THROUGH THE EYES OF ΑΛΛΟΝ ΠΑΡΑΚΛΗΤΟΝ:
JOHN 20 AS GOD'S LIBERATIVE, RE-CREATIVE ACTIVITY
COUNTERACTIVE TO THE AFFECTS OF THE 'FALL'
REPRESENTED BY THE GENESIS 3 NARRATIVE

MATTHEW EDUARD WRIGHT

(Supervised by Prof. Jonathan Draper)

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION – PLAGIARISM

I, Matthew Eduard Wright, declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other person's writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced.
b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed inside italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and the reference sections.

Signed:

………………………………………………………….
(Student)

…………………………………………………………..
(Supervisor)

Abstract:

The study aims, in the first part, at a coherent formulation of a theory of text production, one located against the backdrop of an Hegelian conception of reality which sees text and society as constituting a dynamic and mutually formative relationship. This theoretical appropriation is situated more broadly in the Tri-Polar exegetical framework as set out by my supervisor, Prof. Jonathan Draper, and in this regard also entails a dialogue with his approach. This then constitutes the first pole of the framework, *distantiation*.

At the second pole, *contextualisation*, the methodological tool by which contemporary society is critiqued, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, is used to explicate the mythological degeneration of the modern scientific paradigm in its partnership with the culture industry, where the system's totalising logic is seen as delimiting the realm of legitimate knowledge generation such that forms of knowledge that might be counterpoised in opposition to this paradigm are from the outset proscribed. The section of *contextualisation* therefore points to the need for alternative forms of knowledge generation, ones which are not complicit with the internal logic of the system and which thereby seek to avoid either co-option or obsoletisation.

In the final stage of *appropriation* two case studies are offered to suggest how this has been, or could further be, achieved with reference, in the first instance, to the Genesis 3 narrative and the field of anthropological studies and, in the second, to John 20 and the sphere of contemporary ecclesial praxis. The case studies draw on the work of biblical scholars from the relevant fields and seek to represent this work in a kind of re-appropriation interpreting it in light of the theory set out at the stage of *distantiation*.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Jonathan Draper, for what seemed to be a supernatural patience whilst I was undertaking this work, as well as for his valued wisdom in indicating areas for improvement.

I would also like to thank the academic and administrative staff at the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics, UKZN, for their support through the duration of my studies.

Finally, I would like to thank the people of St. Matthew's, Hayfields, without whose support I might still be writing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS: (PG)

CHAPTER 4: APPROPRIATION

Do not let us go back to a fictitious primordial condition as the political economist does, when he tries to explain. Such a primordial condition explains nothing; it merely pushes the question away into a grey nebulous distance. The economist assumes in the form of a fact, of an event, what he is supposed to deduce- namely, the necessary relationship between two things – between, for example, division of labour and exchange. Thus the theologian explains the origin of evil by the fall of Man – that is, he assumes as fact, in historical form, what has to be explained.[1]

The idols of the nations are silver and gold,
 the work of human hands.
They have mouths, but they do not speak;
 they have eyes, but do not see;
they have ears, but they do not hear,
 and there is no breath in their mouths.
Those who make them
 and all who trust them
 shall become like them.[2]

That the hygienic factory and everything pertaining to it, Volkswagen and the sports palace, are obtusely liquidating metaphysics does not matter in itself, but that these are themselves becoming a metaphysics, an ideological curtain, within the social whole, behind which real doom is gathering, does matter. This is the basic premise of our fragments.[3]

---

[1] Marx, K. 1844. p.1 of XXII on Estranged Labour in *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*
[2] Psalm 135: 15-18, NRSV.
[3] Adorno, T. and Horkheimer, M. 2002. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Jephcott, E. (Transl.). Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. xvii.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND LOCATION OF RESEARCH

1.1 Background and identification of research problem

The initial departure point for this study was the possible connection between the Greek παράκλητος, as used throughout John's gospel and the Hebrew rǻzὺ" (, as used in Genesis 2:18, for which the Septuagint translates βοηθός.[4] Rather than make a case for a literal connection between John's use of the term παράκλητος and the accounts in the Old Testament where βοηθός is used[5], specifically the creation account in Genesis 2, I decided to use the term or concept of *Helper* as a hermeneutical key through which to interpret the events of both the Genesis 3 and John 20 narratives. In both instances, the Help/er, issues from God: the first in the context of creation; the second in what may be argued as a context of re-creation.[6] Re-creation seems however seems to suggest that something is amiss with (the first) creation. An analysis of Genesis 3 therefore is needed in order to establish the nature or quality of the re-creative activity as represented in John 20. Within the Genesis 3 narrative we are given an account of what appears to be a disturbance in relationship between God and God's newly formed creatures.[7] Understanding the nature of this disturbance would then seem pivotal if we are to accurately assess the nature of God's re-creative activity as depicted in John 20.

The study will be conducted within the broader theoretical framework of the Tri-Polar approach to exegesis key to which is a concern for the importance of context in the role

---

[4] See Draper, J. A. 1992. "The Sociological Function of the Spirit/Paraclete in the Farewell Discourses of the Fourth Gospel", *Neotestimentica* 26, 1992, 13-29. pp. 24-25. Contemporary English translations often render both terms 'helper', e.g. ESV "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another *Helper*, to be with you forever" (John 14:16) and "Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a *helper* fit for him."" (Genesis 2: 18).

[5] The image of God as rǻzὺ" (/βοηθός appears throughout the Old Testament and Septuagint. Eg. Exodus 18: 4, Deuteronomy 33: 7, 26, 29; 1Kings 7: 12; Psalms 32: 20, 69: 5, 113: 17, 145: 5.

[6] Perhaps most recently Joseph Mukuna has advanced a strong case for seeing the coming of the Holy Spirit in John 20 as a re-creative event by drawing on parallels between the metaphor of breathing in both instances. See Mukuna, J. 2011. *Language and Theology: A Case Study of the Breathing Metaphor in John 20: 22*. (Master's Thesis) Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal.

[7] Though no literal basis is present in the text for the labelling of the events as "Fall" traditionally it has been interpreted this way. See for example Phipps' review in Phipps, W. E. 1990. *Genesis and Gender: Biblical Myths of Sexuality and their Cultural Impact*. Praeger: New York, pp. 51-66.

of interpretation.[8] This applies both in the acknowledgement that our context automatically shapes our interpretation but also, and perhaps because of this, in the demonstration of a commitment to our context that is, to engage with and work towards transforming aspects of our context which may be life-demeaning or oppressive.

1.2 Research questions

In follow-up to the question of what characterises the nature of the creative and re-creative activity of Genesis 3 and John 20 respectively, the following sub-questions had initially emerged: is it plausible/possible to see Genesis 3 as representative of patriarchy and if so on what levels i.e., historically, metaphorically etc.?; is it plausible/possible to see John 20 as representative of re-creative, liberative activity and if so on what levels? and; if we affirm the first two possibilities how do the two texts dialogue with each other and what might the implications be for considering the role of patriarchy in the production and reception of biblical texts?

Subsequent to embarking on this study and reading some of the theory I had initially chosen I realised that the formulation of these questions was perhaps too simplistic. Indeed, the primary work informing my approach, Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, seemed to advocate strongly a position that regarded antagonistic forces within society as part of a larger dialectic, thus not easily relegated to positions of absolute valuation.[9] Nevertheless with regard to the Genesis 3 text patriarchy (or at least aspects of domination) is still a primary focus, while the John 20 text is confronted with the claim of offering Feminist scholars a stop-gap in what has historically been the patriarchally-biased production of Scripture.

---

[8] See for example Draper, J. 2001. "Old Scores and New Notes: Where and What is Contextual Exegesis in the New South Africa?" in *Towards an Agenda for Contextual Theology: Essays in Honour of Albert Nolan*. Speckman, MT and Kaufmann LT (Eds.) Pietermaritzburg: Cluster (See chapter two below for more detail on my engagement with the Tri-Polar approach).

[9] Adorno, T. and Horkheimer, M. 1979. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. London: Verso. The work is probably the most well-known publication produced by the Frankfurt School under the leadership of Max Horkheimer. More will be said on the theoretical insights contained in the work in what follows.

1.3 Theoretical framework

The theory which I sought for this task had to be able to appropriate aspects of social critique, particularly as these pertained to patriarchal economy, but also and linked to this, had to be able to assess the role and function of texts within this setup. From my search it seemed that the now relatively old work of the Frankfurt School, represented perhaps most poignantly in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, was capable of combining these aspects. For both Horkheimer and Adorno the dilemma or object of critique had equally to do with issues of domination as it had with issues of economic exploitation and alienation: patriarchy is an expression, perhaps overarching, of the type of domination western society has embraced; yet capitalism is the rationalised economic system expressed in the exploitation and domination of certain classes by others, thus arguably no less 'patriarchal' than explicit domination between sexes. Key within this approach, as it relates to my analysis, is the understanding of how a text reflects society and vice versa, hence my position of using Genesis 3 as a sounding-board from which questions of social critique might emerge.

I will try to make the case in what follows that the relationship between text and society, conceived in this way, may be seen to have its basis in an Hegelian-Marxist materialist conception of reality, where according to Marx's re-appropriation of Hegel's position, this consists chiefly in the claim that the primary factor determining the character/nature of a society is the shared engagement and contact of people who come together to reproduce their material environment.

Besides being informed by an Hegelian-Marxist orientation, given that the study is concerned with an analysis of biblical texts, I have chosen to situate it within the Tri-Polar exegetical framework. The content of the study is therefore structured according to the three poles or stages typically set out within this framework, *distantiation*, *contextualisation*, and *appropriation*.[10] According to this model's theoretical explication, set forth in this study with reference to the work of Draper, each stage or pole is usually

---

[10] Indeed, these form the titles of each of three main chapters.

representative of a particular emphasis. These theoretical specificities will be dealt with at the appropriate section, suffice it to say at this point that my use of the terminology is perhaps unconventional and therefore requires clarification. In line with the conventional use of these terms, my study is still aimed at (1.) an appropriate formulation of a body of theory sufficiently apposite to the task of contextual critique/engagement, (2.) the undertaking of such engagement by way of critique of contemporary society and, (3.) an appropriation/analysis of the specified biblical material in light of this engagement.

As will be made clear in the course of this study, the interconnectedness of the three poles or stages of the Tri-Polar approach means that the stages feed intuitively in and out of one another such that, although maintaining a formal distinction, they can be seen practically as part of a larger process. This realisation has been facilitated in my own studies by the articulation of theory appropriate to the task of biblical exegesis which, simultaneously, is not inseparable from one's theoretical approach to the task of social critique/engagement. Thus, it should be noted that the primary theoretical assumptions underlying the approach, while articulated in the main at the stage of *distantiation*, will naturally permeate and inform the subsequent two stages, *contextualisation* and *appropriation*.

Given the high concentration on theory, and the study's supposed situation in the area of biblical studies, I am also inclined to indicate the study's atypical nature as far as the carrying out of an exegesis is concerned. The two biblical texts chosen for the study, Genesis 3 and John 20, do not form part of an exegesis in the strict sense but rather serve as case studies of how such texts might be appropriated in light of the theory set out in the preceding sections. Consequently, the case studies are undertaken mainly by review of secondary authors, the implications of which nevertheless are inferred by suggesting their practical effect on contemporary society in light of the questions raised previously.

1.4 Preliminary literature review and location of research

Based on an initial survey of the literature I had assumed that the texts of Genesis 3 and John 20 ideologically are fundamentally different. Hence my position of seeing John 20 as a liberative, re-creative text, or at least containing activity which represented such notions, while Genesis 3 was hypothesised as a text representative of patriarchal ideology. Perhaps this labelling was premature given that it dictated in my view what must necessarily be the use of different methodological approaches. Nevertheless, I had supposed that John 20 was a text not requiring a reading of resistance, or one "against the grain," because of its supposed surplus of life-affirming symbols.[11] Genesis 3 on the other hand appeared to be quite the opposite, as its life-demeaning implications, especially toward women, seem for many to be obvious;[12] hence I had maintained its *prima facie* patriarchal character.

Esther Fuchs, for example, in her *Sexual Politics in the Biblical Narrative*, sets out an approach which posits the text's patriarchal nature at a fundamental level.[13] Despite this, she also appreciates the inherent value and power of the biblical narrative and so is not willing to relinquish this to an historically one-sided approach to interpretation, in so far as she sees that the text has the ability to make implicit, yet potent, political statements.

The approach Fuchs puts forward thus seeks to deconstruct religious texts by demonstrating their ability to implicitly inform the cultural and legal ethos in society where the hegemony of overt patriarchies is often maintained more effectively through such subtle religious insinuation. Fuchs demonstrates the connection of texts such as the Genesis 3 narrative with the formation of legal codes detailing the subordination of women in Ancient Israel where the efficacy of these texts lies in their ability to reinforce patriarchal bias in ways not overtly political. Thus her concern is not what socio-

---

[11] See for example Kitzberger, I. R. 1995. "Mary of Bethany and Mary of Magdala – Two Female Characters in the Johannine Passion Narrative: A Feminist, Narrative-critical Reader Response". *New Testament Studies*. Vol. 41. pp. 564-586. p. 585.
[12] See later review of grounds for this claim under the first case study (Chapter 4).
[13] Fuchs, E. 2000. *Sexual Politics in the Biblical Narrative: Reading the Hebrew bible as a woman*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

historical phenomena the text, for example of Genesis 3, may be alluding to, but rather what its cultural function becomes in the course of Israel's history and, through its continued interpretation.[14]

The work of Pamela Milne constitutes another Feminist position that detects patriarchal inherencies in texts such as Genesis 3 where she is highly tentative as to whether such texts, and even the Christian canon at large, can ever inform a genuinely emancipatory Feminist ethic.[15] In one article written during the height of structural exegesis' employment Milne shows up the internally self-validating logic of patriarchal approaches to biblical exegesis where she surveys various structuralist treatments of the Genesis creation narratives. In all her treatments of the structuralist assessments of Genesis 2-3, bar that of Jobling, Milne shows how the binary oppositions peculiar to structuralist approaches augment the patriarchal bias already present in the text, where the structuralist exegete is also often oblivious to this procedure. The main question then, for Milne, remains what to do with texts fundamentally patriarchal but nevertheless interminably constitutive of the canon.[16]

---

[14] Fuchs, for example, demonstrates the partnership of the Genesis 'Fall' narrative with legal codes that detail the subordination of women in Leviticus and Deuteronomy maintaining that the efficacy of texts like Genesis 3, whose language is predominantly mythological, lies in their culturally formative potency through what is usually their uncritical acceptance. See Fuchs 2000, p. 116 and pp. 175-176: "The principles couched in God's address to Eve offer a mythic paraphrase of the legal, political principles underlying the wife's role: her conjugal duty is to bear children to her husband, to belong exclusively to him ('your desire shall be for your husband') and to accept his authority." pp. 175-176. Fuchs states of her approach that her "goal is not to read the [biblical] text as a religious or historical text, but rather as a cultural-literary text." Fuchs 2000, p.11.

[15] Milne, P. 1989. "The Patriarchal Stamp of Scripture: The Implications of Structuralist Analyses for Feminist Hermeneutics", *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion,* Vol.5**,** pp.17-34. Milne makes reference here to Beverly Wildung Harison's distinction between "hard" and "soft" feminism saying that "[s]oft feminism regards the problem of sexism primarily as one of attitudes and opinions which can be changed through education and persuasion. Hard feminism regards such a view as interpretive illusion. For hard feminism, the problem of sexism is to be located in the very structures of our society. Translated to the realm of biblical studies we might ask whether the sexism of the bible and its interpretation is a matter of superficial patriarchal bias or whether it is integral to the very structure of the biblical tradition." p. 19.

[16] Milne states elsewhere in reference to the Genesis 3 narrative that "[s]uch a story makes it possible to account for human experience by making humanity male, makes it possible to reduce the irreducible two-ness of humanity to oneness of maleness. The very function of the story is to hide the illogic and unreality of this patriarchal ideology…There is a kind of hermeneutical circle arising out of a text that has been structured by male thinking and which then gives rise to interpretations that historically have been almost exclusively patriarchal." See Milne, P. 1993. "Beyond Genesis 3: the politics of maternal naming" in Brenner, A. (Ed.) *A Feminist Companion to Genesis*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. pp. 165-166.

