for many different models which are used by different authors.

¹¹ B. van Iersel, "His master's voice. De impliciete verteller in Marcus: stem en literaire gestalte" in: *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 34, 1994, pp. 115-127. See also B. Van Iersel, *Marcus uitgeleed aan andere lezers*, Baarn - Kampen, 1997, especially pp. 19-32.

¹² R.M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis, 1991).

¹³ P. Danove, *The End of Mark's Story* (Leiden, 1993).

reader and his contribution to the process of producing meaning from the text. From the hermeneutical point of view the opinion that the text, and only the text, is the bearer of the meaning and that this meaning is implied in the text, is no longer tenable. An objective and value-free reading solely determined by the text does not exist. The position at the other side of the spectrum is that there is no text at all, but only interpretation. In this opinion there is only the reader who makes a text from the specks of ink on a sheaf of papers tied up with gum or string. There is no text. Such a position is for instance held by Stanley Fish.¹⁴ The question how it is possible that several people assign more or less the same meaning to a text, he answers by pointing to the authority of the interpretative communities to which the readers belong. In this theory, however, it is not made clear how frequently new meanings come into being, and that not only already existing meanings are repeated. Yet the history of interpretation of biblical texts shows us that readers have created meanings, which add something new to already existing meanings. The authority of interpretative communities is not sufficient to explain this.

1.3. *The constructive work of the reader*

I present the process of meaning as a circular model of interaction. Of course the reader attributes meaning to the text by the activity of reading, but at the same time he is guided by the data in the text. The text of the reader should be distinguished from the text of the author.¹⁵ The text of the author is the text made by the author, which has found its material expression in the written product. The text of the reader is the total of meanings constructed by the activity of the reader on the basis of the instructions given by the text. The often used metaphor of the musical score is illuminating in this respect. The score is the music written on paper. But it is the musician who interprets the notes on the paper and adapts them to sweet-sounding music. In the same way the text has found a material expression in the written product, a series of instructions for the reader to construct a meaningful whole.

¹⁴ Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretative Communities* (Cambridge, 1980).

¹⁵ So for instance already B. van Iersel "De lezer ontcijfert de tekst en vult in" in: *Schrift* 1980, nr 71, pp. 166-171. He uses the terms 'schrifttekst' and 'leestekst' on pp. 169-171.

To understand the constructive work of the reader the difference between spoken and written text is very important. On a number of points a spoken and a written text differ essentially. In the case of a spoken text the speaker is always present. The communicative situation in which the text is spoken is also always present. The same is true for the persons who are directly addressed. That is not the case with a written text. In comparison with the spoken text there has been a departure of the author. The author is no longer there. The text has become independent. In literary science this has sometimes been called the author's death. There is also a separation from the original context. The context is separated from the written text, too. At the same time there is the separation of the addressee from the spoken text. With this threefold separation of author, context and addressee,¹⁶ the text has become an orphan, so to say. A result of all this is that when we are saying something about the intention of the author or about the context in which the text has functioned, it is always a reconstruction of this intention and a reconstruction of this context. In the case of written texts, intentions of the author, and context are products of the reader. The texts are, as it were, given back their parents by the reader, but one has to realize that they are only foster parents.

The alienation of the origin by putting the text into writing is also the condition on the basis of which the text can be actualized in other contexts. The separation from author, context and addressee makes it possible for the text to be read in another context. In fact people speak of decontextualization and recontextualisation.¹⁷ Through the process of reading started by different readers the text is understood against different backgrounds. A plurality of meanings becomes possible in this process of decontextualization and recontextualisation.

With the instructions for reading to be found in the text, the so-called "gaps" are important. Gaps are all the places of indeterminacy which are present in a text. It has been pointed out that gaps are especially important for narrative texts. Gaps are points in a text where information important for the structure of a narrative is hardly or not at all given. These gaps come into being by a certain manner of presentation or a certain way of narration which can differ de-

pending on the literary genre of the text. They occur for instance at the transition from one situation to another. Gaps have an important function in the interaction between the text and the reader. They activate the reader's response to the text. Thus gaps are part of the pragmatics of the text. It is for the reader to fill up these gaps. Gaps also have a function when a reader is forced to modify the horizon of his expectations about what is narrated, on the basis of the instructions offered for reading, if these instructions do not correspond to the reader's expectations.¹⁸ Gaps enable the reader to make new reconstructions of the narrated world. So not only what is in the text, but also what is not in the text determines the process of assigning meaning which takes place while reading.

