

ingly⁵⁷. As Conroy notes, “Final-form study is not concerned with reconstructing the historical process by which the text reached its present state”⁵⁸. Here one examines the syntax of a biblical text based on our knowledge of classical Hebrew. One may also include aspects of pragmatics, i.e., the communicative function of the text, in the final-form analysis⁵⁹. By ‘diachronic analysis’ is meant: an investigation into the history of formation through which the text has reached its final form⁶⁰. The presupposition is that both synchronic and diachronic aspects are mutually complementary for the understanding of a Biblical text, which underwent various modifications before reaching its final form⁶¹.

Following the methodology outlined above, the synchronic analysis precedes that of diachronic because “it is prudent to proceed with what we have, rather than what we do not have; to begin [sic!] from the known to the unknown and from certainty to uncertainty”⁶².

The synchronic analysis is undertaken on three levels. Firstly, a fresh translation of the Hebrew original is made with critical notes. Secondly, detailed exegetical analysis of every verse with particular attention to the semantic aspect of important terms and phrases is attempted. Thirdly, the results of the exegetical analysis are brought into a theological synthesis, in which the major theological motives of Hos 11,1–11 are studied against the context of the book of Hosea. In our discussion not much emphasis is placed on the pragmatics of the text.

The diachronic reading is mainly intended to understand the various processes of redaction, which might have taken place before the text reached its final form. After having considered the major theories of redaction of the book of Hosea that have been suggested over the last twenty years, with special focus on chapter 11, an attempt is made to propose a plausible account of the genesis of the text. Hosea being one of the twelve minor prophets, a small section is dedicated to the role of the book in general, and of chapter 11 in particular, within the editing of the book of the Twelve Prophets.

⁵⁷ For a detailed treatment of the term “synchronic” in modern linguistics and its relevance for Biblical studies, cf. J. BARR, “The Synchronic, Diachronic and the Historical: A Triangular Relationship?” in *Synchronic or Diachronic?*, 1–14. On the linguistic concepts of diachrony and synchrony, cf. C. RICO, “Synchronie et diachronie: enjeu d’une dichotomie de la linguistique a l’interprétation de la Bible”, *RB* 108 (2001) 228–265.

⁵⁸ CONROY, “Reflections on the Exegetical Task”, 263.

⁵⁹ Cf. CONROY, “Reflections on the Exegetical Task”, 263–264.

⁶⁰ Cf. CONROY, “Reflections on the Exegetical Task”, 266.

⁶¹ Cf. KONKEL, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 3–4. See also W.A.M. BEUKEN, “Isaiah: Is it Only Schismatics That Drink Heavily: Beyond the Synchronic Versus Diachronic Controversy”, in *Synchronic or Diachronic?*, 15–38; RYOU, *Zephaniah’s Oracles*, 4–5.

⁶² LIM, *The Sin of Moses*, 26. K. SPRONK, “Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to the Book of Nahum”, in *Synchronic or Diachronic?*, 168, – among many – suggests that synchronic analysis should precede the diachronic.

0.3 A Brief Survey of the Study

The study is divided into two main parts: Part I deals with the synchronic reading of the text and Part II considers the diachronic aspect. Part I consists of three chapters. Part II consists of two chapters. The whole work is concluded by a brief theological reflection on Hos 11,1–11.

Chapter One of Part I deals with the translation of Hos 11,1–11 with particular attention to the textual problems. The Hebrew text of Hos 11,1–11 is very corrupt and the syntax of some verses is rather difficult to understand. Hence a translation of the chapter entails an amount of conjecture. In our translation an attempt is made to keep the MT as far as possible, without involving many emendations. As a matter of principle the translation is intended to be more literal than stylistic. Where the MT is obscure, the LXX and other ancient versions are consulted.

Chapter Two of Part I is occupied with the close reading of Hos 11,1–11. After considering briefly the delimitation of the text and its internal subdivisions, each verse is analysed paying attention to the semantic and syntactical aspects of the text. Key terminologies are studied taking into consideration their occurrences in the whole book.

Chapter Three of Part I discusses the major theological themes of Hos 11,1–11. This chapter is meant as a conclusion to the synchronic reading of the text, which attempts a theological synthesis of the findings of the exegesis. The main themes that are discussed are: 1) the historical retrospect: its meaning and scope; 2) the sin of Israel with emphasis on the false worship and lack of knowledge; 3) the Hosean portrayal of God, with particular attention to the parent-child metaphor.

Part II of our study, which has two chapters, undertakes a study of the process through which the text has reached its final-form. The first chapter (Chapter Four) undertakes the study of the redaction history of the book of Hosea with focus on Hos 11,1–11. After making a survey of the proposals of major studies and commentaries on the redaction of the book of Hosea, attempt will be made to evaluate them and to present a redaction history of Hos 11,1–11. The second chapter (Chapter Five) seeks to consider the role of the book of Hosea in general and Hos 11,1–11 in particular in the editing of the book of the Twelve Prophets.

If the present study, which investigates Hos 11,1–11 taking into account synchronic and diachronic perspectives, contributes in some small way to a more profound understanding of an important text in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, its purpose will have been met.

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