By way of introduction then, treatments such as those of Fuchs and Milne, as broadly representative of a more radical Feminist stance,[17] are suggestive as to the backdrop against which the cultural impact of Genesis 3 will be appropriated. In approaching John 20 I have taken a less overtly ideological stance while nevertheless not wanting to remain uncritical in brining questions of Feminist concern to the text of John. There are two authors from which I have drawn primarily here namely, Jane Schaberg and Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger. With regard to the first, I have tried to use Schaberg's work as something of a theoretical backdrop against which to view the content of John, while at the same time, taking seriously her intention to highlight Feminist concerns when dealing with the text.

There are furthermore two 'sub-areas' of focus within Schaberg's work. The first pertains to her review of what she terms the 'legend-making process' through which the figure of Mary Magdalene has been appropriated in western cultural history. Schaberg's assessment of this process is on the whole negative and concludes that it functions to disempower the potency of the Magdalene figure where this could otherwise be rendered through a Feminist lens in a more empowering light.[18]

The second area pertains to Schaberg's work on the resurrection accounts, located in all the Gospels, where Jesus appears to women but with particular focus on that contained in John 20 to Mary Magdalene. Schaberg seeks to re-appropriate this encounter with a review of the historical reliability of the tradition while at the same time appealing to tenets of Jewish apocalyptic mysticism in which authorising/revelatory experiences for women were apparently not uncommon.[19]

---

[17] I had initially included in this survey work by Beverly Stratton whose title seemed to promise an approach suited to the orientation of my study. However Stratton's seems more conservative than Fuchs and Milne where, though acknowledging the presence of rhetoric and ideology in the interpretation of biblical texts seems less inclined to do so with regard to the texts themselves. Stratton seems compelled then to accommodate what others regard as blatant patriarchal inherencies of the text in attempting to provide a reading more liberative for women than the historical situation might otherwise suggest. See Stratton, B. J. 1995. *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

[18] Schaberg, J. 2003. "Thinking Back through Mary Magdalene" in Levine, A. J. with Blickenstaff, M. (Eds.) 2003. *A Feminist Companion to John*. (Vol.1). London: Sheffiled Academic Press.

[19] Schaberg, J. "The Empty Tomb and the Appearance to Mary Magdalene" (seminar paper finally published in) Schaberg, J. 2004 *The Resurrection of Mary Magdalene*. New York/London: Continuum.

With regard to the work of Kitzberger, I have tried to appropriate this as a methodological tool in dealing with the material in John relating to Mary Magdalene where Kitzberger undertakes a "feminist, narrative-critical" reading of the text using theories of intertextuality.[20] Kitzberger here focuses on the role and function of characterisation in transporting the reader to renewed places of understanding. One of her concerns is the hermeneutical quandary that has resulted in trying to reconcile insights from Johannine and Synoptic material viewed from within a historical-critical paradigm. Kitzberger uses a narrative and intertextual reading to overcome this but maintains an argument for John's dependency, or at least knowledge of, the Synoptic tradition. Working from a Feminist perspective, Kitzberger also states that her concern to use such a methodological approach is to bridge or breakdown gender boundaries as they pertain to characters within the text.

The third area of focus for this study and therefore around which there is relevant literature relates to my theoretical framework and thus also to the appropriation of the insights gained from the analyses of my two texts. This is that of the Western-Marxist tradition represented by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer in their *Dialiectic of Enlightenment*. Besides an attempt to appropriate Marxist analysis and critique within a more modern consumerist context, Horkheimer and Adorno take seriously the ambiguous role played by reason as intellectual ascent particularly embodied in the Enlightenment project where they are able to link (and thus critique) its role as it coincides with those issues relating to patriarchy and class. The work is, needless to say, dense and at times obscure, meaning that no small effort was required to come to terms with it.[21]

---

[20] Kizberger details her methodology in similar fashion in at least three separate papers. Her study "Mary of Bethany and Mary of Magdala- two female characters in Johannine passion narrative: a feminist narrative-critical reader-response" serves as the primary work from which I appropriate her methodology. See Kitzberger, I. R. 1995. "Mary of Bethany and Mary of Magdala – Two female characters in the Johannine passion narrative: a feminist, narrative-critical reader response". *New Testament Studies*. Vol. 41, pp.564-586; Kitzberger, I. R. (Ed.) 2000. *Transformative Encounters: Jesus and Women Re-viewed*. Leiden: Brill. Kitzberger, I.R. 2002. "Transcending Gender Boundaries" in *A Feminist Companion to John*. (Vol.1). Levine, A. J. and Blickenstaff, M. (Eds.). London: Sheffield Academic Press.

[21] Because of the rich tradition of both Marxist and German Idealist insight from which the authors draw it was necessary to undertake at least a cursory reading of some of the figures who informed their approach. In the main, this consists of Hegel and, to a lesser extent, Kant which was, I found, to serve the dual purpose of helping appropriate the work *Dialectic of Enlightenment* as well as better informing my hermeneutical orientations as far as its epistemological underpinnings were concerned.

CHAPTER TWO: DISTANTIATION

2.1 Towards an adequate theory of text production

This section is concerned with the theory and method pertaining to this paper, an attempt not only to clearly present this, but to define, as adequately as possible, the relationship between the two. The reader will have noticed from the contents page that I have stuck to the conventional 'staging' of the Tri-Polar approach in terms of *distantiation*, *contextualisation*, and *appropriation*, and that I have assigned these to each of the three substantial components of this paper. Where I have deviated from the conventional usage of the Tri-Polar approach is in the content included under each section. As the reader will see shortly, this section, though titled *distantiation* is not concerned with creating a critical distance between the exegete and biblical text or even with the analysis of a biblical text, but with creating a critical distance within the self and those categories one employs in his or her analysis of the world. What follows then could be said to necessarily precede the task of biblical analysis and I have thus maintained the term *distantiation* as I see it underscoring the necessary criticality appropriate to this stage.[22]

2.1.1 Summary of the Tri-Polar approach

As an adequate condensation of the Tri-Polar approach I have chosen to focus on the work of my supervisor, Prof. Jonathan Draper, who was instrumental in the development of the kind of three-staged exegetical approaches common to what today is known broadly as contextual exegesis. We turn therefore to an article written in dedication of Albert Nolan where Draper provides a relatively concise summary of the Tri-Polar model and some of the thinking it accompanied.[23]

---

[22] Since I have maintained the terms *distantiation*, *contextualisation* and *appropriation* to characterise the activity of my approach at the most general level, it seems fair to talk of the Tri-Polar approach as a framework rather than a model or method, even if its feelers trespass periodically into the territory of what would otherwise be spoken of in terms of method.

[23] Draper, J. 2001. "Old Scores and New Notes: Where and What is Contextual Exegesis in the New South Africa?" in *Towards an Agenda for Contextual Theology: Essays in Honour of Albert Nolan.* Speckman, M.T. and Kaufman, L.T. (Eds.) Cluster: Pietermaritzburg.

Firstly, it appears that Draper is content to view the exegetical process primarily as a communicative act or event as, in this case, he locates the discussion within the context of Halliday's theory of register, seemingly suggesting its applicability not only to historical agents communicating with each other (i.e. in the context of biblical studies say, Paul and his addressees) but also to the way in which the biblical text communicates with the contemporary reader. Draper states that "[A]s a guideline, we could take Halliday's three factors which determine the register of communication: what is going on and where it is happening (*field*); who is communicating with whom, including aspects of class, gender and power relations (*tenor*), and what method of communication has been adopted, e.g. speech, song, letter (*mode*)…Most of us engage in this process instinctively in everyday life. In the case of an ancient text like the Bible, however, the process becomes more complicated by our relative inability to determine field, tenor and mode with any degree of certainty". Draper then goes on to say that "we need to be particularly careful to establish field, tenor and mode in his [here referring to Paul's] historical setting, but we will also have to take the same factors of field, tenor and mode into consideration in our own modern setting."[24]

If these comments are merely suggestive of the nature of the overall communicative process constituting the exegetical task, Draper is more particular about what each of the three poles or stages entail. In some preliminary remarks, Draper states that, with regard to the three stages and our approach to the text that "[W]e have to allow the text to be different to us, alien, intended for others, as a first step to entering its world of discourse. This process of "letting the text be other" I call *distantiation*. The second step involves knowing who we are in the conversation, what our situation is, and how we relate to the communication offered by the text. This process of "analysing my situation as a reader/hearer", I call *contextualization*. The third step involves deciding on the nature of the communication taking place and its implications for my context. This process of

---

[24] Draper 2001, p. 151.

"accepting meaning and implications of the text for myself and my community", I call *appropriation.*"[25]

Relating to the stage of *distantiation* Draper furthermore states that "exegesis should consider both the *context of the text*, and how it came into being, and the *structure of the text*, and how it signals meaning and seeks to manipulate the reader [emphasis Draper's]. Both of these are necessary components of distantiation: diachronic and synchronic considerations."[26] Draper then lists some of the methodological tools one might employ in trying to uncover the "origin and social location of the text" during the stage of *distantiation*. While Draper acknowledges that "we come to the text with presuppositions and prejudices…[at the stage of *distantiation* we] try to foreground these…[where] our work of reconstruction seeks to create sufficient distance for us to hear the voice of the text rather than our own echo."[27]

Draper then moves on to discuss *contextualisation* and begins by citing the work of Iser, intimating the indeterminacy, plurality and surplus of meaning pertaining to texts saying that "gaps and indeterminacies, as well as changing valencies, always leave the text open to development" thus problemetising the text's appropriation for contemporary contexts.[28] But Draper goes on to state more clearly that *contextualization* "focuses specifically on analysis and evaluation of the context of the reader/hearer today…[where w]e need to understand who we are as readers and what the questions are which we bring to the text…[where a]ll of the analysis we undertake at this stage will be aimed at understanding ourselves as historical beings rooted in a specific time and place."[29]

---

[25] Ibid. p. 152. It is interesting that at the end of this introductory section Draper cites influence of Gadamer's concept of "historical consciousness" where, presumably, this incorporates aspects of his phenomenological approach where Draper states "[W]hat I have called the moment of appropriation could also be called the "fusion of historical horizons" between the historical subjectivities of the reader and the text (1993:306-307, 374-375)." As we will later see, something like a phenomenological approach will be arrived at through the course of this study, though by slightly different means.

[26] Draper 2001, p.156.

[27] Draper 2001, p.156.

[28] Draper 2001, p.156.

[29] Draper 2001, p.157.

Moving on then to the stage of *appropriation* Draper describes this as the "climax of the interpretive process".[30] He does not say much more about the methodological detail of this stage but, in reference to Gadamer's 'fusion of horizons', states that ultimately "[*appropriation*] brings together the horizon of the text and its community and the horizon of the reader and her community, and mediates a new consciousness leading to a new praxis."[31] Even in Draper's application of the model later on in the paper, this section functions as something of a concluding, or summarising section, appropriating the insights gained at the previous stages of *distantiation* and *contextualization*.[32]

What I would like to pick up on following this summary are primarily two things. Firstly, the suggestion may be made that each of the three aspects of the Tri-Polar framework are not so much clearly demarcatable steps as they are "moments" within hermeneutical cycle. This is indicated even in Draper's own designation of the aspects of each approach and also in the fact that he does not seem phased as to which stage one begins with in the interpretative process. In this regard Draper states that it "is not important whether *distantiation* or *contextual analysis* comes first, provided that each is given due weight. We could begin with the text, with the context, or with questions of the faith community relating to the formulation of its faith (questions concerning appropriation can initiate the exegetical process, but clearly not pre-judge it)."[33]

Furthermore, we can add that aspects of one "moment" seem to be discernible/locatable within what is more formally described as one of the other moments or stages. For example, it may be argued that the moment of *distantiation* which Draper lists first in this particular treatment is already one step within the larger process of appropriation since ultimately our goal is the appropriation of the text for our context (not disregarding that each moment or step has features particular and necessary to it which mark it as distinct). Or again under the heading of *contextualisation* where Draper says that "[A]ll of the analysis we undertake at this stage will be aimed at understanding ourselves as historical

---

[30] Draper 2001, p.157.
[31] Draper 2001, p. 158.
[32] Draper 2001, pp. 166-167.
[33] Draper 2001, p. 155.

beings rooted in specific time and place" has strong connotations of *distantiation* where this is understood however in relation to ourselves and not to the text – distance is willed or created between us and 'us as historical specimens or subjectivities' without which we also forfeit a certain level of criticality.[34]

2.1.2 Dialogue and engagement with Tri-Polar approach

At the beginning stages of my research I was encouraged to present a seminar paper containing what would become the first chapter of my thesis pertaining to the theory and method I was to use. What this amounted to was effectively a dialogue between the Tri-Polar approach, various Marxist-influenced theory, as well as some insights from the field of orality studies.[35] While I was eager to maintain the Tri-Polar approach as the general framework within which to present my study, I sought particular theory that would assist me in analysing my chosen context for the stage of *contextualisation*. Not only this but, given my initial struggle to come to terms with the Tri-Polar approach, I sought a theory that would at the same time help me to successfully appropriate the theoretical/methodological assumptions common to biblical studies.

Subsequent to the approval of my proposal I was privileged to spend a semester of my studies at the Humboldt Üniversiteit zu Berlin where they happened to be offering a course on Critical Theory and the Frankfurt School.[36] In as far as I had lain out my study schematically, though this was still at a preliminary stage, my concern was initially to

---

[34] I mention these examples merely to suggest a greater interconnectedness and fluidity than is otherwise presumed in academic biblical studies, that each stage or moment (at least as is set out in the Tri-Polar model), practically often happens compositely, repeatedly, and cyclically and could, if pressed, fall collectively under the umbrella of a broader process of *contextualisation*, *appropriation* or even, if one takes a Barthean/Bultmanean line of God as 'wholly other', where the text, as Word of God, stands in perpetual judgement over against our present context, *distantiation*.

[35] FOURTH UNISA SYMPOSIUM OF NEW TESTAMENT AND EARLY CHRISTIAN STUDIES: Towards a South African Hermeneutics, University of South Africa, Pretoria. September 3-5, 2012.

[36] "Critical Theory for the 21st Century: The Frankfurt School from Horkheimer to Habermas and Beyond". The most well-known representatives of the School are perhaps Adorno and Horkheimer. Walter Benjamin is usually cited in his association with the School, particularly in his influence on Adorno, though he was never formally a member. Herbert Marcuse was a protégé of Adorno and Horkheimer but later left the Institute after his extended exile in America where the Institute returned formally to Germany. The Institute was subsequently headed by Jürgen Habermas, who developed his own brand of critical theorizing, and presently by Axel Honneth.

establish a causal link between a proposed advent of patriarchy (if it can thus be rightly labelled) and the concept and consequences of original sin, where the primary basis for this was taken as Genesis 3, i.e. what has been traditionally termed the 'fall' narrative. My concern or intention was thus to locate the advent of patriarchy within the context of an idea of original sin, subsequently to undertake an exegesis of parts of John's gospel while arriving at a reading of the text which saw the liberative and redemptive power of God, the Holy Spirit and Jesus, as undoing the effects of the Fall or original sin, i.e. undoing, or being counteractive towards the effects of patriarchy.

My approach therefore was aimed at incorporating work of the Frankfurt School in constructing a theoretical framework in the hope that this would assist me in analysing the context of contemporary western culture from a critical stand-point while, at the same time, appropriating insights gained from (what was aimed at being) a Feminist reading of the biblical texts. The journey to Berlin, and into the body of work known as Critical Theory, lead however to some unexpected turns to the extent that I had to rethink the emphasis of my project and thus my theoretical and methodological approach to it.

Although it may seem now like a trivial issue, one cause for concern was the interplay between my methodological tools and my theoretical framework. I had been encouraged by my supervisor, Prof. Jonathan Draper, to employ an exegetical model pioneered by him and others,[37] known as the Tri-Polar model for exegesis, or Tri-Polar exegetical framework. The historical development and formulation of the Tri-Polar model, and others like it, was borne out of the politically-charged climate of apartheid- and post-apartheid South Africa, where a greater need to engage with the contextual concerns of the day was paramount. Yet one of the results of privileging context means a more explicit account of how that context shapes us in our interpretation. This means being more express and precise about the methodological and hermeneutical tools we choose to

---

[37] See Grenholm, C. and Patte, D. 2000. "Receptions, Critical Interpretations, and Scriptural Criticism" in Grenholm, C. and Patte, D. (Eds.) *Reading Israel in Romans: Legitimacy and Plausibility of Divergent Interpretations*. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International for an assessment of the historical development of the terminology as well as West, G. 2008. "Interpreting 'the exile' in African biblical scholarship: an ideotheological dilemma in postcolonial South Africa" in Becking, B. and Human, D. (eds) *Exile and suffering: a selection of papers read at the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the OTWSA*. Leiden: Brill.

use as well, if possible, about how they impact each other and the hermeneutical process itself. My main dilemma in all of this was the difficulty I had in separating out, as clearly as Draper does in his analysis, the three stages/poles of the Tri-polar exegetical process.