For a good interaction between text and reader a well balanced quantity of gaps is important. If there are few gaps, the danger exists that the reader finds the text dull and not challenging enough. If there are too many, the events narrated in the text become vague. There is too little information then. The effect of gaps makes clear that both the information given and the information not given are important for the meaning to come about. Gaps have several functions. By appearing for instance at the transitions between situations they mark these transitions and link up necessary connections by—strangely enough—giving no information. The reader reconstructs these necessary connections on the basis of data in the text of which he actually does have information. The imagination and the fantasy of the reader are thus stimulated. Another kind of gap can come about when the world of the story is presented from different points of view, the point of view of the narrator and the points of view of various characters. The reader is stimulated to take up his own position in and towards the narrated world.

1.4. *The reader and the critic*

Important is also the question what kind of reader gives meaning to the text. For there are different ways of reading. In literary criticism one distinguishes between the common reading and the critical analysis of texts. In his study about the gospel of Mark, R. Fowler¹⁹ wrote about this. First of all it must be said that the common reading

¹⁶ See for this P. Ricoeur, *Du texte à l'action. Essais d'herméneutique II* (Paris, 1986), pp. 183-211, especially, pp. 187-190.

¹⁷ So for instance W. Werren, *Intertextualität en bijbel* (Kampen, 1993), pp. 16-17.

¹⁸ W. Iser, *Der Akt des Lesens. Theorie ästhetischer Wirkung* (München, 1976), p. 263.

¹⁹ R. Fowler, o.c. pp. 27-31.

and the critical analysis cannot be seen as two totally different things. They partly overlap. If we put the reader and the critic in a spectrum we may say that the critic is the judge and master of the text, whereas the reader is the servant to the text. The critic so to say steps back from the text to take a pose of critical, objectifying distance, whereas in the common reading this distance between reader and text is minimalized. It is as if the text allows the reader to identify with the text. The reader loses himself in the text. One can illustrate this by referring to one's own experience. When a reader is absorbed in a fascinating book, he is no longer aware of his environment. The time and space of his reading situation are replaced by the time and space of the story he is reading. The reader is being read by the text. Or as Fowler put it elsewhere in his study: what is read has become the here and now of the reader.

An illustration of the distinction between critic and reader is found in the difference in dealing with what is usually called the whole and its parts. In common reading one cannot really speak about the whole and its parts. At the moment of reading the eye is going along the text and what is being read at this moment has the attention. The text already read is the background. The same is true of the expectation of what is to be read. In his phenomenological studies of the process of reading Wolfgang Iser makes use of the distinction between "Figur" and "Grund"; a distinction also used in the psychology of observation.²⁰ "Figur" is what is presented as a field within an outline. "Grund" is the field outside an outline. Depending on what one regards as within or outside the outline, "Figur" and "Grund" interchange. In the process of reading there is this relationship of "Figur" and "Grund" between on the one hand, the text being read at this moment, and on the other hand the text already read or to be read. In the critical analysis there is a coherence of a different type. One can rightly call this a coherence of the whole and its parts. The critic can try to survey the whole through objectifying distance and to determine the relationship between the whole and the parts. To determine this relationship is part of his job as a critic.

A second point in the distinction between the critic and the common reader is that the critic forms opinions about the text and argues about them. The reader does not do these things, because he is not objectifying the text. For the reader the text and the things read in

the text are a real presence which is not accessible for a critical approach and even resist it. One can feel this resistance for example when a reader is going to analyze a text which is very significant for him and in which he is quite emotionally involved.

The critic as well as the common reader have to do with a series of texts that set a standard. By analyzing texts and assessing them a critic makes this standard and this series of texts. He is choosing texts. The common reader has a different relation to this series. The reader is not choosing texts, but there is a kind of canon that forms him. The critic prescribes which texts have to be read; he is shaping a canon. But in the process of reading the canon of texts is a living entity that shapes the reader.

So the spectrum in which the critic and the reader are moving consists of two poles. The one side is the objectifying pole. At this pole the critical experience of reading and analyzing is very often placed in the history of critical reading. The critic has a discussion with other critics who have already formed an opinion about the text. Illuminating for this are the footnotes of "german" commentaries of biblical texts processed in the classical way. The other side is the subjectifying pole in which the individual and psychologizing reading much more easily takes a place. In postmodern and deconstructive theories of texts these readings get much attention.

1.5. *Instructions for reading*

For the actual reader-oriented analysis of a text, the question what the instructions for reading imply, is very important. The answer to this question is as simple as it is complex: it is the text in its totality. All that the text contains in presenting the text, the course of actions, descriptions of situations, focalizations, internal and external evaluations, contributes to the process of giving meaning to the text, to the process taking place between the text and the reader. In this context the following remarks made by W. Vorster are very clarifying: "It is in this respect that the reader in the text, the author in the text, the narrator and the narratee, the presentation of the story, the employment, order, time, events, and other existants in the narrative world become important." "Since the structure of any text is designed with the reader in mind, traces of the reader in the text are to be looked for on all the levels of the structure and functions of narratives. Pro- and retrospection, gaps and indeterminacy, selection and

²⁰ W. Iser, *o.c.* pp. 155-161.

organization, are signs of the reader as Iser and Eco have indicated. All the narrative features such as plot, characterization, point of view, narrative commentary, order of narration, and time and space give clues to the actual reader in his or her construction of an image of the implied reader."²¹ In a reader-oriented analysis all the elements mentioned are not aimed at the coming into being of meaning in referential or mimetic sense, but meaning in pragmatic sense. Now they are understood as instructions to the reader with the help of which he is bringing about his reading-text. Using the metaphor of the musical score again, they are the notes with the help of which the musician voices the music. Meaning originates from the meeting of text and reader. The reader-oriented explanation of texts signifies that meaning is no longer taken in an objectivistic sense, no longer as the intention of the author or as a reference to a signified reality. Meaning is dynamic and subjective. With that, however, meaning has not become arbitrary.

1.6. *Intertextuality*

In the developments of biblical research of the last few years special attention has been asked for the intertextuality of biblical texts and not without results.²² The term "intertextuality" has been introduced by J. Kristeva. "Every text is built up as a mosaic of quotations, every text is reception and transformation of another text. Instead of the notion of intersubjectivity the notion of intertextuality has now established itself."²³ The awareness of intertextuality produces new insights about the meaning of and about attributing meaning to texts. This awareness is based on the insight that texts are connected with each other. Texts are part of a larger system of language. Reading texts against the background of this larger system gives an "extra"

²¹ W. Vorster, "The Reader of the Text: Narrative Material" in: *Semiotica* 1989, nr 48, pp. 21-39. The quotations can be found on p. 30 and p. 32.

²² See also J. Bastiaens, *Interpretaties van Jys. 53. Een intertextueel onderzoek naar de lijdende dienstbrecht in Jys. 53 (MT/LXX) en in Lk. 22:14-39. Hand 3:12-26 en Hand 4:23-31* Tilburg, 1993; S. Draaisma ed., *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings*, Kampen, 1989; B. van Iersel, *Intertextualiteit in sonnetten. Een voorstel tot enkele nieuwe classificaties van behelddend aan Mt. 1:1-2 en Lk. 1:2 en experimenteel toegepast op Mc. 1:1-13*, Afscheidscollege Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, 1989; E. van Wolde, "Van tekst via tekst naar betekenis: Intertextualiteit en haar implicaties" in: *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 30 (1990), pp. 333-361; W. Werren, *Intertextualiteit en Bijbel*, Kampen, 1993.

²³ J. Kristeva, *Recherche pour une sémantique* (Paris, 1969), p. 146.

meaning that would not exist without this background. This means that in the process of reading texts, a richer meaning presents itself if one takes into account other texts that are part of the larger system.

The aim of intertextual investigation is twofold. One wants to describe the relations between the *fenotext* and the *architext* as precisely as possible and then determine which role these intertextual relations play in the process of meaning that is enacted in the activity of reading. It is important to realize that intertextuality has nothing to do with interdependence of texts. If that were the case, intertextuality would only be a new name for the classical diachronic research. Intertextuality is not about something that happens in the genesis of texts, but in the process of readers giving meaning to texts. For it is the reader who puts the text in the larger language system.

There is a minimalistic and a maximalistic understanding of intertextuality. Minimalistic is the view that only considers as relevant the *architexts* indicated in the *fenotext* by indicators. In this case there is only the intertextuality marked by the text itself. It will be clear that in this opinion only explicitly marked quotations are reviewed and that for the intertextual process of meaning hardly any activity is demanded from the reader. The text itself has already done the job in this respect. All the dimensions of meaning are lost that might have come up if the reader had been aware that in the text other texts are echoing. If the reader realizes that in the words of welcome of Elisabeth in Luke 1,42: *Εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν γυναιξίν*, there is an echo of the blessing in Judges 5,24, of Jael, who has conquered the enemy by driving a tent pin into the head of Sisera, the commander-in-chief of the enemies, or if the reader realizes that Judith is blessed with the same words because she had rescued the town of Betulia by beheading Holofernes (Judith 13,18), then the meaning of the text does not so quickly acquire the romantic atmosphere which many people attach to it. In a minimalistic understanding of intertextuality these unmarked relationships of texts are not noticed and the effects on the meaning are lost.