2.1.3 Dialectic of Enlightenment *and Culture Industry (preliminary considerations)*

Subsequent to the questions raised above, I had already found myself falling into the murky and obscurantist world of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and had become intrigued by the related work of its authors Adorno and Horkheimer. Having been inclined towards Marxist influences in my methodological approach beforehand, this work seemed a useful theoretical bridge in the analytical task of appropriating Marxist insights to the hermeneutical or exegetical process.

One of the concepts within the work which appealed to me was the notion of culture industry which the authors detail in the work and which subsequently became a focal point for later critical theorists.[38] One implication of reading this concept, as far as the hermeneutical enterprise is concerned, relates to the way in which society conceives (of) itself through culture and cultural production. For Adorno and Horkheiemer, culture had meant to be an aspect or facet of society through which the productive forces or surplus creative potential within society could be expressed.[39] Instead, through the development of what they call culture industry, this creative surplus is monopolised, exploited and ultimately obfuscated by the mechanisms of industry and, in so doing, present a façade,

---

[38] The notion of culture industry is also presented in an abridged version in a separate essay titled "Culture industry reconsidered" by Adorno. See also Marcuse's articulation of associated concepts in *One-Dimensional Man*. Adorno, T. 1975. "Culture Industry Reconsidered". *New German Critique*. Vol.6, pp. 12-19. Rabinbach, A. G. (Transl.) (online text available at http://www.icce.rug.nl/~soundscapes/DATABASES/SWA/Culture_industry_reconsidered.shtml); Marcuse, H. 1964. *One-Dimensional Man*. Online text available at: www.marxists.org/reference/archive/marcuse/works/one-dimensional-man/index.htm .

[39] The valuation of culture by the authors is sometimes ambiguous. Ideally, culture (viz. that of the ancient Greeks and the modern European) is the highest and most noble form of human expression. Practically, culture exists only as part of larger capitalist society and so in order to maintain its purity or potency, and as witness to the detriments of capitalism, must guarantee its independence or autonomy in distinction from larger economic structures. Their assessment of culture industry, what they also term mass culture, sees the cultural sphere being subsumed within, and thus co-opted by, dominant modes of economic production. The potential for creative expression, and critique, is thus radically diminished because the necessary distance or independence is no longer maintained.

something that masquerades as culture, but in reality is commodious, or subsists of/in commodities. Given what may be termed the materialist conception of reality underlying the Frankfurt School's thinking this status of culture naturally then has reciprocal effects on human self-understanding and human relationships within society at large.

One might ask here how such a concept relates to the interpretative process as regards biblical exegesis, or even to the tension between original sin and patriarchy such as I sought to probe in my analysis of the given biblical texts. My research question, though formulated somewhat differently in my proposal was now arriving at something like the following: how do we account for the role played by patriarchy in the interpretative process? This question, while perhaps forming something of an ultimate question and so coming across as impossibly broad to answer, was for me still an important question and certainly worth investigating within the exegetical enterprise.

For me, there are two immediate (though admittedly no-less-broad) implications of this question which bear significance for the exegetical task. The first may perhaps be termed predominantly theological, in that it relates to the biblical narrative and what can be detected as the emergence and predominance of patriarchal culture: if, within a liberationist paradigm, we confess a God who desires the emancipation of all people, so that we live in a free and just society (however vague these terms might be), how do we account for the ascendancy of patriarchy as the dominant mode of existence as well as the cultural mode of expression through which the bible came to us? The second implication is perhaps practical in that it relates to our present interpretative task. However, it is connected to the former in acknowledging continuity between the often blatantly patriarchal culture out of which the bible emerged and the successive generations of (patriarchal) interpretations which in turn perpetuate such a culture. In light of these issues, the question posed just now requires re-formulation: how does the *legacy* of the patriarchal *interpretation* of biblical texts inform, shape and constitute us as human subjects, our understanding of scripture, and thus also, the society in which we live?[40]

---

[40] My personal difficulty in trying to appropriate the Tri-Polar exegetical framework in the light of the questions posed above largely contributed to my dilemma in constructing a sufficiently sound theoretical

What I was seeking then, the premise of which I believe could already be detected within Critical Theory, was a body of work which could help me assess adequately the mutually formative/constitutive relationship existing between text, society and culture, as well as some of the ideological elements involved within this relationship. While the overall emphasis and spirit of Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* was one with which I closely identified and was eager to incorporate, the work itself does not easily lend to the extraction of a set theory or methodology. I subsequently came across two sets of overlapping theory which indubitably have their roots in the tradition of Western Marxism to the extent that they even list some of Critical Theory's thinkers as formative in the development of their insights.

2.1.4 Cultural Materialism, New Historicism and Critical Theory

According to my research, the kind of theoretical assumptions I was seeking were to be found most explicitly in two sets of theory (elements of which are interchangeable) known as Cultural Materialism and New Historicism.[41] These theories are notoriously fluid in their theoretical boundaries, having borrowed from various preceding movements, yet there is sufficient basis to suggest that work representing both traditions is heir to much of what was lain down theoretically by writers within Critical Theory.[42]

One of the primary differences between CM/NH and the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School is that the former are, in the main, literary theories. Yet this also contributes to their suitability in my approach, given that their object of focus is text and text's relationship to society. Predominantly, this relates to the way in which literary texts, both in their production and subsequent analyses shape and structure society. My aim then was

---

framework. It should thus be clear that, by this stage, the task was increasingly focused on theoretical as much as (purely) exegetical concerns, i.e. pertaining to the carrying out of an exegesis, but also an investigation and research into the hermeneutical elements which constitute this enterprise.

[41] As to capitalising the names see Ryan, K. (Ed.) 1999. *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism: A Reader*. London: Edward Arnold. p.xi. They are referred to hereafter as CM/NH.

[42] Indeed, analysts of the development of CM/NH include Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno amongst the principle founders of its thought. See Brannigan, J. 1998. *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press. pp.23, 28 and Ryan 1996, p. 32

to bring into dialogue insights from Critical Theory, Cultural Materialism and/or New Historicism with the Tri-Polar exegetical framework in the hope that the former three might inform the hermeneutical operations of the latter. The reason for this, as already mentioned, was to enable an approach that saw the relationship between text and context and/or society and/or culture as being one which is dynamic and mutually formative. In order to appreciate the position adopted by theorists representative of both traditions we will briefly survey some of their theoretical introductions.

In assessing the development and convergence of CM/NH, John Brannigan[43] begins with a quote from Marxist literary critic Raymond Williams, saying that within their theoretical predispositions CM/NH do not "separate literature and art from other kinds of social practice, in such a way as to make them subject to quite special and distinct laws."[44] Brannigan states that CM/NH

> refuse to see literary texts against an overriding background of history or to see history as a set of facts outside the written text. To a new historicist or cultural materialist critic, history is not objective knowledge which can be made to explain a literary text. To see history as a secure knowledge which a literary critic can use to fix a text's meanings is clearly a comforting idea…[then quoting Jean Howard] "A common way of speaking about literature and history is just that way: literature *and* history, text *and* context. In these binary oppositions, if one term is stable and transparent and the other in some way mirrors it, then that term can be stabilized and clarified too…Literature is not, however, simply a medium for the expression of historical knowledge. It is an active part of a particular historical moment, or, as Howard says, "literature is an agent in constructing a culture's sense of reality"…For new historicism and cultural materialism the object of study is not the text and its context, not literature and its history, but rather literature *in* history. This is to see literature as a constitutive and inseparable part of history in the making, and therefore rife with creative forces, disruptions and contradictions of history.[45]

---

[43] I have chosen to focus on one author as representative of both NH and CM, and in this vein have chosen quotes or passages which I think are generally expressive of how this relationship is to be conceived.
[44] Brannigan, 1998. p.1 (Quoting Raymond Williams' *Marxism and Literature*).
[45] Brannigan, 1998. p.3. (Quoting Howard 1986, p. 24).

But Brannigan is ambiguous as to the precise role of literature, or different cultural media, within the mediation and materialisation of social formations and structures, in other words, and to take an example, whether it is used by the state as a means of control or by subjects as a means of subversion and expression of their creative potential.[46] Further to this, Brannigan cites Louis Althusser and his assessment of literature's role in society saying "literature is one of the institutions which participate in making state power and ideology familiar and acceptable to the state's subjects (Althusser 1984, 1-61). Literature will reflect the values, customs and norms of the dominant interests in society…and so is mobilised, mostly unconsciously by the state as an ideological weapon, an army of metaphors which seek to persuade and manipulate rather than coerce."[47]

Brannigan's ambivalence about such a definitive assignment of literature's role, whether in fact it can be assigned absolute labels, as well as his ambiguity about the role of power within literature's production and dissemination, is furthermore demonstrated in an endnote on power relations where he states that "[p]ower is perhaps the most elusive term in the new historicist and cultural materialist vocabulary….It refers usually to the relations of domination and resistance which saturate our social, political and cultural relations, but it can also refer to the ways in which power is a productive, even pleasurable, part of our existence. Power in new historicist analysis hovers between being oppressive and being productive, and one of the most elusive aspects of this term is that it seems to emanate from us, and to be applied to us."[48]

Highlighting a difference in emphasis between the two movements (i.e. CM and NH) Brannigan states that "where new historicists deal with the power relationships of past

---

[46] Brannigan 1998, p.4.

[47] Brannigan 1998, p.5. Althusser himself was a major proponent of the shift in Western Marxism from an emphasis on economic mode of production, or what is termed 'base', to a greater emphasis on the ideological apparatuses perpetuated within a given economic order. Whereas for Marx, the perpetuation of a capitalist mode of production was guaranteed by the reproduction of the means of (economic) production, such 'reproduction' entails more pointedly for Althusser, the reproduction of such things as the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). The shift in analysis therefore is from an emphasis on the economic base to one on the ideological modes of reproduction which then enable the maintenance of the economic hegemony. See Althusser, L. 1993 *Essay's on Ideology*, pp. 22-44.

[48] Brannigan 1998, p.15.

societies, cultural materialists explore literary texts within the context of contemporary power relations."[49] This shift from the historical conditions of a text's production to the moments of its contemporary appropriation necessitates a concentrated focus on the ideological aspects of the text's appropriation. Brannigan goes on to demonstrate this by stating that

> [f]or the most part, new historicist critics are not as interested in power plays between contending monarchs or between monarchs and usurpers as they are interested in the operations of power within self-regulating ideologies. A formative study for new historicism was Claude Lévy-Strauss's recognition that culture is a self-regulating system, just like language, and that a culture polices its own customs and practices in subtle and ideological ways. For the new historicists this recognition has been extended to the 'self', particularly in Stephen Greenblatt's early and seminal study, *Renaissance and Self-Fashioning*. What makes the operations of power particularly complex is the fact that the self polices and regulates its own desires and repressions. This removes the need for power to be repressive…when the self, ideologically and linguistically constructed, will reproduce hegemonic operations.[50]

Power, conceived in such terms seems to undermine a position of supposed objective critique, somehow distanced from the system. Yet in spite of his assessment, Brannigan maintains it is still the New Historicist critic who, albeit to a limited and perhaps thwarted extent, is able to interrogate the power dynamics within texts and the inter-twined ideologies these generate, and that this, in itself, at least tends toward subversive activity. Elaborating this time on the nuances within cultural materialism Brannigan writes that cultural materialism analyses the

> material existence of ideology, concentrated in the study of literary texts. For cultural materialist critics ideology works in language and our deployment of language, but more than this, ideology exists in a material form through institutions like the church, the school, the theatre, the university and the museum…[where] culture is a field of much ideological contest and contradiction, and that no cultural artefact or practice is outside this political sphere.[51]

---

[49] Brannigan 1998, p.9.
[50] Brannigan 1998, p.7.
[51] Brannigan 1998, p.12.

Brannigan goes on to state, this time quoting Dollimore and Sinfield, that

literary texts do not exist in a fixed mode of production… 'A play by Shakespeare is related to

the contexts of production – to the economic and political system of Elizabethan and Jacobean

England and to the particular institutions of cultural production (the court, patronage, theatre,

education, and the church). Moreover, the relevant history is not just that of four hundred years

ago, for culture is made continuously and Shakespeare's text is reconstructed, reappraised,

reassigned all the time through diverse institutions in specific contexts.'[52]

In a useful description of the influence of Post-Structuralism on the respective

movements, Brannigan states that

[c]hief among these was the idea that all human behaviour, practices and knowledge were

constructs and inventions, rather than natural or instinctual. Such a realisation leads to the

practice of reading texts as participants in the construction of human beliefs and

ideologies…both new historicists and cultural materialists insist that there is no division

between text and context, or between literature and politics. Out of this common belief both

critical practices treat literary texts on an equal basis with texts and documents of all kinds,

professing not to privilege 'literature' as a form of expression outside the realms of society or

politics or history.[53]

One might already at this point be able to discern the close relation this work bears to the

Tri-Polar framework and the area of biblical exegesis, and as a result already intimate

some of the implications for this. While bearing the theoretical insights just brought up in

mind I would now like to look at another area of study related both to the exegetical task

of appropriation as well as to the social impact that culturally formative texts have on

society. This consideration is all the more apposite for the present study given that the

insights raised come primarily from my supervisor, Prof. Jonathan Draper.

2.1.5 Orality studies

Although not initially part of my theoretical framework or general field of research, in the

course of my studies, I had come across work of my supervisor carried out in the field of

---

[52] Brannigan 1998, p.12 (Quoting Dollimore and Sinfield 1985. *Political Shakespeare* p.viii)
[53] Brannigan 1998, p.21.

orality studies. I subsequently decided to include the insights raised by this work as I believed them to be informative of my own position within this study. The articles by Draper highlight I believe the dynamic relationship existing between text, culture and society, which I had wished to make more explicit in my own analysis. Draper's studies are set primarily around the area of the colonial introduction of the bible to Africa.

In an article titled "Confessional Western text-centred biblical interpretation and an oral or residual-oral context" Draper writes that authors who had initially pioneered a reader-response approach in modern, Western contexts "leave out of account something of vital importance in our Southern African situation. They assume a printed text and readers who have internalized textuality and whose consciousness has been restructured by textuality."[54] Following this and in light of research done by A. R. Luria in the Soviet Union, Draper goes on to say that "literacy restructures consciousness".[55] Both Draper and Mazamisa in Draper[56] talk about textuality or training through text- (or print-) based mediums as *socialisation processes*. It is worth quoting a fuller section of the article here in order to assess the implications of this. Draper poses the question earnestly as follows:

> Why then do we insist so strongly on the text and on *sola scriptura* in our theological education and doctrine? It is certainly our Western heritage from the Reformation and the Renaissance. We are heirs to the process of alienation from the oral world produced by writing and print. We have internalized it until it seems natural, and we do not recognize that there is another world view. But there is a power dynamic to it as well. There is always a power dynamic to text, since it freezes the Word and places it in the hands of interpretive experts…Our university Biblical Studies courses and their implicit or explicit hermeneutics are not neutral. When Takatso Mofokeng talks of historical critical study of the Bible as the "hermeneutical yoke of the oppressor" (39), he has a point. It would apply even when the experts use their skills in the cause of the struggle for liberation, as for example Itumaleng Mosala (1989) does with his Marxist analysis of the struggle within the text.[57]

---

[54] Draper, J. 1996. "Confessional Western Text-Centred Biblical Interpretation and an Oral or Residual-Oral Context". *Semeia*. Vol. 73, pp.61-80. p.59.
[55] Draper 1996, p.60.
[56] Draper 1996, pp. 71-72.
[57] Draper 1996, pp. 75-76.