The maximalistic understanding sees intertextuality as a feature of every utterance. Every utterance has its home in an continually growing language system. Every text appears as part of a universal intertext. This understanding leads to a never ending process of meaning by connecting the *fenotext* again and again to new and different intertexts. Although he does not use the word

intertextuality, David Flusser in an article about *Hebrews* 3-4²¹ offers a nice metaphor that can be used to describe the maximalistic view on intertextuality. He compares the relationships texts have with each other with the mycelium that connects the singular mushrooms in an underground network. Knowledge of these connections adds to the meaning. But just as the mycelium creates an ever growing circle of mushrooms, thus in the maximalistic view of intertextuality an always growing network of texts is created, which in the end will enclose our total reality.

It will be clear that for research the minimalistic view is hardly interesting, whereas the maximalistic understanding is unmanageable because it is a hopeless task. So a kind of position in between is asked for. In this midway position a description of relationships of texts is possible in terms of transformation. If there is no transformation it yields an identity of fenotext and architext. Examples of this identity are literal quotations whether marked as such or not. If there are transformations, these can be characterized as addition, deletion, transposition or replacement. In the case of allusions there are so many transformations that the reference to the architext is usually only implicitly expressed. But for the intertextual process of meaning these intertextual relations are no less interesting than others.

The description of intertextual relationships in terms of transformation could be called the syntax of intertextuality. The semantics of intertextuality deals with the meaning and the function of these transformations and non-transformations, whereas its pragmatics deals with the use of intertextuality in the process of communication.

2. An example: Psalm 94,7-11 in *Hebrews* 3,7-4,11

The New Testament writings have a high intertextual quality. This is especially the case in *Hebrews*. This writing is characterized by a large quantity of quotations from the Septuaginta. Moreover there is a lengthy treatment of the explanation and actualisation of scriptural data. Perhaps this is connected with the literary genre of *Hebrews*. In *Hebrews* itself the writing is indicated as a λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως (*Hebrews* 13,22). Perhaps this indication has to be understood both in

the sense of a word of exhortation and in the sense of a word of consolation.²⁵ This exhortation and consolation are reflected in a homily committed to paper with an accompanying letter. The way old testamentic data are dealt with in this homily is absolutely fascinating. Different names have been given to the textual approach as used in *Hebrews*, such as typology, comparative hermeneutic, creative rabbinical exegesis, and christological concentration. For our aim it is now important to see that the author of *Hebrews* is asking his readers to read the texts of the Old Testament in a special way. He not only quotes texts from the Old Testament but also explains them, and thus he provides insight into the process of reading he advocates.

2.1. *Syntaxis*

J.C. McCullough²⁶ discusses the differences in text between *Hebrews* 3,7-11 and Ps 94,7-11 (LXX).

1. There are some differences in the verbal forms. Ps 94,9 (LXX) has εἶδοσαν, whereas *Hebrews* 3,9 has εἶδον. In Ps 94,10 (LXX) the text is εἶπα, where *Hebrews* 3,10 has εἶπον. According to McCullough this kind of variants is common in the manuscripts of the LXX and he asserts that one can no longer determine if the author of *Hebrews* has found this in his text or that he has changed it himself. Although it is not a verbal form, McCullough also mentions that some manuscripts of the LXX have a different spelling for τεσσαράκοντα, but he does not say what this different spelling is.

2. *Hebrews* 3,9 has ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ, whereas Ps 94,9 has ἐδοκίμασαν. According to McCullough the original text in the Septuaginta is ἐδοκίμασεν [με]. He does not give arguments for the singular. The addition [με] can be supported from the manuscripts. If the version ἐδοκίμασαν or ἐδοκίμασεν [με] sounded strange in the ears of the author of *Hebrews*, the question can be asked why he substitutes this for a formula which is even more unusual (in the Septuaginta the word δοκιμασία only appears in Sirach 6,21 and in the New Testament only in *Hebrews* 3,9). Some have tried to explain this by saying that nowhere in the Septuaginta the verb is used in the sense of

²⁵ W.G. Uebelacker, *Der Hebräerbrief als Appell. 1. Untersuchungen zu exordium, narratio und postscriptum, Hebr 1-2 und 13,22-25*. Lund, 1989, pp. 36-40.