Similarly, it is worth noting some of the preliminary remarks pertaining to the relationship or comparison between orality and literacy made by Draper in another article. Draper says the following:

> Orality is found in small, loosely organized, face-to-face communities, where language is used in a direct, personal, mnemonic, performative, and cumulative way (that is, communication is developed by adding one thought to another, and often various people will contribute one after the other in ways partly repetitive but partly new to develop a communal understanding [of a Bible passage under discussion]). Literacy not only provides a substitute for memory, enabling material to be stored for retrieval, but according to Ong, restructures consciousness, enabling the development of analytical skill and logical, sequential reasoning. Orality is unreflective, while literacy is introspective. Thus literacy is a necessary phase in the evolution of human consciousness.[58]

Immediately after this however, Draper states that "since the work of Scribner and Cole (1981), the study of literacy has challenged these assumptions" and, with reference to research on the Vai people of Liberia states that "results indicate that what produces analytical thinking and transforms cognitive structures is not literacy but schooling associated with Western hegemony."[59] Draper goes on to say that this is corroborated by A.T. Cope in his study on Zulu orality "which shows that objective, analytical, and introspective writing is characteristic of the earliest phase of literacy under the direct control of the mission schooling, whereas more advanced competence in literacy in the later generations, which had thrown off the influence of the mission schools, returns to the style and content of Zulu oral culture in written form."[60]

In spite of this objection Draper goes on to write that such studies in literacy do not so much form counterclaim as point to need for a more nuanced approach. He states that "[T]here is, indeed, not one monolithic thing called literacy, but rather many literacies, all of which are culture-specific…People are defined as illiterate when they do not conform to a set of cultural criteria…[L]iteracy as a discourse pattern (written or not written)

---

[58] Draper, J. "The Less Literate are Safer": The Politics of Orality and Literacy Biblical Interpretation" in *ATR*. LXXXIV: 2. pp. 303-318. pp.304-305.
[59] Draper, J. *ATR*. pp. 305.
[60] Draper, J. *ATR*. pp. 305.

enshrines the worldview and identity of a particular cultural community…[L]iteracy theory seems to complement and not necessarily negate aspects of orality theory. Literacy does have its cognitive aspects which differ significantly from orality, but both are culture-specific, and both relate to the hegemony of the dominant elite."[61]

Various historical examples of the mediation process in oral societies attest to the dynamic interplay between text as medium, its specific content, and the forms in which these might be re-appropriated. Another article by Draper citing Isaiah Shembe as one such example states that the "[t]he strongly developed oral culture into which the written word was introduced, re-converted words into Word…The missionaries could control the Word in writing and printing, but not the Word as it was mediated orally. In its textual form, the Bible was experienced as alienating, determined by the culture of the West. But in its oral form, repeated, sung, danced, preached, acted out, the Word became African and was experienced as liberating."[62] Likewise, Gerald West surveys three examples of what we could call similar such 'organic' appropriations in reference also to the life of Isaiah Shembe and the artwork of Trevor Makhoba, further demonstrating the way in which the W/word continually intervenes and is re-appropriated through different cultural media.[63]

From having read Draper's articles on orality studies it seems a central concern is to highlight the political aspects of the bible's colonial transmission where the main contention is not so much that 'literacy structures or re-structures consciousness' but that certain types of literacy are indelibly intermeshed with political motives, conscious or not, and that those exposed to literacies of the dominant/elite are likewise subject to the political forces implicit under-girded by these. It is also clear however, at least in the case of the bible's appropriation in Africa, that despite these ostensibly pernicious forces, the appropriated forms the bible assumed in African contexts nevertheless maintained a strong culturally-specific and thus, in relation to colonialism, subversive character.

---

[61] Draper, J. *ATR*. pp. 306-307.
[62] Draper, J 2002, "The Bible as poison onion, icon and oracle: reception of the printed sacred text in oral and residual-oral South Africa in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 112 (March 2002) 39-56.
[63] West, G. 2007. "(Ac)claiming the (extra)ordinary "reader" of the bible" pp.29-47 in *Reading Other-wise: Socially Engaged Biblical Scholars Reading with their Local Communities*.

If one is to further interrogate the cognitive relationship between the bible, or text, as medium, and the onto-epistemic-(or more simply, self-)understanding of a people, a central insight seems to me firstly that the specific form of media, as Draper intimates, does impact in some way, the shaping or restructuring of consciousness. Furthermore, not only does this consequently have a bearing on the *content* of what is communicated (since consciousness determines perception and thus our ability to process content), but it would also have an impact on the social structures which arise within society as a result, since these too are ultimately constituted by conscious subjects within society.

The purpose of including the above section then is to highlight the destabilising element brought to bear by orality studies on what is traditionally perceived as a fixed distinction between different forms of media and the content conveyed through these, as well as the forms of media themselves and the contexts in which they are appropriated, as if these were neatly separable components. This section is furthermore of value in that it corroborates some of the theoretical insights raised in the previous section on Cultural Materialism/New Historicism, albeit from a slightly different angle. Though both NH and CM reflect broad, complex, and not always coherent strands, where the theoretical backdrop might be formerly different from that of orality studies, the Marxist materialist conception of reality maintained by the former is surely vital in detecting this dynamic.[64]

---

[64] Within my thesis I have tried to trace the genesis of this to Hegel's philosophy and what is known as his 'absolute idealism' the implications of which I believe are discernable right through Marx and the Western Marxist tradition which includes, to a large extent, the movements of NH/CM. I have chosen to represent NH/CM here because, as an already developed body of theory, it explicates most precisely (more so than other theories) the dynamic relationship of text and culture/society. Neo-, or Western Marxists, emphasising Marx as humanist, apparently find much of their epistemological/theoretical bases within Hegel. Debate exists as to what extent Hegel permeates Marx's own writings but there is some consensus on certain key concepts. The materialist view of reality assumed within this paper (and without which the inferences about production, particularly cultural, would not be possible) is one example. Freiderich Beiser, a preeminent Hegel scholar, traces this conception through what he calls Hegel's "absolute idealism" (Beiser, F. 2005. p.55 ff.). Hegel's, Beiser maintains, is an "entirely immanent" metaphysics, which refutes the existence of the transcendent and seeks to locate the ideal/absolute entirely within the material. In other words, though it is strictly a metaphysics, whose object of contemplation remains the A/absolute, and by implication suggests an orientation towards the ephemeral and abstract, by reason of his identification of the ideal with the material, his philosophy is explicitly and unabashedly materialist.

2.1.6 Implications for the Tri-Polar approach

There are perhaps two implications worth mentioning regarding the exegetical enterprise, and particularly, the stage of *appropriation* within this. The first, which I think was already picked up on in Draper's comments on orality studies, relates to the privileging of the historical-critical paradigm within academic biblical exegesis. The Tri-Polar framework proposes the stage of *distantiation* as a necessary step in allowing the text to be 'other', i.e. speak to us from a vantage point different to, or 'other than', our own. In so doing, we are supposedly allowing the text a degree of autonomy and thus being more responsible in our academic hermeneutical enterprise. The premise for a stage of 'autonomy' however also usually accompanies an assumed objectivity, based on it being carried out through historical-critical analysis. This indicates the very close connection, or affinity, between our theoretical assumptions about what it means to be objective and the methodological tools we use to analyse the text. This identification, within a western paradigm, of historicity with truth, also means that objectivity, whether it does so explicitly or not, carries with it an ideological weight, under-girded undoubtedly by 'truth claims' in need of interrogation. Given that we cannot escape, or at the very least, that it is difficult to separate out, our ideological predisposition[65] from the conceptual tools we employ in analysis, even at the supposedly more autonomous stage of *distantiation*, one should be cautioned in the claim of allowing the text to be 'other' if that 'other' is used as base of legitimacy through historicity.[66]

---

[65] Something like what West calls 'ideo-theological orientations'. See for example West, G. 2008. "Interpreting 'the exile' in African biblical scholarship: an ideo-theological dilemma in post-colonial South Africa", Becking, B. and Human, D. (eds) in *Exile and suffering: a selection of papers read at the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the OTWSA,* Leiden: Brill. "The integrative *dynamic* between the three poles is evident. The contextual pole makes a contribution to the ideo-theological orientation of the appropriation pole, in terms of the readers' social location and the choices readers make about their social location. The textual pole makes a contribution to the ideo-theological orientation of the appropriation pole, in terms of its own core axis (as discerned by particular readers)." West 2008, p.11.

[66] This is not to deny the usefulness of historical approaches towards the text especially when employed within a liberationist paradigm. What scholars like Draper endeavour to do within the stage of *distantiation* is use methodological tools from the social sciences which indicate and explicate the unjust structures operative within the society out of which the bible emerged. On this basis, i.e. establishing historical grounds within the text as witness to injustice, scholars such as Draper are able to promulgate a generally emancipatory God and at the same time point to links within contemporary contexts of similar injustice thus helping readers/hearers in such contexts to identify with parts of the biblical narrative they perhaps otherwise would not be able to.

In so far as one *is* concerned with the historical aspects of the text, the question posed should perhaps be shifted from a focus on *what* happened, i.e. to put it more colloquially, 'getting at the facts', to the material conditions of production from which the text emerged, which would try to take into account the social, cultural, political and economic dimensions contingent to the text's production. Where the paradigm of historical-critical studies presupposes a potentially discernable, objective truth waiting to be uncovered behind the text, which may be done through sufficient access to the 'facts', the latter tries to ascertain what social, cultural and economic forces were operative on the historical conditions of the text's production, and in favouring the second question we are compelled not only to consider such forces operative within and upon the historical context of the text but also those traversing the vast divide of historical/ideological interpretations, extending to, and impacting us in the present.

What I am suggesting therefore and what I believe is a necessary step in the exegetical task, indeed in all forms of critical analyses, is not so much a political concern which singles out this or that concern as directing one's reading but rather is a hermeneutical orientation in seeing the text as part of the production process of society, where the relationship between text and society is organic and mutually formative. This has been tentatively demonstrated in our cursory review of NH/CM and the insights contained in orality studies. The end result of such an approach is to suggest, even if this expressed here in crude terms, that the biblical text is produced and reproduced through continual interpretation and reinterpretation and, through the range of its historical interpretations, the text in turn shapes, and produces society. Since the text cannot make the transition from its 'original' form to the present without the act of interpretation, this stage is bound to the text as part of its own and continued production. Thus the text continues to 'be written' through the history of its interpretation, the new form of which is always re-read, re-interpreted and re-produced.

If one does adopt such a view of the relationship between text, society and interpreter then there are two further implications for the task of hermeneutics. The first has been largely accepted by forms of exegeses privileging the role of context, and is namely that

issues of politics, economics and culture, are inseparable from the reader's own orientation and contextual concerns and that therefore, at least from a liberationist perspective, these have to be made more explicit. The second implication, while strictly speaking theological, is no less hermeneutical in that it has a bearing on how we understand our role as readers/interpreters of Scripture. This is namely that the concepts of revelation, and even inspiration, become somewhat destabilised, embodied in a fluid and ongoing process through which the production and reproduction of texts constitute structures within society over which we, as interpreters, exercise a certain degree of agency. The text (now referred to in its extended, revised version) is a dynamic set of relations, the actants of which are not stable or static but fluid and changing because they are constituted by active agents within history. Collectively, they become the mediators of the scriptural message, whatever we determine that to be substantively.

2.1.7 Preliminary conclusions

The genesis of the text or the beginning of the text's life is furthermore difficult to pinpoint. Even if one traces the text's material development via the methodological sub-branches of historical-critical studies one concludes that the text circulated originally in oral form and so this already problemetises the notion of a definite historical genesis. Likewise, if one proceeds in opposite direction of the text's historical spectrum, in light of the insights thus far raised, this is also problemetised by virtue of the text's formations through layers and layers of cultural tradition and production, all of which impacted on and (literally) produced the text, through history. The text's life extends, in this direction, in a potentially infinite fashion because of the enduring impact it has on the production of societal formations. Even if a given text is no longer read, one at least as culturally formative and influential as the bible would have had an exponentially enduring socio-cultural impact into our present and future.

If there is little separation, or if we cannot separate out as clearly as we thought before, the stage of the text's production from its historical context (in terms of the Tri-Polar framework, the stage concerned with *distantiation* through an assumed historical

objectivity) and likewise if we cannot separate out, as clearly as we thought before, the stage of text and *appropriation* where/if we acknowledge that our interpretation is in some way a continuation of the text's production, we will surely be compelled to reassess our own theoretical/methodological (i.e. hermeneutical) orientations as interpreter-producers. Finally, if both context and text exist as mutually formative components of the larger interpretive process, we must concede that our interpretations (i.e. in actual fact, the text's continued production) will also play a role in constituting the social relations and societal conceptions on which our society is based. 'Texts produce societies and societies produce texts' would be something like a paraphrasing of CM/NH's central assertion, and against the background of a materialist conception of reality, texts are themselves products/manifestations of society and society of texts.

It should be clear by now, in the context of this study, at least that the traditional three-tiered distinction of *distantiation*, *contextualisation* and *appropriation* had, for me, become somewhat destabilised in favour of a more fluid and amorphous schematisation. This is all very well and, in the context of biblical exegesis traditionally subject to an over-emphasis on the historical-critical paradigm and concomitant concepts of objectivity, a perhaps healthy corrective, yet for the purpose of an academic study a degree of methodological structure is still necessary. What I would like to do therefore is to suggest a way forward so that, though sometimes more nuanced and ambiguous, the terms of the Tri-Polar framework might be more manageable for our purposes.

Given the agency ascribed to the interpreter/reader of biblical texts in the preceding discussion, it seems that greater interrogation of, or at least a formulation of a way to interrogate, the ideological/epistemological orientations of the interpreter becomes that much more important. I would like therefore to interrogate and qualify what might be called the epistemological basis of the hermeneutical enterprise generally. In so doing I have sought also to uncover what could be regarded as the foundation for Marx's materialist conception of reality which, I believe, is essential to our understanding of the text-reader-society schema. It is then at this point that many of the theoretical insights raised thus far begin to converge around the philosophy of Hegel.

2.2 Situating the Tri-Polar approach within an Hegelian framework

Anyone familiar with Marx will know that he occupied an ambiguous, but nevertheless formative, relationship to the philosopher Hegel. Furthermore, Hegel's philosophy provided much of the theoretical orientations for the Frankfurt School and Western Marxism generally.[67] There are two interrelated insights which this section will focus on. The first relates to Hegel's notion of a dialectical unfolding of history, which later formed the basis, though in a re-formulated way, for Marx's dialectical materialism. The second is the basis of a materialist conception of reality, the roots of which I believe lie in Hegel's philosophy, and which subsequently are foundational to any dialectical-materialist conception of reality. To this end I have tried to single out certain key elements or components of Hegel's philosophy, mainly through secondary sources, in the hope of highlighting the above concerns. We begin then by reviewing the work of two pre-eminent Hegel scholars, Michael Forster and Friederich Beiser.

2.2.1 Hegel's dialectical method

Forster begins his exposition by pointing to the divergence of opinion as to the nature of Hegel's (dialectical) method and even whether he had one.[68] Through an interpretation which privileges Hegel's *Logic* over the *Philosophies of Nature* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Forster attempts to put forward an interpretation of the dialectical method which is more concrete than perhaps is found in other treatments.[69] Thus Forster writes about the dialectical method that:

---

[67] It is instructive to note that the course I attended on the Frankfurt School at the Humboldt University in Berlin began with an introductory section on Hegel's *Philosophy of Spirit*.

[68] Most notably Solomon, see Forster, p.131 in Forster, M. 1998. "Hegel's Dialectical Method" in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Cf. also Beiser, F. 2005. *Hegel*. New York: Routledge, p.325, who lists Solomon, Dove and Simpson as occupying this position. Beiser describes Hegel's method as an "anti-methodology" (Beiser 2005, p.160) which may be compared with Forster's, stating that "[T]he dialectical method is pervasive in Hegel's mature philosophy. It governs all three parts of his system proper: the Logic, the Philosophy of Nature, and the Philosophy of Spirit. And it also governs the discipline that he developed as an introduction to this system, the Phenomenology of Spirit (expounded in the book of that name)." Forster 1998, p.130.

[69] Due to my own lack of expertise I have chosen to include a review of Forster's treatment for the sake of clarity and succinctness. Thus my inclusion of his position is not an indication of disagreement with other scholars as to the precise nature of Hegel's method.

[I]n the Logic, the dialectic is essentially a method of expounding our fundamental categories (understood in a broad sense to include not only our fundamental concepts but also our forms of judgement and forms of syllogism). It is a method of exposition in which each category in turn is shown to be implicitly self-contradictory and to develop necessarily into the next (thus forming a continuously hierarchical series culminating in an all-embracing category that Hegel calls the Absolute Idea).[70]

At this stage it is informative to include Beiser's take on the matter in which he characteristically attempts to capture some of the nuance and ambiguity involved:

The dialectic has been so controversial that some scholars even deny that Hegel had such a method. In the usual sense of the word, a 'method' consists in certain rules, standards and guidelines that one justifies a priori and that one applies to investigate a subject matter. But, in this sense, Hegel utterly opposed having a methodology, and was critical of philosophers who claimed to have one…Hegel insisted that the philosopher should bracket his standards, rules and guidelines and simply examine the subject matter for its own sake. The standards, rules and guidelines appropriate to a subject matter should be the result, not the starting point, of an investigation. So, if Hegel has any methodology at all, it appears to be an *anti*-methodology, a method to suspend all methods.[71]

Beiser goes on to say that "Hegel's term for his own anti-methodology is 'the concept' (*der Begriff*), which designates the inherent form of an object, its inner purpose. It is the purpose of enquiry to grasp this inner form"[72]. Regarding the dialectic Beiser further states that:

[W]hen Hegel uses the term 'dialectic' it usually designates the 'self-organization' of the subject matter, its 'inner necessity' and 'inner movement'. The dialectic is what follows from the concept of the thing. It is flatly contrary to Hegel's intension, therefore, to assume that the dialectic is an a priori methodology, or indeed a kind of logic, that one can apply to the subject matter. The dialectic is the very opposite: it is the inner movement of the subject matter, what evolves from it rather than what the philosopher applies to it.