²⁶ J.C. McCullough, *Hebrews and the Old Testament*. Diss. Queen's University, 1971; J.C. McCullough "The Old Testament Quotations in *Hebrews*," in: *New Testament Studies* 26 (1980), pp. 363-379.

tempting God. Another opinion is based on the fact that *hemashah* in Deut 33,8 is translated in the Septuaginta as *ἐν πείρᾳ*. This translation wants to maintain the meaning of the toponym. It is possible that in *Hebrews* 3,8 *ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ* is also an attempt to preserve the meaning of the name Massa, where according to the Old Testament traditions of Exodus 17,7 and 33,8 the temptation is located. However, according to McCullough the formula is used to prevent a repetition of synonyms with the same meaning. This would have been the case if *ἐπίρασαν* was followed by *ἐδοκίμασαν*. The translation could go back to the text the author of *Hebrews* used, but it could also have been inserted by the author himself. The opinion that *Hebrews* 3,9 wants to preserve the meaning of the toponym Massa is attractive because of the context in *Hebrews*. For in the preceding section (3,1-6) the faithfulness of Moses and of Jesus has been mentioned. In this section Jesus is the example. That is clear from 3,1: *Κατανοήσατε τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν*. In 3,7-4,11 the generation of the desert is a negative example for the addressees. That appears e.g. from 3,12: *Βλέπετε, ἀδελφοί, μήποτε ἔσται ἐν τινι ὑμῶν καρδιά πονηρὰ ἀπιστίας ἐν τῷ ἀποστήναι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ζώντος*. The unfaithfulness here mentioned is the opposite of the faithfulness of Moses and Jesus. There is a parallel with the conduct of the generation of the desert, indicated in the quotation by the word *δοκιμασία*. In such a context it is easily imaginable that the author of *Hebrews* wants to preserve the meaning of the toponym Massa and not so much the name itself. Moreover by the transformation a parallel between *ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ* and *ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ* has been established.

3. In Ps 94,10 (LXX) the text is *τῇ γενεᾷ ἐκείνῃ*, whereas *Hebrews* has *τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ*. Some manuscripts have *ἐκείνῃ* in *Hebrews* 3,10. This can be explained as influence from the text of the Septuaginta. Many commentators say that *ἐκείνῃ* was changed to *ταύτῃ* in order to fit the quotation better in its new context. McCullough mentions a stylistic reason. The formula with *ἐκείνῃ* is a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, where the formula with *ταύτῃ* is very common.

4. The last transformation concerns *διό* in *Hebrews* 3,10. In the text of the Septuaginta it is absent. The effect of the transformation is far-reaching. In the Septuaginta the forty years allude to the duration of God's anger, whereas in *Hebrews* they allude to the period in which the Israelites witnessed God's works. For this addition McCullough gives a stylistic reason. In the Hebrew text of Ps 94 there is a con-

struction of three elements: "they tempted me, they saw my works, I was angry for forty years." The connection of the second and the third element is asyndetic. The Septuaginta takes over the asyndetic construction. The author of *Hebrews* with his Greek background wants to indicate the nature of the connection. As both the Massoretic text and the Septuaginta connect the first and the second element with "and", the natural place for the causal connection indicated by *διό* is between the second and the third element. But in my view another explanation is possible. Several times in *Hebrews* quotations are presented as double quotations. Thus in *Hebrews* 10,38b καὶ separates the quotation from Hab 2,3 and the one of Hab 2,4. In *Hebrews* 1,8-9 the quotation from Ps 44,7-8 (LXX) is split by καὶ. Other examples are *Hebrews* 2,13 where Isaiah 8,17-18 is presented as two quotations and *Hebrews* 10,30 where Deut 32,35-36 is presented as two different quotations. In both places the quotation is interrupted by καὶ πάλιν. It could be asked if in 3,10 the same pattern is applied. In that case *Hebrews* 3,7-11 has to be considered as two quotations. The first is introduced by *διό*, καθὼς λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄγιον. The second is likewise introduced by *διό*. In the first quotation the conduct of the people is described, in the second God's reaction. By putting *διό* between the two quotations the conduct of the people is not described as a one-time event in the first quotation, but as a conduct lasting forty years. Anyway in the comment on the text it appears that God's reaction is of the same duration. Thus in *Hebrews* 3,17 we read: *Τίσιον δὲ προσώχθησεν τεσεράκοντα ἔτη*;

2.2. Semantics

It is best to situate Psalm 95 (LXX 94) at a pilgrimage to the temple. The second part of the psalm is directed at the pilgrims who entered the temple with their praises. They are confronted with a warning against the hardening of the heart. Here the time of Moses is called to mind, in which in spite of the deeds of salvation the people had their doubts (Ex 17,1-7; Num 20,1-15) and for which they were punished with the withdrawal of the promise of rest, that is the promise of Canaan. The oath, sworn by God that nobody is going to enter, is connected with the words of God in Num 14,21-22, where He says that nobody will see the land He has promised. God's oath is a reaction to the grumbling of the people on account of the reports given by the scouts of the country. The purpose of this part of the

psalm is that the pilgrims may come to a self-examination about their faith or their hardness. Thus the psalm itself is already an example of intertextuality.