---

[70] Forster 1998, p. 132.
[71] Beiser 2005, pp. 159-160.
[72] Beiser 2005, p.160.

Beiser discourages use of the schema 'thesis—antithesis—synthesis' which has typically been used to characterise Hegel's dialectic saying that "[A]lthough Kant's antinomies were the inspiration for Hegel's dialectic, Hegel never used Kant's method of exposition of thesis and antithesis" and furthermore argues that is wrongly attributed to Hegel, Fichte and Schelling.[73] Beiser further characterises Hegel's dialectic by correcting the misconception of its supposed opposition, or the idea of it being an alternative, to traditional forms of logic:

> Hegel's dialectic was never meant to be a *formal* logic, one that determines the fundamental laws of inference governing all propositions, whatever their content. In its most general form in the *Science of Logic* the dialectic is a metaphysics whose main task is to determine the general structure of being. Such a metaphysics does not compete with formal logic because it has a content all its own, even if a very general one, namely the most general categories of being.[74]

Having then taken account of Beiser's cautionary remarks, let us resume Forster's treatment of the dialectic. Here we will cite a passage from Forster in which he quotes part of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia*:

> "The logical has in point of form three sides…These three sides do not constitute three *parts* of the Logic, but are moments of each logical reality, that is, of each concept…a) Thought, as the Understanding, sticks to finite determinacies and their distances from one another… b) The dialectical moment is the self-sublation of such finite determinations and their transition into their opposites… c) The speculative moment, or that of positive Reason, apprehends the unity of the determinations in their opposition – the affirmative that is contained in their dissolution and transition."…We may illustrate this general model of the Logic's dialectic by means of the textbook example from the beginning of the Logic. Hegel starts from the category of Being, and first tries to show that this contains its contrary, Nothing: "*Being, pure being,* without any further determination…It is pure indeterminateness and emptiness. There is *nothing* to be intuited in it…Just as little is anything to be thought in it…Being, the indeterminate immediate, is in fact *nothing*, and neither more nor less than *nothing*." Hegel then undertakes to demonstrate the converse containment of the concept of Being in that of Nothing in a similar way. Having thus reached the negative result that these two categories are self-contradictory, Hegel finally tries to show that there is a positive outcome that unites them but in a manner that

---

[73] Beiser 2005, p.161.
[74] Beiser 2005, pp.161-162.

avoids their self-contradictoriness, because it not only preserves them but also modifies their senses: the category Becoming. (To see what he is getting at here, one should reflect on the fact that what is simply in a state of becoming *in a sense* is or *has being* and also *in a sense* is not or *is nothing*.) Becoming then forms a starting point for a new round of dialectic – going on to develop self-contradiction that leads to subsumption under the category of Determinate Being (Dasein).[75]

Given the subject matter, and the notorious divergence of opinion pertaining to it, Forster's appraisal seems suspiciously neat. So once again, in order to appreciate some of the nuance and ambiguity surrounding the topic I will try to incorporate work of other authors. Stephen Houlgate, in his treatment of Hegel, adopts an approach that leans towards the practical, one which tries to appropriate Hegel's thinking in the spheres of ethics and politics. Regarding anything which may be termed Hegel's 'method', Houlgate begins with an assessment of what he sees as Hegel's attempt to establish a presuppostionless logic. This, in as far as remaining faithful to the rally-cry of a critical philosophy, as well as to an assessment of the general categories of being (à la Beiser), seems to be consistent with our assessment of Hegel thus far. Houlgate states in reference to this attempt that:

> [T]his is of course a development of Kant's conception, presented in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, that theoretical understanding is the power of spontaneity and active, groundless synthesis, and of his idea, set out in the *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, that practical reason is the power of autonomous self-legislation. It is also a development of Descartes' idea that philosophy may take nothing for granted in its search for truth and that thought is the principle of doubt or criticism which frees us from the authority of habitual but unwarranted belief. The connection between thought and freedom is perhaps more implicit than explicit in Descartes' writings, however, since his explicit aim is not so much to liberate human consciousness as to provide a solid foundation for the sciences. But in Kant's philosophy, especially his moral philosophy, this connection between thought and freedom is made fully explicit. We are moral beings for Kant in so far as our will is capable of being determined not simply by particular interests or desires, but by self-legislating reason. And it is this capacity of

---

[75] Forster 1998, p.133.

our reason to determine the will independently of particular interests that constitutes our autonomy and freedom, and our ultimate human worth.[76]

Concerning the so-called 'starting point' of Hegel's logic in the concepts of *Being* and *Nothing* and, in Houlgate's terms, Hegel's endeavour to arrive at a presuppotionless logic through these, Houlgate says that:

[O]ne should be careful not to be misled by this apparently 'metaphysical' beginning to Hegel's logic…Hegel is not inviting us to think of 'reality' or 'nature' or any particular determinate being. He is not inviting us to think of *what is*. Each of these thoughts represents the thought of some determinate content, the thought of *something*. But Hegel wants us to begin by merely thinking the indeterminate thought of being as such…Now consider what is the least that can be said about thought – the least that we can think about thought – to begin with. It is not that thought is syllogistic or that it is concerned with objectivity or that it is opposed to feeling; that is already to think too much. The least that thought can think about itself is simply that it *is*. The outcome of Hegel's turning of Cartesian doubt against thought itself is thus not the conviction that I am, but merely the ineradicable thought that thought is. Thought can abstract from everything, but it cannot abstract from the thought that it is, from the thought of its own being. But, equally, since that thought is still wholly indeterminate, we cannot yet give any determinate meaning to the idea that we are thinking the simple being of *thought*…thought surely cannot think simply of utter indeterminacy; it must think *something* if it is to think at all. If it tries to abstract from all content, thought surely ends up thinking nothing whatsoever. Hegel agrees. The indeterminate thought of being does indeed amount to the thought of nothing whatsoever. Being, construed in such an indeterminate way, is merely an empty word. At the beginning of Hegel's logic thought thinks – or tries to think – the utter indeterminacy of *being*, but that thought is so utterly indeterminate that it evaporates in the very attempt to conceive it. The thought of pure, indeterminate being thus slides into the thought of nothing because of its sheer inadequacy…[a]nd yet, that does not simply put an end to presuppositionless thinking. After all, when we abstract from all determinate thoughts and are left thinking nothing at all, at least nothing determinate, we do not stop thinking altogether. Thinking of nothing is not the same as simply not thinking. Thought that suspends all its presuppositions and thinks of nothing determinate still remains thought, albeit utterly indeterminate and inchoate thought. Thus, even as we admit that we are in fact thinking *nothing whatsoever* when we think of

---

[76] Houlgate, S. 1991. *Freedom, Truth and History: An Introduction into Hegel's Philosophy*. Routledge: London. p. 43.

being, we must also recognise that nothing whatsoever nevertheless *is* what we are thinking of, and that when we think of nothing, we are actually thinking of sheer indeterminacy, of empty, indeterminate *be-ing*. Just as the thought of sheer, indeterminate being slides into the thought of nothing, therefore, so the thought of nothing slides into the thought of being.[77]

2.2.2 Geist *and* Doppelsatz

Having said something about a general starting point to Hegel's approach we should now try to say something about specific theoretical insight contained within it. To this end I have followed the lead of Michael Hardimon in introducing Hegel's thinking via two components often regarded as central to his approach, those of *Doppelsatz* and *Geist*.[78] This explication comes primarily in the form of excerpts from Hardimon, the enlisting of other scholars to inform this position, as well as my own view as to the appropriation of this for the task at hand. On the principle of the *Doppelsatz* Hardimon then states that:

> [T]he *Doppelsatz* (or double dictum) – "What is rational is actual, and what is actual is rational" (PR, ¶12) – is one of Hegel's most famous, most provocative, and most discussed philosophical slogans. Its two brief lines provide an extraordinarily provocative, memorable, and condensed formulation of three crucial aspects of Hegel's philosophical point of view. They encapsulate Hegel's basic (1) conception of reason, reality, and their relation, (2) methodological approach, and (3) normative outlook. Because of this the *Doppelsatz* provides a wonderful device for exploring Hegel's thought.[79]

Before continuing his treatment of these three aspects Hardimon discusses the term *wirklich* and its English equivalents, rendered as either "actual" or "real". Though this might seem like something of an aside, it relates to the normative role reason comes to assume within Enlightenment thinking, about which more will be said later, and so thus is

---

[77] Houlgate 1991, pp. 50-51.

[78] Hardimon treats them in the opposite order. Personally, the notion of the *Doppelsatz* comes across as being more foundational, hence my dealing with it first. See [78] Hardimon, M. O. 1994. *Hegel's Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.54 ff.

[79] Hardimon 1994, p.54. Some of the implications of Hardimon's threefold characterisation in terms of its relation to method will be meted out shortly. It is helpful here to suggest that (1) relates to Hegel's epistemological and ontological position, that is, the situation of the philosopher in reality, (2) relates to the dialectical method per se while (3) relates to normative grounds for critique. The last point is important given its partial basis for Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of Enlightenment, viz. standards or principles internal to Enlightenment thinking, or the normative standards proposed by the system itself.

important in our ability to critique Enlightenment thinking on this basis.[80] Hardimon states:

> '[R]ational', as Hegel uses the term, has both an epistemic and a normative aspect; roughly speaking, it means both rationally intelligible and reasonable or good [[81]]…Things are actual (*wirklich*) to the extent that they express, manifest, realize, and correspond to their inner essence. What makes them actual – to the extent that they are actual – is not that they exist but rather that they exist *and* express their inner essence. Thus, in Hegel's terminology, not everything that exists is actual. To the extent that things fail to live up to their essence, they fall under the categories of 'mere appearance' (*bloße Erscheinung*) and 'illusion' (*Schein*)[[82]]…[T]he German word *Wirklichkeit* can be translated as either 'actuality' or 'reality', and *wirklich* can be translated as either 'actual' or 'real'. 'Actuality' has quite appropriately become the standard translation for *Wirklichkeit*, as Hegel uses it, and 'actual' the standard translation for his use of *wirklich*. One reason for this is that 'actual' preserves the contrast with *potential* and *undeveloped* [emphasis mine] that is central to Hegel's conception of *Wirklichkeit*. A thing is *wirklich* to the extent that it has developed its potential. Another reason for translating *wirklich* with 'actual' is to respect Hegel's general practice of using the term *Realität* to mean something rather different from *Wirklichkeit*. [83]

Hardimon then goes on to make the important assertion that:

---

[80] Hardimon has stated prior to this that "[C]ontrary to appearances, the *Doppelsatz* does not maintain that everything that exists is rational…Hegel explicitly denies that everything that exists is rational (EL, §6)…Hegel employs the word 'actual' (*wirklich*) in a technical sense…[where] what is 'actual' is to be contrasted with what merely exists (that which exhibits mere *Dasein* or *Existenz*). Hegel understands 'actuality' (*Wirklichkeit*) to be the unity of essence (*Wesen*) and existence (*Existenz*) (EL, §142). Things are 'actual' only to the extent that they realize their 'essence', their underlying rational structure. When Hegel says "*what is* is reason," he is not using the expression 'what is' to refer to everything that exists but instead to refer to that which 'genuinely' is, that which is actual." Hardimon 1994, p.26.

[81] But see Stern who disagrees with this position, proposing one which devalues the normative aspect/role of Reason in Stern, R. 2006. "Hegel's *Doppelsatz*: A Neutral Reading" *Journal of the History of Philosophy,* vol. 44, no. 2 (2006) 235–66.

[82] "Although Hegel recognizes that the philosophical distinction he draws between 'existence' and 'actuality' is technical, he contends that it has its roots in educated speech, which, he maintains, declines to give the name real (*wirklich*) poet or real (*wirklich*) statesman to a poet or statesman who can do nothing really meritorious or reasonable (EL, §142Z). Hegel also holds that his technical sense of 'actuality' corresponds to what he calls the 'emphatic sense' of the ordinary word. This reflects his general view that philosophy captures the 'speculative content' of ordinary language." Hardimon 1994, p.53.

[83] Hardimon 1994, pp. 54-55. Despite then the more technically appropriate translation of 'actual' for *wirklich* the connotations borne out by 'real' should still be kept in mind. Hardimon goes on to state that "whereas *Wirklichkeit* is a perfectly ordinary German word – like 'reality' in English – the English word 'actuality' is specialized and learned. It is far more idiomatic to speak of a real statesman than an actual statesman. Moreover, 'reality' not 'actuality' is the honorific term in English. We may or may not care whether things are actual, but we do intuitively care whether they are real." Hardimon 1994, pp. 55.

[t]he point of the *Doppelsatz* is not to establish a *definitional* connection between the words 'real' and 'actual' but rather to assert a *metaphysical* connection between reality and reason. And so Hegel's claim that the real is rational is not empty. It instead provides a summary statement of his political conception of reality and as such makes a substantive claim – a claim about the nature of the real, which… has important normative implications…Hegel's conception of reality…ascribes an intrinsically normative or teleological dimension to the real. Things are *real*, in Hegel's view, to the extent that they live up to their own underlying norm or end – their essence or concept. This conception of reality differs from the commonsense view, according to which things can be perfectly real despite being defective or imperfect. Hegel maintains that to the extent that things fail to correspond to their essence they lack reality.[84]

These preliminary notes about Hegel's use of terminology already begin to point to central notions contained in the *Doppelsatz*, such as, for example, that of the Concept (*der Begriff*). In order to appreciate the position of the Concept within Hegel's thought it is helpful say more about its influence from Platonic and Aristotelian thinking vis-à-vis the notion of Forms/Ideas and of Substance respectively. Again, this may seem more than is necessary, the point is nevertheless not to provide a thorough understanding of Platonic or Aristotelian philosophy, but rather to highlight or emphasise, and thus better understand, aspects of Hegel's thought.

Firstly, it is worth noting that, as with the German-English translations of *wirklich*, the Greek *eidos* can be rendered either as Ideas or Forms, the etymological roots thus once again communicating some of the term's nuance.[85] Beiser is most helpful in describing this particular relationship between Greek philosophical thought and that of Hegel, showing that Hegel's notion of the Concept, sides more with Aristotelian than Platonic

---

[84] Hardimon 1994, p.56. We have in English a saying that captures some of the character of Hegel's *Doppelsatz*. Though it refers primarily to people, with some imagination, it could be extended to non-personal entities as well. The saying "He was in his element" means that the person concerned was at that time occupying or inhabiting that which he is generally, or to use what has become a colloquial expression, 'quintessentially', perceived to be. If someone is defined by or thought of primarily in terms of their love of cars, for example, they would be 'in their element' at a car show, or occupying the front seat of a vintage Mustang, and so on with other examples. Literally, they come alive, or seem to, when they are in such states, since their essence, that which they are defined to be at heart (which by the way, is that which they have consciously grown to define themselves, and so is in line with Hegel's view of the Concept as self-actualising) corresponds to their outward or material reality.

[85] "Idea" in Flew, A. and Priest, S. (Eds.) 2002. *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. London: Pan Books, p. 184.

thinking. In the following section Beiser is discussing this in the broader context of absolute idealism, the usually conventional designation of Hegel's philosophy. Beiser says the following:

> Hegel identifies the idea not with Plato's archetype but with Aristotle's formal-final cause. Hegel saw Aristotle, not Plato, as the proper founder of absolute idealism…Following Aristotle's critique of Plato, Hegel thinks that universals do not exist as such but only *en re*, in particular things. As forms inherent in things, as concrete universals, universals are, in Aristotle's language, the *formal-final* causes of things. The formal cause consists in the essence or nature of a thing, what makes it the thing that it is; and the final cause is the purpose the object attempts to realize, the goal of its development. The two senses of causality are joined in Hegel, as in Aristotle, because the purpose of a thing is to realize its essence or to develop its inherent form. Like Kant, Hegel calls the formal-final cause the 'concept' (*Begriff*) of a thing…If we keep in mind Hegel's Aristotelian concept of the idea, then his idealism has a fundamentally teleological meaning. To state that everything is an appearance of the idea now means that it strives to realize the absolute idea, or that everything acts for an end, which is the absolute idea.[86]

Elsewhere Beiser has stated that, with regard to Hegel's conception of Spirit (which may be seen as corresponding in some ways to his notion of the Absolute), that

> Spirit by itself, apart from any of the finite individuals in which it appears, would be only a general term or universal. But here Hegel insists that no universal can exist on its own apart from, and prior to particular things. By itself it is simply an abstraction. Hegel's insistence on this point comes from his adherence to the Aristotelian dictum that universals exist only *in re*…spirit by itself is only an abstraction and comes into existence only through the activity of finite agents.[87]

By way of further illustration, a comparison of Plato's doctrine of Ideas/Forms with that of Aristotle's Substance, may be cited from a contemporary dictionary of philosophy where:

> [D]istinguishing between knowledge and mere opinion, Plato holds that the former is possible only if there are absolute and changeless objects of knowledge. These are 'Forms', or ideal

---

[86] Beiser, 2010, pp.66-67.
[87] Beiser, F. 1993. *Cambridge Companion to Hegel*. pp. 290-291.

realities…Sensible objects are 'called after' the corresponding Form because they 'participate in' that Form; e.g. Socrates is called just because he participates in Justice. Sensible objects never purely possess one property rather than its opposite. For instance, Socrates is not only just but unjust in some respects. But the Forms themselves never admit their opposites, being purely what they are, while sensible objects depend on Forms for whatever order and regularity they have…Plato seems [thus] to conceive the Forms as ideal exemplars that provide standards of judgement. Thus, to know the Form of Justice allows us to judge what acts or people are just. We know that Socrates is just because we somehow perceive his relation to Justice.[88]

Aristotle's most basic philosophical commitment was to common sense: opposed both to Plato's ideal Forms and to the atomists' material atoms, he sought a theory that would at once allow a place for moral values and for scientific truths – a theory, moreover, which would not posit invisible and unknowable entities such as Forms and atoms. His solution was the theory of substance (*ousia*). In the *Categories* he explains that substances are the ultimate subjects for all properties. Socrates is a man and Socrates is pale; manhood and paleness are thus characteristics belonging to Socrates. The ultimate realities ('primary substances') are concrete things, and of concrete things Aristotle's preferred examples are biological individuals such as Socrates. Concrete things are the ultimate realities because, if they did not exist, nothing else would exist either. In other words, if there were no such things as Socrates and Callias, characteristics such as manhood and paleness would have nothing to belong to, and hence they would not exist…Armed with this theory of being, Aristotle could argue that Plato's Forms are basically universals which Plato mistakenly treats as individuals. There really are universals, but they depend for their existence on particular objects such as Socrates, rather than, as Plato contends, particular objects depending on Forms.[89]

To place this distinction in sharper focus and to bring it back to within the ambit of Hegel's philosophy we return to Hardimon's discussion of the Concept (or *Begriff*) in the context of his later discussion on Hegel's notion of Spirit:

Hegel does not think that *Geist* has a fixed essence that is given fully articulated from the start. He maintains, rather, that *Geist*'s true *Begriff* is itself subject to a developmental process. (In this respect Hegel's view of essence differs from the traditional view, according to which essences are by their very nature fixed and immutable.) *Geist*'s *Begriff* becomes fully

---

[88] Flew, A. 1979. *Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*. London: Pan Books, p.427.
[89] Flew 1979, p.41.

determinate only through *Geist*'s struggle to articulate and actualize itself. Thus *Geist*'s development is not only a process through which its articulations and actualization of its *Begriff* develop but also a process through which its *Begriff* develops. *Geist*'s 'true *Begriff*' is that form of its *Begriff* which would eventuate from an ideal process of development. This *Begriff* attains its true and final form *only at the end* of *Geist*'s developmental process.[90]

It should be clearer by this stage that, for Hegel, the Concept itself is not only self-actualising but coincident or concomitant with the material reality it takes. As we will see under the discussion of *Geist*, the notion that the essence of a concept extends beyond its material reality is entertained but only in terms of retrospection and forecast. Apart from this, to say that entities exist ideally (i.e. apart from material manifestation) is entirely inconsonant with Hegel's philosophy – the idea or concept is inseparable from the material manifestation through which this emerges. The reader may also be aware by this stage that there are many terms or notions 'central to' Hegel's thinking which interlink and overlap and, in some instances, may even appear interchangeable. In light of this, it is helpful to try ascertain the spirit or character (*Gepräger*) common to Hegel's philosophy generally and in which arguably, all these terms find their meaning.

In order to do this, let us move on to a discussion of a notion that is general in the sense of over-arching, but also central in terms of the substance of Hegel's philosophy namely, *Geist*, also undertaken through the work of Hardimon. In discussing some of the advantages and disadvantages of rendering *Geist* as 'Spirit' Hardimon suggests some of the associations/meanings Hegel has of the word:[91]

---

[90] Hardimon 1994, p. 46.

[91] The stages of development or progression of the figure of "Self-Consciousness" within Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (*Pänomenologie des Gesites*) may be characterised on three levels: firstly, it serves to represent or explain the development of Self-Consciousness within the 'individual' (i.e. treats of the individual's relationship of the self to self-consciousness); secondly, Self-Consciousness between individuals (i.e. as the development, progression of distinct/'separate' self-consciousnesses) and; thirdly, as the emergence of Self-Consciousness on the world-historical scene that is, Self-Consciousness as socially-/culturally-constituted phenomenon. Undoubtedly, these three characterisations are not entirely separable and lead into one another. This would suggest that Self-Consciousness (or its development as depicted in the *Phenomenology*) not only includes the three modes of representation mentioned above, but extends beyond these. *Geist* can be rendered "Spirit" or "Mind" which (once more, highlights the multifarious connotations of the word) where *Geist* manifests as *Self-Consciousness* in all the variant modes mentioned. Hence the preference of some for *Phenomenology of Mind* who are presumably of the opinion that this more closely intimates the role/function of *Geist*. Identifying Hegel's concept of *Geist*, or even Self-

As Charles Taylor has emphasized, *Geist* for Hegel is essentially embodied in a two-fold sense. First, *Geist* must have its seat in embodied, living subjects: in rational animals, human beings. Second, *Geist* must be expressed in an external medium (e.g. language, custom, institution). Taylor calls this requirement, the "principle of necessary embodiment." *Geist* is actual (*wirklich*) only as embodied. *Geist* comes to be embodied – comes to be actual – through its own activity. *Geist* is self-actualizing (VG, 74/64). And *Geist* actualizes itself by expressing its self-conception in an objective (spatio-temporal) medium. Thus, in Hegel's view, the spiritual is not to be identified with 'the internal' or 'the inward'. On the contrary, *Geist* is a self-objectifying (EG, §387R), self-manifesting (EG, §383), self-actualizing (EG, §381R) entity.[92]

In line with this characterisation, Self-Consciousness incorporated within the broader concept of *Geist*, cannot attain (to itself) unless and until it is aware of its own objective existence, hence its very existence is constituted by a degree of self-awareness. Self-Consciousness must literally *see* itself embodied corporeally in order to become aware of itself and thus first come into existence. It is thus self-reflexive. Hardimon goes on to say that central to Hegel's notion of *Geist* is that it "expresses, objectifies, manifests, and actualizes itself *in the world*. Only by doing so does *Geist* become fully actual. Thus Hegel's conception of 'the spiritual' is unabashedly worldly."[93]

Another feature which Hardimon offers as illustration of *Geist* is its self-interpretation. Firstly, Hardimon explains, this means that "*Geist* is capable of forming an interpretation of itself, of the kind of entity it essentially is, and of the needs, aims, and goals it essentially has." In this sense, explains Hardimon, "*Geist* is [literally] self-conscious."[94] Furthermore, states Hardimon, "*Geist*…attains self-knowledge [and thus realises itself] by developing successively more adequate interpretations of itself, that is, a series of increasingly more coherent interpretations accounting for an increasingly wide range of its activities."[95] Yet *Geist* is not only self-aware and thus capable of offering up its own

---

Consciousness, exclusively with a rational faculty/function, or even over-characterising it in these terms is, to my mind, misleading. Having said that, what distinguishes Self-Consciousness from (pure) consciousness is self-awareness and, in turn, self-reflection, a faculty exclusive to the human mind.
[92] Hardimon 1994, p. 43.
[93] Hardimon 1994, p. 44.
[94] Hardimon 1994, p. 45.
[95] Hardimon 1994, p. 45.

interpretations of itself, "the proposition that *Geist* is self-interpreting also means that *Geist* is (at least partially) 'defined' or 'constituted' by its self-interpretations."[96]

We should now be in a better position to understand the notion of the Concept providing a normative basis within reality, as well, in light of this, of the normative role ascribed to Reason since the material form of *Geist* is inseparable, but indeed develops out of, *Geist*'s own Self-Consciousness, one constituted by Geist's self-interpretation which necessarily entails both retrospection and a forward speculative orientation, in short, appropriating its historical locatedness, through the means/mechanism of Reason. In this way it is therefore central to *Geist* not only that it have the ability to be self-interpreting but know that it possesses this ability. *Geist* would be acutely deficient therefore if, for example, it formulated its future orientation haphazardly or unconsciously or, likewise, if it did not continually reassess this future orientation on the basis of its actual, material location in turn formulated in light of its perceived historical trajectory. As we shall see, this understanding of Reason as self-regulating and normative forms much of the substance of the critique contained within *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

With regard to Hegel we can say that "*Geist* is self-actualizing" since the self-perception of *Geist*, contained in its self-interpretation, is also at the same time its own realisation in particular historical or material forms.[97] Importantly, as Hardimon points out,

> maintaining that *Geist* is defined or constituted by its self-interpretations…does not mean…that *Geist* is whatever it happens to take itself to be. Hegel holds that Geist has a true nature, or true essence (VA, 1:129/1:93) – a *Begriff* (concept)…Hence, *Geist's* self-understanding can be one-sided and inadequate. The less closely its self-interpretations correspond to its *Begriff*, the less adequate they are. And conversely, the more fully its interpretations correspond to its true *Begriff*, the more adequate they are… *Geist's Begriff* becomes fully determinate only through *Geist's* struggle to articulate and actualize itself…[and] attains its true and final form *only at the end* of *Geist's* developmental process. A corollary of this point is that although *Geist* aims

---

[96] Hardimon 1994, p. 45.
[97] To take an example from contemporary culture: communication between people via cell-phones is both a manifestation and expression/declaration of the implicit perception that ours is a culture with the necessary scientific and technical capacity to communicate in such a way, as well as what otherwise might be seen as a simple act of communication.

from the start to actualize itself as the kind of entity it is, the kind of entity that it is, is something that can be fully specified only at the end of *Geist's* developmental process (see PhG, 24/11). It is only when *Geist* has completed its process of development that it can understand what it was doing. It is only when *Geist* has arrived at its goal that it can understand where it was going. This is why Hegel insists that *Geist's* self-understanding is inherently retrospective.[98]

2.2.4 Implications for a theory of text production

It might be helpful here, before proceeding, to undertake a summary of some of the implications thus far. In view of the fact that our treatment of Hegel has necessarily been concise and collective, the implications drawn here as regards the hermeneutical enterprise are meant to be taken as suggestive rather than absolute. For the sake of time I will thus also limit myself to four points, which are really two but applied, in turn, to the hermeneutical method of the Tri-Polar approach and to the task of social critique that will later fall under an assessment of the content contained in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. These can be most appositely captured if we return to the two initial principles by which Hegel's thinking was introduced, namely the *Doppelsatz* and *Geist*.

In the main, what the *Doppelsatz* points to, for the purposes of this study, is a materialist conception of reality already underlined and intimated in the preceding discussion around NH/CM etc. – Hegel, although what is detailed here of his approach is a cursory survey, merely provides the more fundamental philosophical basis on which to posit such a materialist conception of reality.[99] How then does this relate to a.) the hermeneutical enterprise and b.) social critique that is partnered with this?

---

[98] Hardimon 1994, p. 46. Although Hegel's *subjectivity* can be, and is, defined collectively, it must to some extent be rooted in the consciousness of its individual members – "[Hegel] holds that the only way in which a collectivity can attain self-consciousness is through the consciousness of its members. Hegel contends that a national community [for example] attains self-consciousness (and so becomes a subject) when its members come to identify with its institutions and practices, regard its national principle as expressive of their own self-understanding, and regard its *Volksgeist* as constitutive of their spirit" – hence the possibility of understanding Self-Consciousness' progression as one also within and between society's members. Hardimon 1994, p. 50.

[99] The qualification is offered here that though a case can be made for seeing Hegel's thinking as foundational to a materialist conception of reality, this does not negate its idealist elements. The point of importance is that Hegel, as was shown, never conceives of the ideal in purely abstract terms, it is located

In the first instance, there is a fundamental, integrative link between the three aspects or poles of the hermeneutical process: reader, context, and text (one could add the fourth aspect of the historical context of the text if one wished to be thorough). We realise that to be critical and academically rigorous we must try to demarcate these poles as clearly as we can so that we can better articulate what takes place at each through the exegetical process. Already to name the different stages however is something of an affront to the underlying reality uniting them all, yet we know, again for the purposes of clarity we cannot dispense with this labelling.

Nevertheless, the hermeneutical task or process should now be viewed as one where, in reality (understood now in the Hegelian sense) there is little separation between the three poles formerly mentioned—they exist, if one likes, in a hermeneutic or dialectical cycle, each one mutually formative of the next, constantly feeding in and out of the other. Our understanding of the text should furthermore be broadened to include the material reality of which it is apart.

Thus, in contradistinction to a neat three-tiered approach of something like the Tri-Polar model, the characterisation of the relationship between components involved should be more along the lines of phenomenological approach which indeed Draper cited through Gadamer in the initial formulation of the Tri-Polar model. Just as *Geist* is existence-less apart from embodiment, so the text is existence-less apart from material reality. This means that the text, viewed from an historical perspective is an embodiment of the historical material conditions attendant to it as well as that, in our contemporary context, we ourselves and our society become extensions of the text, an insight more commonly acknowledged within literary fields such as CM/NH.

In the second instance, namely the relation of the *Doppelsatz* to the area of social critique, we see that the implications drawn from the hermeneutical process are not at all

---

in, and necessarily arises out of, the material. The aim in emphasising this conception of reality as materialist then is to try counter what has historically been a Western obsession with, or overemphasis of, the ideal, to the point of complete abstraction and hypostatisation such that, for all practical purposes, the relationship between the ideal and material can no longer be adequately conceived.

unrelated to this. If we and our society become extensions of the text, our interpretations, the hermeneutical tools, the framework of categories, the metaphysics which Hegel calls the 'diamond lattice' through which we interpret all things, take on a more cognitively significant function given their capacity to inform and shape the epistemic and ontological orientations of society, the latter two, broadly speaking, being constitutive of the *Geist* of the particular period we inhabit. This then encourages us to recognise the importance of the bible's interpretation and the importance of biblical interpreters for appropriating the bible in the contemporary context. But at the same time, importantly, it poses the question of what normative standards we assign, not just as readers of the bible but as a collective society, to our own processes of collective self-formation. This latter aspect will be taken up in the section of critique offered through *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

The implications which may be inferred from our knowledge of the concept of *Geist* are in some ways questions internal to theology. There is some dispute over the extent to which Hegel was influenced by Christianity. Ultimately, as Beiser points out, the object of Hegel's philosophy was the Absolute which he equated on numerous occasions with God, and is reported, before his death, even to have confessed himself as a Lutheran. Yet besides whatever actual influence permeates Hegel's thinking from the Christian tradition, the implications drawn from *Geist* are still theological in that *Geist* becomes the subject matter of history where, and this is not unlinked to implications drawn from Hegel's *Doppelsatz*, history is regarded as dialectical unfolding of *Geist* in which all what was said just now about the nature and character of *Geist* and the implications drawn from this, pertain – namely that we, ourselves, as conscious and self-conscious subjects, if we are to participate in *Geist*, must do so collectively and mutually with a view to attaining somehow, however broadly this may be conceived, a common goal, in which each self-consciousness can be fully realised. Like its parallel in the *Doppelsatz* the impact of this on the task of social critique, if what has been said about *Geist* is accepted, is far reaching and profound and implies even more responsibility in assessing what normative procedures are put in place for the betterment of the lives of all. Once more, some of the detail of this is meted out within the critique of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

CHAPTER THREE: CONTEXTUALISATION

3.1 Enlightenment critique

There are three critical components of *DE* which I deem relevant for this study: instrumental rationality; the culture industry and; the tendency toward amorality which is also the ascendancy of unreason.[100] The tendency toward amorality/ascendancy of unreason are not unlinked to the instrumental function of reason assumed in enlightened thinking, and in fact necessarily lead out of this as we will come to see, where the final prognosis of contemporary society, what I have termed the ascendancy of unreason, may also be spoken of in terms of enlightenment's totalitarian nature to which the authors make reference already in the first section.[101] Despite the fact that of these three only the culture industry is explicitly labelled as a critical component in *DE*[102] aspects of all three are discernible as repetitive motifs throughout the work where such a method of

---

[100] The terming of these notions, save culture industry, which is a title-section in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (hereafter *DE*), are not taken directly from *DE*. The term instrumental rationality is a later coinage of Habermas (See Sherratt, Y. 1999. "The *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: A contemporary reading" in *History of the Human Sciences*. Vol.12, No.3, p.36). The authors of *DE* nevertheless use terms such as "technologically educated", "instrumentalization of science", and "functionalized reason", among others, to refer to the instrumental function reason assumes in enlightenment's contemporary manifestations. (*DE*, p.xvi, p.xv, p.69) The degenerative state of such thinking, which coincides with totalitarian capacity of contemporary culture, is also conveyed in subsequent concepts formulated by Frankfurt School theorists. Axel Honneth, for example, cites Horkheimer's use of "irrational organization" of society, Adorno's "administered world", Marcuse's "one-dimensional society" and Habermas' "colonization of the social life-world" while he himself speaks of reason's pathological state in lieu of its incapacity to provide self-awareness and thus the means by which to overcome the social malady such degeneration precipitates. See Honneth, A. 2004. "A Social Pathology of Reason: on the intellectual legacy of Critical Theory" in Rush, F. (Ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Critical Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 338-339. A fundamental difference in Horkheimer and Adorno's conception of the Enlightenment (ideally and actually) in relation to analytical conceptions of the Enlightenment post-Kant pertains to the role they ascribe to Reason where Reason is here understood in its Hegelian sense (as discussed above) as actualising rational structures in society and where, in the absence of these, Reason too, or the capacity to think rationally, necessarily dissipates.