The exegesis of Ps 94,7-11 (LXX) in *Hebrews* 3,7-4,11 is typological by nature according to Friedrich Schröger.²⁷ It is called typological exegesis if single persons, historical events and cultic institutes of the Old Testament are seen as prefigurations of the Christ-related events. The typological exegesis starts with historical facts, but then it leaves the historical area and explains a new testamentic state of affairs with the help of Old Testament data.

To the proper nature of typology in *Hebrews* belongs the notion of the dignity of the new covenant above the old one. This dignity is expressed in the elevation of Christ. He is raised above the angels and above Moses. His priesthood is raised above the priesthood of the Old Testament priests and is comparable to the priesthood of Melchizedek. His sacrifice is more valuable than the sacrifices of the old covenant. His sacrifice establishes a new covenant that will remain valid for ever and therefore another sacrifice is no longer necessary.

This typology is also the presupposition of the exegesis of Ps 94 (LXX) in *Hebrews*. This is especially clear in the way the concept of *κατάπαυσις* is dealt with. This becomes particularly clear in connection with Gen 2,2²⁸. It seems that *Hebrews* 4,3 should not be read in terms of the Paulinic opposition between work and faith. This opinion of R. Jewett²⁹ leads to a very forced explanation of the text. The text itself indicates that the issue is about the opposition between *ἔργα* and *κατάπαυσις*. The phrase *ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου* prepares the quotation of Gen 2,2 in verse 4. The quotation of Gen 2,2 is introduced in the characteristic way of *Hebrews*. It is God who speaks the scripture-word: *εἴρηκεν*. The place where the scripture-word is to

²⁷ Fr. Schröger, *Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes als Schriftausleger* (Regensburg, 1968). See also Fr. Schröger "Das hermeneutische Instrumentarium des Hebräerbriefes" in: *Theologie und Glaube* 60 (1970), pp. 344-359; Fr. Schröger "Das hermeneutische Instrumentarium des Hebräerbriefverfassers" in: *Schriftauslegung. Beiträge zur Hermeneutik des Neuen Testaments und im Neuen Testament* (München - Paderborn Wien, 1972), pp. 313-329.

²⁸ See for this especially W. Weren "God rustte op de zevende dag". De functie van Genesis 2,2 in Hebrëen 3,7-4,11" in: C. Verdegem, W. Weren (eds.), *Stromen uit Eden. Genesis 1-11 in bijbel, poëzie exegese en moderne literatuur*. Liber Amicorum voor Prof. Dr. Niek Poulssen (Boxtel-Brugge, 1992), pp. 126-141. W. Weren, *Intertextualiteit en Bijbel* (Kampen, 1993), pp. 213-234.

²⁹ R. Jewett, *Letter to the Pilgrims. A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (New York, 1981).

be found is here indicated in a general way: *που*. The content is also roughly indicated with the words *περὶ τῆς ἐβδόμης*. Then the quotation follows. In the Septuaginta the text is: *Καὶ κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἐβδόμῃ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ*. In the text of *Hebrews* two things are formulated in a different way. The first one is that *ὁ θεός* is inserted. It can be explained by supposing it was inserted to take away any doubts. But it also has a function in the way this text is discussed in the following context. The rest in Ps 94,11 (LXX) is, as I will show, the rest into which God himself has entered too (see verse 9 and 10). The insertion of *ὁ θεός* underscores this. The other transformation is that *τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἐβδόμῃ* is changed in *ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἐβδόμῃ*. This seems to me to be a transformation of a purely stylistic nature.

In his studies about the meaning of Gen 2,2 in the context of *Hebrews* Wim Weren shows that in the concept "rest" important transformations have been accomplished.³⁰ On the basis of the rabbinic interpretation rule *gezerah shawah* two scriptures have been linked which clarify each other on the strength of two or more identical words. The quotation from Gen 2,2 in verse 3 implies that the rest no longer means the promised land, but it is a rest available from the beginnings of the world. A new aspect is also that God's sabbatical rest becomes accessible to the people and remains accessible to the people. Here we see another interpretation rule at work. It is the rule that we may conclude from the appearance of new things that the old ones disappear.³¹ In *Hebrews* 4,7-8 we see this rule at work where *Hebrews* denies outright that Joshua ever entered the promised land. If this had happened, there would have been no need, so many years after the generation of the desert, for David to speak again about the "today" in which God is warning against the hardening of the heart that prevents man from entering into the rest.

That *σαββατισμός* and *κατάπαυσις* have the same meaning is clear from the parallel of verse 6 and verse 9 where substantially the same thing is pointed out. As the *κατάπαυσις* is meant for the people, so the *σαββατισμός* is meant for the people. Then in verse 10 it becomes

³⁰ W. Weren, "God rustte op de zevende dag". pp. 136-138; W. Weren, *Intertextualiteit*, pp. 230-232.

³¹ This rule is formulated in so many words in *Hebrews* 8,7 and 8,13: "Had the first covenant been faultless, there would have been no need to look for a second one in its place." "By speaking of a new covenant, he has pronounced the first one old; and anything that is growing old and ageing will shortly disappear."

really clear that God's own rest is meant. In this verse it is explicitly said, at least according to the majority of the commentators: "Anyone who enters God's rest". In this verse $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\theta\omicron$ relates to God. An exception is the commentary of H. Braun³², who is of the opinion that it is related to the rest of the one who enters. However if understood as "God's rest", the rest gets the nature of eternity, and then the parallel of God and the people of God as indicated in verse 10 is meaningful; viz. the people are resting from their work as God is resting from his. The reference to Gen 2,2 becomes significant because with the help of this reference the eternal and divine character of the rest promised to the people is established. In the context of *Hebrews* the rest in Ps 94 (LXX) is no longer the promised land; the word now indicates a divine reality. The rest has now become the divine destination of the readers *Hebrews* has in mind.

2.3. Pragmatics

For the pragmatic dimensions of the intertextuality of Ps 94 (LXX) and *Hebrews* 3,7-4,11 the situation of the readers and the rhetorical situation are important. The rhetorical situation is described by W. Übelacker.³³ The rhetorical situation does not coincide with the actual, historical and social situation of the addressees. A rhetorical situation is a situation in which a person is called upon or feels called upon to give answers which might change the situation. The argumentative potential of the speaker and his expectations with regard to the audience play an important role. W. Übelacker gives the following reconstruction of the parennetic parts of *Hebrews*. In the longer parennetic passage of *Hebrews* 5,11-6,12 the author describes his addressees: they have got dull of hearing. Though by this time they ought to have been teachers, they still need someone to teach them the ABC of the words of God. In 13,7.17 there is the exhortation to obey the leaders. They are staying away from the meetings of the community (10,25). There are outlandish teachings (13,9). Typical for the addressees is their lack of faith and their doubts about the effectiveness of the sacrifice of Christ (9,1-10,18). For the author and for the readers the Old Testament seems to be an undisputable authority, but the readers do have their doubts about the position of the

Son. They put the visible above the invisible. They also struggle with the problem of why man has to endure suffering. The rhetorical situation is such that from the beginning the author has to reckon with some resistance from the readers. That is why W. Übelacker in his study investigates the rhetorical strategies the author uses to reach his purpose.

B. Lindars³⁴ describes the situation of the addressees on the basis of *Hebrews* 13. First of all *Hebrews* is a letter. This is often denied because of the beginning, but the end points this out very clearly. Also 13,19 indicates that the author writes from a distance and *Hebrews* is aimed to be read aloud. The text finishes with the blessing in 13,20-21. The author adds an ending written by himself and greetings. He calls the letter a word of exhortation (13,22). He makes a last appeal to get his view accepted. He shows the same concern in 13,8-19 where he asks people to pray for him. He will be absent for some time. In 13,17 it is clear that the addressees are a dissident group in the community (cf. also 13,1). It seems that in 13,17 there is an allusion to the reason why *Hebrews* was written. The leaders have written about the crisis to the author (a well-respected member of the community). Perhaps they hope that he is coming soon. But this is not possible and that is the reason why he is writing the letter.

Indications as to the nature of the crisis are given in 13,7-16. The leaders mentioned here are the ones who have evangelized. They are still known personally. The exemplary character of their lives is based on their faith. "Faith" does not point to the content of faith, but to the quality of their allegiance to the Christian confession. The addressees are tempted to take a path that does not agree with the gospel they have received. *Hebrews* 13,7-16 is difficult for us to interpret as we do not have a clear idea of the situation, but it is obvious that the author tries to influence the readers. Thus he reminds them in 13,8 of the basis of their faith: Jesus Christ. This may be an allusion to the primitive confession: "Jesus is the Christ." *Hebrews* 13,9 warns against strange teachings and food-laws which are useless. On the other hand in 13,10 an altar is mentioned from which those serving in the tent are not allowed to eat. The outlandish teaching could refer to the explanations about the sacrifice of expiation (*Hebrews* 9). The eating could refer to the meals in the synagogues on

³² B. Lindars, *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* (Cambridge, 1991). See also B. Lindars "The rhetorical structure of Hebrews" in: *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989), pp. 382-406.