[101] Enlightenment is totalitarian both in its desire for unity, which is actually desire for control, and in the means through which this unity is achieved, the scientific empirical method – "For the Enlightenment, whatever does not conform to the rule of computation and utility is suspect. So long as it can develop undisturbed by any outward repression, there is no holding it. In the process it treats its own ideas of human rights exactly as it does the older universals. Every spiritual resistance it encounters serves merely to increase its strength. Which means that enlightenment still recognizes itself even in old myths. Whatever myths the resistance may appeal to, by virtue of the very fact that they become arguments in the process of opposition, they acknowledge the principle of dissolvent rationality for which they reproach the Enlightenment. Enlightenment is totalitarian." *DE*, p. 6.

[102] See *DE*, pp.120-167.

explication is also consonant with the general style of the authors.[103] In line with this, I have not attempted an extraction of the three critical components which a separate discussion of each might entail but rather have tried to survey the work's content at large while inferring insights for each critical component as we proceed.

3.1.1 The Concept of Enlightenment[104]

By way of introduction, let us begin with a quote taken from the preface which serves to introduce not only the content of the first section, "The Concept of Enlightenment," but also one of the central theses contained throughout *DE*. The authors state:

> [t]he aporia which faced us in our work thus proved to be the first matter we had to investigate: the self-destruction of enlightenment. We have no doubt—and herein lies our *petitio principii*—that freedom in society is inseparable from enlightenment thinking. We believe we have perceived with equal clarity, however, that the very concept of that thinking, no less than the concrete historical forms, the institutions of society with which it is intertwined, already contains the germ of regression which is taking place everywhere today. If enlightenment does not assimilate reflection on this regressive moment, it seals its own fate. By leaving

---

[103] Commenting on the writing style of Adorno and Benjamin, Connerton makes the following suggestions (I have not read enough of Benjamin's work to assess the degree to which there is overlap of Connerton's assessment of Adorno on Benjamin, though to my mind, many of the characteristics Connerton assigns to Benjamin apply equally to the writing style employed in *DE*): "Common to both was the aversion to the idea of a 'system'. The literary form best suited to Adorno was the essay. His habits of thought had a natural affinity for other small forms: the aphorism, the aperçu, the sketch. His often epigrammatic power drew much of its source from the cherished sense of the unique specificity of things, a sense and a partisanship for the individual, for that which is not or cannot be integrated whose nature resists systematic form. In spite of his sometimes stilted intensity, his terseness served, and was intended to serve, a polemic end. Recognizing that ideology inhabited not only the substantive propositions of discourse but the very texture and sinew of language itself, he set out to reject – at times by literary shock-tactics – both the existentialist 'jargon of authenticity' and the journalistic habits of comfortingly facile assimilation. Benjamin's writings, too, are of great density; indeed he sometimes surpasses even Adorno in the brevity of his formulation. But at least one major source of his distinctive discourse lay elsewhere. His chosen mode was the commentary, for whose method and meaning he was indebted to the profound connection in Jewish theology between theological argument and language. Form radiated his characteristic stylistic devices. The 'open form' of his commentaries sought not so much to present something settled or 'contained', but rather to return again and again to a motif, prising open its aspects. The technique of reprise was necessary to a mode of presentation aimed at the filling-out of meanings; and it was by such indirections that he did not so much wish to impart an achieved knowledge but enacted the processes by which insights are earned." Connerton 1978, pp. 13-14.

[104] I have, somewhat cumbersomely, had to use two translations of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, given subtle differences in emphasis that both of these convey. Because the page numbering does not correspond between translations I have maintained the reference *DE* when citing the 1979 translation and *DE, 2002* for the 2002 translation. The reference details for both are provided in the bibliography.

consideration of the destructive side of progress to its enemies, thought in its headlong rush into pragmatism is forfeiting its sublating character, and therefore its relation to truth.[105]

Despite the decidedly negative characterisation which enlightenment thinking subsequently assumes in *DE*, the above comment indicates that the authors are not out-rightly opposed to enlightenment per se. Indeed they cannot be since the forms of reason and modes of critique which the authors adopt (in fact much of that which adheres to western civilisation generally) would have been impossible apart from Enlightenment.

The authors are thus supportive of the Enlightenment's initial goals. The grounds for their critique therefore lie in a kind of self-indictment, where they envisage enlightenment thinking as having failed to deliver on the goals initially set, where these in fact have manifested in their opposite. This reality was reflected for the authors in the context in which they wrote, namely during and immediately after World War II. The potency of their critique at the time lay in the demonstration that fascism and barbarism, terms thought conventionally to apply only to totalitarian regimes (Germany, Russia, Italy and Spain) were actually best realised in consumer capitalist societies, of which America, (to which Horkheimer and Adorno were exiled) was the leading example. Concomitant with such historical development is the loss of self-awareness and capacity for criticality, which had from the outset been supposed to have been the essence of Reason ideally conceived by Enlightenment.

Yet while the basis for their critique is demonstrated through appeal to concrete forms of social coercion, whether in intellectual spheres or social relationships, the work of *DE* recognises the ambiguity about the situation, where the fundamental dilemma facing western civilisation as essentially deeper, namely an inextricable (sometimes apparently inexplicable) link between consciousness, subjectivity, or enlightenment (whichever term one chooses to use) and aspects or elements of domination, where to apprehend intellectually already tends towards coercion. Hence the authors describe the relationship

---

[105] *DE 2002*, p. xvi. It might be pertinent to note, again in line with the general style of the authors, that any one of a number of quotes could be selected to indicate the authors' central premises.

between myth and enlightenment as dialectical where neither is valued absolutely but where the tendency in the dialectic's progression is rather towards more total forms of control and domination ultimately manifesting in entities such as instrumental rationality.

One of the central theses of the book, which the authors state in as early as the preface, is that "Myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology" thus testifying to the dialectic by which the two are tied.[106] The rationale underlying this is two-fold. On the one hand, it relates to the claim that the emergence of the subject (at the same time connected to notions of subjectivity generally) is from the earliest instance already an enlightenment and thus entails elements of domination. Subjectivity, though to lesser degrees, and in historically contingent forms, underlies myth just as it does enlightenment proper, hence the thesis that myth is already enlightenment. Yet this does not necessarily explain the link between subjectivity and domination.

The notion of subjectivity, or the emergence of self-consciousness, entails for the authors first estrangement from the subject's material surrounds, in as far as this requires introspection, and secondly, a degree exploitation or coercion, in as far as re-appropriation through apprehension of the material environment is required for the subject's reintegration.[107] Knowledge acquisition in relation to the self and the self's material surrounds becomes not an end in itself but is always aimed at the subject's integration in order to overcome the estrangement of the subject's fledgling state. Knowledge acquisition thus becomes inescapably a mechanism of control or coercion.

Yet as suggested by the designation of myth and enlightenment's relationship as dialectic, one is mistaken in conceiving this dynamic as present solely in modern subjects. Considered in the context of myth and myth generation, as the authors show through various historical examples, one can discern such subjectivity already at work in the earliest mythologies, implicit perhaps at earlier stages, but always gaining

---

[106] *DE 2002*, p. xviii.

[107] Underlying such a notion of self-estrangement is the influence Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* where Hegel here maps the progression of self-consciousness through history. See for example Hegel, G. W. F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Miller, A. V. (transl.). Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 111-119.

ascendancy, so that by the time of Homer's *Odyssey* it is already purveyed ideologically. What ties myth and enlightenment together then is their central aim – sufficient apprehension of the material environment for greater levels of appropriation or control.[108]

The second aspect underlying the claim that myth becomes enlightenment and enlightenment reverts to mythology relates to the authors' appeal to what seems to be the religious character of both myth and enlightenment, evinced in a system of gradated sacrifice which has marked enlightenment and myth's progression from the beginning. Once more this has manifested in both overtly cultic practice, which characterised the mythical modes of apprehension of former times, but predominates no less in enlightened and even modern forms of thought in disguised fashion.[109]

Indeed, enlightenment's ultimate progression is motivated by the insatiable desire to eliminate variables, either through excision which manifests in sacrifice, or inclusion and apprehension which involves the application of a dissolvent rationality. The cultic form of this expression has, by the time of enlightenment proper, merely traded place with the formalisation of rational logic which refuses admission of difference, subsuming everything under the unity of the scientific system.[110]

---

[108] "Myth intended report, naming, the narration of the Beginning; but also presentation, confirmation, explanation: a tendency that grew stronger with the recording and collection of myths. Narrative became didactic at an early stage. Every ritual includes the idea of activity as a determined process which magic can nevertheless influence. This theoretical element won independence in the earliest national epics. The myths, as the tragedians came upon them, are already characterized by the discipline and power that Bacon celebrated as the "right mark." In place of local spirits and demons there appeared heaven and its hierarchy; in place of the invocations of the magician and the tribe the distinct gradation of sacrifice and the labour of the unfree mediated through word of command. The Olympic deities are no longer directly identical with the elements, but signify them. In Homer Zeus represents the sky and the weather, Apollo controls the sun, and Helios and Eos are already shifting to allegorical function. The gods are distinguished from material elements as their quintessential concepts. From now on, being divides into the *logos* (which with the progress of philosophy contracts to the monad, to a mere point of reference), and into the mass of all things and creatures without. This single difference between existence proper [cf. *DE, 2002* – "man's own existence" p. 5] and reality engulfs all others. Without regard to distinction the world becomes subject to man." *DE*, p. 8.
[109] "The first chapter of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is an attempt to reconstruct the genealogy of sacrifice through an analysis of the concept of mimesis: first, in the order of animistic identification, then in magic, subsequently in myth, and finally in reason. At each of these stages the concept of mimesis is not understood as mere imitation, but as a form of mimicry or semblance that appropriates rather than replicates its object in non-identical similitude." Rabinbach, p. 139.
[110] "In advance, the Enlightenment recognizes as being and occurrence only what can be apprehended in unity: its ideal is the system from which all and everything follows. Its rationalist and empiricist versions

Both of these claims, while containing different emphases and relating to specific socio-historic phenomena, are nevertheless linked if one accepts that the motivation behind myth and enlightenment's progression is a will to dominance. While the emergence of subjectivity necessarily entails abstraction, and thus estrangement, from the material environment, and so is perhaps less overtly oppressive, the mythical violence which seeks the 'extrication of the incommensurable' is still the outward manifestation and logical result of the emergence of subjectivity, where the subject is defined, in terms of modern science, always in contradistinction to an externally-constituted nature.

Fear of the unknown motivates this in both cases where the transition affected by the development of mythical modes of thought to enlightened reasoning is ultimately a vanquishing of this Unknown which was all the while enlightenment's aim, not only for want of control, but precisely because such control and domination meant total apprehension and end to the Unknown.[111] The authors maintain that enlightenment's tendency is both self-destructive and totalitarian, which extend both to the concrete forms of life lived out by subjects, as well as to the modes of thought which determine these.[112]

---

do not part company on that point. Even though the individual schools may interpret the axioms differently, the structure of scientific unity has always been the same. Bacon's postulate of *una scientia universalis*, whatever the number of fields of research, is as inimical to the unassignable as Leibniz's *mathesis universalis* is to discontinuity. The multiplicity of forms is reduced to position and arrangement, history to fact, things to matter. According to Bacon, too, degrees of universality provide an unequivocal logical connection between first principles and observational judgements…Formal logic was the major school of unified science. It provided the Enlightenment thinkers with the schema of the calculability of the world. The mythologizing equation of Ideas with numbers in Plato's last writings expresses the longing of all demythologization: number became the canon of the Enlightenment…To the Enlightenment, that which does not reduce to numbers, and ultimately to the on, becomes illusion; modern positivism writes it off as literature. Unity is the slogan from Parmenides to Russell. The destruction of gods and qualities alike is insisted upon." *DE*, pp.7-8.

[111] "Humans believe themselves free of fear when there is no longer anything unknown. This has determined the path of demythologization, of enlightenment, which equates the living with the nonliving as myth had equated the nonliving with the living. Enlightenment is mythical fear radicalized. The pure immanence of positivism, its ultimate product, is nothing other than a form of universal taboo. Nothing is allowed to remain outside, since the very idea of "outside" is the real source of fear." *DE 2002*, p.11.

[112] "As a linguistically expressed totality, whose claim to truth suppresses the older mythic belief, the national religion or patriarchal solar myth is itself an Enlightenment with which the philosophic form can compare itself on the same level. And now it has its requital. Mythology itself set off the unending process of enlightenment in which ever and again, with the inevitability of necessity, every specific theoretic view succumbs to the destructive criticism that it is only a belief—until even the very notions of spirit, of truth and, indeed, of enlightenment itself, have become animistic magic. The principle of fatal necessity, which brings low the heroes of myth and derives as a logical consequence from the pronouncement of the oracle,

3.1.2 Odysseus or Myth and Enlightenment

The second section of *DE* "Excursus I: Odysseus or Myth and Enlightenment" attempts to provide a case study of the dialectic introduced in the first section through a discussion of Homer's *Odyssey*. Despite its apparently mythic content, the authors see the *Odyssey* as a precursor to bourgeois ideology. In as far as the emergence of the subject is not only discernable here but exonerated by the genre of epic, where the formalisation of the mythic system, the Greek pantheon, was already a mark towards discursive logic which the authors had intimated in the first section, the protagonist of the epic, Odysseus, becomes the earliest template of bourgeois subjectivity.[113]

Odysseus is portrayed as struggling to overcome the material surrounds with which he is confronted, represented by the gods and nature, which also provide a means of control in as far as assimilating himself within his material world is concerned.[114] The analysis therefore serves to reinforce the central claims of *DE* about enlightenment rationality.[115]

does not merely, when refined to the stringency of formal logic, rule in every rationalistic system of Western philosophy, but itself dominates the series of systems which begins with the hierarchy of the gods and, in a permanent twilight of the idols, hands down an identical content: anger against insufficient righteousness. Just as the myths already realize enlightenment, so enlightenment with every step becomes more deeply engulfed in mythology. It receives all its matter from the myths, in order to destroy them; and even as a judge it comes under the mythic curse. It wishes to extricate itself from the process of fate and retribution, while exercising retribution on that process." *DE*, pp. 11-12.

[113]"The distance of subject from object, the presupposition of abstraction, is founded on the distance from things which the ruler attains by means of the ruled…[where T]he generality of the ideas developed by discursive logic, power in the sphere of the concept, is built on the foundation of power in reality. The superseding of the old diffuse notions of the magical heritage by conceptual unity expresses a condition of life defined by the freeborn citizen and articulated by command. The self which learned about order and subordination through the subjugation of the world soon equated truth in general with classifying thought, without whose fixed distinctions it cannot exist." *DE 2002*, pp. 9-10.