³³ H. Braun, *An die Hebräer* (Tübingen, 1984).

³⁴ W.G. Übelacker, o.c.

feast days, intended to strengthen the connection with the temple. The explanations in *Hebrews* imply that the ties built up with the Jewish congregation should be severed. This also implies the endurance of the hostility (13,13) of which Christ is the model (13,12). Important is also the participation in the meetings of the Christian community.

That more was hoped for from the meetings in the synagogues than from the Christian doctrine is connected with the awareness of sin. The underlying question is why the Christians have lost their faith in the expiatory death of Jesus. The kerugma the readers received was that of a total expiation of all sins. This expiation took place in the baptism. They expected to stay in grace till the parousia. When the reality of sin arises again, a problem comes up for which the Jewish liturgy finds good solutions, viz. the ritual of the Day of Atonement. Now the readers have to be convinced that Jesus' death has expiatory validity for their situation, too. That is why there are the explanations about the ritual of expiation Christ has executed which is valid for all times. This has to be communicated not only on the level of theory, but also on the level of Christian lifestyle. That is why *Hebrews* introduces its concept of faith in the sense of fidelity and perseverance. It also pertains to the situation of the readers being aware of persecutions (*Hebrews* 10,32-34 and 12,4).

Because of these data about the intended reader an eye must always be kept on the pragmatic aim and the rhetorical nature of *Hebrews*. The connection of explanation and paraenesis typical for *Hebrews* could be denoted as paraenetic oriented theology or as theologically founded paraenesis.

Likewise for the explanation and treatment of Ps 94,7-11 (LXX) in *Hebrews* 3,7-4,11 this situation of the readers and the rhetorical task faced by the author have consequences. This becomes especially apparent in the meanings of the word "today" in the context of *Hebrews*. One can distinguish a multiple "today". There is the "today" of the generation of the desert, a "today" that is already past. That is the "today" in the referential meaning of the psalm. During that "today" the generation of the desert has not entered the rest. In 4,6 the author explicitly indicates the reason for this is the disobedience of the generation of the desert. Then there is the "today" David speaks of. This "today" is determined again by God. This "today" was not realized at the moment David spoke of it. It is explained as a prophecy. The "today" is still an actual possibility for the readers. Accord-

ing to *Hebrews* 4,6 people can still enter into the rest. The "today" David speaks of, is therefore perceived as a promise and possible fulfillment. But that is not the only point. In the explanation of the psalm there is also a strong involvement in the actuality of the readers. This involvement appears especially in the paraenetic verses referring to Psalm 94,7-11 (LXX). This involvement is first of all negative. The readers are exhorted not to have a wicked and faithless heart leading to apostasy. This negative connection between psalm and readers is particularly indicated in verse 3,12. But the positive paranesis is also put into words. In 4,11 the readers are exhorted to enter into the rest which is God's rest itself. The "today" of the psalm may even be exceptionally actual. *Hebrews* is seen to be a written homily. One can suppose that this homily was read aloud in an actual liturgical celebration. It is possible that psalm 94 (LXX) had a function in the celebration. In that case it is about a "today" the proclamation of which is still echoing in the ears of the readers.

After finishing our reader-oriented exegesis of the intertextuality between Psalm 94,7-11 and *Hebrews* 3,7-4,11 we find it unsatisfactory to characterize the relationship between the two texts as typological. We have seen different models of interpretation applied. We mention seven of them:

1. The scheme of promise and fulfillment is at work where it is about the "today" referred to by David and still present for the addressees.
2. In the interpretation of the "rest" the typical typology of *Hebrews* came to light which brings up the difference in quality between typos and antitypos. The text finishes with the mention of a divine and eternal rest.
3. It is not merely a difference in ontological quality as in a typological approach. The generation of the desert is rather an example that is not to be followed.
4. Rabbinic rules of interpretation are used, viz. the rule of *gezerah shawah*. With the help of one and the same catchword two texts are connected. The divine and eternal character of the rest can thus come to light through Genesis 2,2.
5. The view present in many places in *Hebrews*, viz. that out of the appearance of new things may be concluded the disappearance of the old ones, is at work where the objection that the people entered the promised land under Joshua is refuted.

6. The reading of biblical text *Hebraeus* offers its readers, has to do with the current affairs of those readers.
7. The biblical texts the author of *Hebraeus* is dealing with, are invested with divine authority. We saw this in the introduction of the quotation of Gen 2,2 in *Hebraeus* 4,4. In *Hebraeus*, Scripture is God's word.