[114] The authors state with regard to Odysseus – "the hero of the adventures turns out to be the prototype of the bourgeois individual, whose concept originates in the unwavering self-assertion of which the protagonist driven to wander the earth is the primeval model. Finally, the epic, which in terms of the philosophy of history is the counterpart of the novel, exhibits features reminiscent of that genre, and the venerable cosmos of the Homeric world, a world charged with meaning, reveals itself as an achievement of classifying reason, which destroys myth by virtue of the same rational order which is used to reflect it." *DE 2002*, pp. 35-36.

[115] "The awakening of the subject is paid for by the acknowledgement of power as the principle of all relations. In view of the unity of this *ratio*, the divorcement between God and man dwindles to the degree of irrelevancy to which unswervable reason has drawn attention since even the earliest critique of Homer. The creative god and the systematic spirit are alike as rulers of nature. Man's likeness to God consists in sovereignty over existence, in the countenance of the lord and master, and in command…Myth turns into enlightenment, and nature into mere objectivity. Men pay for the increase of their power with alienation

Subjectivity, by itself, as coming onto the scene and as emerging as an historically contingent entity, is already an enlightenment, already entails alienation and domination through abstraction (both within its self and its material environment). Yet despite their common origin there is still a fundamental change in the quality or character of thinking which accompanies mythical modes of thought and Enlightenment proper. Myth still maintained a belief in the subjective properties of nature such that, though nature was 'other than' or foreign, and perhaps because of this, it was also revered. The scientific paradigm, which gains ascendancy through enlightenment thinking, turns man into sole subject, exclusive of nature, where the latter is entirely objectified.

So although the motives of man in relation to nature have not changed – he still seeks betterment or comfort through the influence of nature – nature is now devoid of intrinsic value in becoming mere specimen. By a projection of subjective properties onto nature, which resulted at the same time in a perception of natural forces as potentially hostile, myth had always guaranteed its own safety as well as that of nature. Yet through the programme of demythologisation science ultimately does away with this thinking in the unmasking of nature as anthropomorphism.[116] A rise in the level of subjectivity is paired with an inverse devaluing of the subjective properties of nature.[117] The following quote

from that over which they exercise their power. Enlightenment behaves towards things as a dictator toward men. He knows them in so far as he can manipulate them. The man of science knows things in so far as he can make them. In this way their potentiality is turned to his own ends. In the metamorphosis the nature of things, as a substratum of domination, is revealed as always the same. This identity constitutes the unity of nature." *DE*, p. 9.

[116] "Enlightenment has always taken the basic principle of myth to be anthropomorphism, the projection onto nature of the subjective. In this view, the supernatural, spirits and demons, are mirror images of men who allow themselves to be frightened by natural phenomena. Consequently the many mythic figures can all be brought to a common denominator, and reduced to the human subject. Oedipus' answer to the Sphinx's riddle: "It is man!" is the Enlightenment stereotype repeatedly offered as information, irrespective whether it is faced with a piece of objective intelligence, a bare schematization, fear of evil powers, or hope of redemption." *DE*, pp. 6-7.

[117] "The shaman's rites were directed to the wind, the rain, the serpent without, or the demon or the sick man, but not to materials or specimens. Magic was not ordered by one, identical spirit: it changed like the cultic masks which were supposed to accord with the various spirits. Magic is utterly untrue, yet in it domination is not yet negated by transforming itself into the pure truth and acting as the very ground of the world that has become subject to it. The magician imitates demons, in order to frighten them or to appease them, he behaves frighteningly or makes gestures of appeasement. Even though his task is impersonation, he never conceives of himself as does the civilized man for whom the unpretentious preserves of the happy hunting-grounds become the unified cosmos, the inclusive concept for all possibilities of plunder." *DE*, pp. 9-10. "The world of magic retained the distinctions whose traces have disappeared even in linguistic form. The multitudinous affinities between existents are suppressed by the single relation between the subject

serves to demonstrate the subtle yet profound shift undergone in the development of later forms of enlightenment thinking:

> On the magical plane, dream and image were not mere signs for the thing in question, but were bound up with it by similarity or names. The relation is not one of intention but of relatedness. Like science, magic pursues aims, but seeks to achieve them by mimesis—not by progressively distancing itself from the object. It is not grounded in the "sovereignty of ideas," which the primitive, like the neurotic is said to ascribe to himself; there can be no "over-evaluation of mental processes as against reality" where there is no radical distinction between thoughts and reality. The "unshakeable confidence in the possibility of world domination," which Freud anachronistically ascribes to magic, corresponds to realistic world domination only in terms of a more skilled science. The replacement of the milieu-bound practices of the medicine man by all-inclusive industrial technology required first of all the autonomy of ideas in regard to objects that was achieved in the reality-adjusted ego.[118]

3.1.3 Instrumental rationality

Instrumental rationality not only forms the logic of the scientific paradigm, the embodiment of contemporary enlightenment thinking, but also mitigates against, and ultimately prevents, self-critical reflection thus negating the principles of thought for which the Enlightenment initially stood. Though instrumental reasoning manifests in both mythical and enlightened modes of thought it gains historical precedence subsequent to Kant's *First Critique*.

The context of the *Critique of Pure Reason* relates to the debate, prevalent within the philosophy of the 18th century, between empiricist and rationalist camps. Put simply, empiricists had claimed that humans were entirely conditioned in their thinking where knowledge was seen as the product of experience (a problem, in the context of a post-Reformation Europe, not only from a religious, but also existential, or more broadly cultural, perspective since it seemed to undermine the basis of objective knowledge generally). Absolute and universal knowledge was, according to the empiricists,

---

who bestows meaning and the meaningless object, between rational significance and the chance vehicle of significance." *DE*, pp. 10-11
[118] *DE*, p. 11.

unattainable. The rationalists on the other hand maintained that there were fundamental and universal ideas innate to all humans at birth, hence we could be assured, to some degree, of the objectively (real) epistemological foundations for human society.

The sum total of Kant's response, if we are permitted to bypass the somewhat more meticulous route by which he arrives here, is what he terms a 'Copernican revolution' which amounts basically to a thorough interrogation of the 'framework of categories'. Underlying this is the fundamental assumption, which Kant shared with the empiricists, that immediate knowledge of the material world is impossible. The framework of categories is the term Kant used to describe the system of concepts and ideas by which humans order the data we receive from the outside, sensuous world. Where Kant differed from the empiricists, and hence the terming of his move as Copernican, hence also why Kant cannot be seen strictly as either empiricist or rationalist, is in his assertion that though we interpret the world through the framework, which is internal to our thinking, the fact that there is any correspondence at all between the material world and our perception of it which results in coherent mental representations (thought, by Kant, to be common to all) is sufficient basis to infer the logical ordering of the material universe.

Meyer Greene, in his introduction to Kant's *First Critique*, is helpful in explaining what is involved in Kant's 'revolutionary' turn:

[I]t is obvious that Kant is defining the terms 'object' and 'objective' in a new way. Descartes had conceived of reality in radically dualistic fashion. Thought and the spatial world of objects were for him wholly independent of one another. Objects somehow impressed themselves upon the mind, and our ideas of objects were true and adequate to the extent to which they corresponded to, or represented, them with fidelity. This is the 'doctrine of representative perception' in terms of which we tend, even today, to conceive of the epistemological problem. To avoid the insoluble perplexities incident to this doctrine Kant approached the problem of knowledge from a different angle. His starting point was our actual experience of sense perception which differs so radically from our 'inner', subjective experiences such as day-dreaming, controlled imagination and reasoning. Now what, he asks, is the precise difference between these two types of experience? …The crucial difference between our 'subjective' and 'objective' experiences can be defined only in terms of our ability to control or determine the

temporal and spatial pattern of what sensuously presents itself to us. When I *imagine* a moving ship, I can picture it to myself as sailing up-stream or down-stream, rapidly or slowly; when I *imagine* a chair I can alter its shape at will and freely determine its position in an imagined room. But when I *perceive* a moving ship or chair, the spatial and temporal pattern of the object of my awareness is determined for me and I must accept it for what it is. What I perceive, accordingly, is objective to me, for in the act of perception I am in the presence of that which has a character of its own. This spatio-temporal character, in turn, I can apprehend only in terms of the *concepts* of substance, causality and the other schemata.[119]

What this amounts to, if we focus on the example of the ship, is to say that the spatio-temporal variation which I perceive in the ship's representation is not determined by any subjective function or property, since this data is supplied externally – whether the ship moves up- or down-stream, rapidly or slowly is necessarily independent of the will, as Meyer Greene puts it. Yet the categories of causality and magnitude (or substance), supplied by the intellect, themselves allow the inference of direction and speed where, without them, the data pertaining to this variation would remain unintelligible. Thus Kant ingeniously occupies a middle position between the empiricist and rationalist extremes.

Despite his ingenuity in apparently having provided the foundation for objective knowledge, Kant's system raises certain internal contradictions known as the antinomies. In themselves these pose no threat to the coherence of Kant's postulations for the grounds of objective knowledge yet, like all philosophers of his day, Kant was not concerned merely with a theory of knowledge acquisition, but sought to extend his system to ethical and aesthetic spheres where indeed, the *Second* and *Third* critiques were aimed at precisely this. In terms of the development of suitable social ethic for example, which Kant sought through extension of his philosophic principles, two problems arose which he needed to overcome.

Firstly, if Kant's premises are adhered to, the notion of God proves incompatible with the law-like categories governing the phenomenal realm of experience, a prospect which, in

---

[119] Meyer Greene, T. (Ed.) 1929. *Kant: Selections*. The Modern Student's Library. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. pp. xliv-xlv.

the still religiously-charged climate of his day, was a serious flaw. Secondly, from a more-strictly ethical point of view, autonomy itself, upon which morality is predicated, is also forfeited. Causal necessity, a central category governing the realm of phenomenal experience, precludes a conception of God whose essence in theory must remain uncaused, while humans, existing as historically particular subjects within the phenomenal realm, are likewise bound by the laws which govern this realm, and so, with regard to causal necessity, are limited in their capacity to exercise freedom.

Kant's solution to these antinomies, by which he aimed to safeguard both the concepts of God and morality (freedom/autonomy) was the proposal of the separation of reality into two distinct realms, the *noumenal* and the *phenomenal*. The concept of God, and furthermore the notion of free will, necessary to any ethical system, cannot said Kant, adhere apart from the supposition of this distinction. The issue is captured succinctly in Meyer Greene's discussion of the antinomies of the *First Critique*:

> All natural events, it has already been shown, are subject to the law of causal necessity. Now man, by virtue of his physical nature, is part and parcel of this phenomenal world; as such, accordingly, he must be wholly subject to its laws. The problem therefore arises as to whether he can in any sense be judged to be free. Again, since every phenomenal event must have an antecedent cause, God cannot be thought of as the first member of this causal series, for, so defined, He too would have to have a cause. Can God then be in any sense related to the world of phenomenal events, taken in its entirety? To solve these problems Kant…falls back on his distinction between phenomenal and noumenal reality. If the world of nature is the only world there is, no place can be found for God and human freedom. If, on the other hand, a noumenal world exists, man may (provided his nature, though partly phenomenal, is also partly noumenal) be able to identify himself with a noumenal law of freedom; and God (conceived of as a purely noumenal Being) may be the ultimate or noumenal ground of all phenomenal appearance. Pure 'speculative' reason can conceive of such a possibility; further than this, however, it cannot go because, once and for all, man's sensuous experience of phenomenal fact can never provide the data for positive belief in a noumenal realm of value. 'Speculative' reason, however, in its insistence upon the possibility of such a noumenal realm, has provided a

place in its metaphysical scheme of things for whatever aspects of noumenal reality may be revealed to man in his moral, religious or aesthetic experiences.[120]

Put simplistically, the role and realm of speculative reasoning is therefore necessarily maintained, within Kant's system, on a purely formal level, with the noumenal realm as a necessary postulate if Kant is not to dispense with either the concept of God or morality. Nevertheless, both of these concepts remain outside the realm of legitimate knowledge where their worth and substance can never be objectively corroborated as objects of experience in the phenomenal world can.

The implications of this are two-fold. The radical separation of subject and object within the scientific paradigm entails an epistemological break between reason and its self-critical capacity, which had always been protected to some extent by speculative reasoning. Because the actants of the epistemological equation are defined solely in terms of the sovereign subject and inanimate objects of material extraction, the knowing process itself is thwarted and stultified. Knowledge generation becomes a one-way channel in that that which is attained serves only the benefit of subject, while the object is defined solely in instrumental terms. Science, loosing its speculative function likewise loses the capacity for self-correction, or even self-awareness (the essential feature of any critical inquiry). The object of science becomes specimen, pursued and investigated through the empirical method solely for instrumental purposes. Acquisition of knowledge becomes inseparable from domination over that about which knowledge is attained.[121]

---

[120] Meyer Greene, T. (Ed.) 1929. *Kant: Selections*. The Modern Student's Library. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Excerpt taken from Meyer Greene's "Introduction" to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. (pp.l-li).

[121] "In magic there is specific representation. What happens to the enemy's spear, hair or name, also befalls the individual; the sacrificial animal is massacred instead of the god. Substitution in course of sacrifice marks a step toward discursive logic. Even though the hind offered up for the daughter and the lamb for the first-born, still had to have specific qualities, they already represented the species. They already exhibited the non-specificity of the example. But the holiness of the *hic et nunc*, the uniqueness of the chosen one into which the representative enters, radically marks it off, and makes it unfit for exchange. Science prepares the end of this state of affairs. In science there is no specific representation: and if there are no sacrificial animals there is no god. Representation is exchanged for the fungible—universal interchangeability. An atom is smashed not in representation but as a specimen of matter, and the rabbit does not represent but, as a mere example, is virtually ignored by the zeal of the laboratory. Because the distinctions in functional science are so fluid that everything is subsumed in the same matter, the scientific object is petrified, and the fixed ritual of former times appears flexible because it attributed the other to the

Secondly, there are implications for the realm of ethics. Though he has seemingly established grounds for the pursuit of objective knowledge through his distinction of *phenomenal* and *noumenal* realms, Kant has delimited the possibility for the objective verification of morality which, according to his system, necessarily falls within the *noumenal* realm, about which knowledge is merely speculative. God and morality are irreconcilable with phenomenal experience since they cannot be subject to the categories by which such experience is ordered – causal necessity precludes both the notion of God and individual autonomy. Though Kant seeks vouchsafe morality through the categorical imperative, empirically or practically any basis for this is compromised given the irreconcilability of the *noumenal* and *phenomenal* realms.[122]

In the Second Excursus, the self-validating logic of Kant's system namely, the fact that the legitimacy of the grounds for objective knowledge are located solely in correspondence between the framework and data of the external, phenomenal world is explicated by Horkheimer and Adorno.[123] As the authors show, not only is the logic of

---

one." *DE*, p. 10 "Science has no awareness of itself; it is merely a tool. Enlightenment, however, is the philosophy which equates truth with the scientific system. Kant's attempt to justify this identity, which was still made with a philosophical intention, gave rise to concepts which have no meaning for science, since they are not simply instructions for performing manipulations according to certain rules. The notion of the self-understanding of science conflicts with the concept of science itself. Kant's work transcends experience as mere operation, and for that reason—and in accordance with its own principles—is rejected as dogmatic by enlightenment today. In confirming the scientific system as the embodiment of truth—the result arrived at by Kant—thought sets the seal on its own insignificance, because science is a technical operation, as far removed from reflection on its own objectives as is any other form of labour under the pressure of the system." *DE, 2002*, p. 66.

[122] Speculative reason on the other hand, or philosophy as conceived within the Continental tradition, holds reason as occupying positions of both subject and object. Hence Hegel's assimilation of Reason with the Absolute, where the Absolute is that within which subject and object cohere or identify. Hegel's absolute idealism is monistic in that "it denies any substantial distinction between the subjective and objective, the ideal and the real, the mental and the physical, and affirms instead that they are distinct attributes of one and the same substance." (Beiser 2005, pp. 65-66). Furthermore, "absolute idealism is the doctrine that the ideal and the real, the subjective and objective, are one and the same in the absolute. In other words, it is the doctrine that the absolute consists in subject-object identity." (Beiser 2005, p. 61).

[123] "Reason is "a faculty of deducing the particular from the universal." According to Kant, the homogeneity of the general and the particular is guaranteed by the "schematism of pure understanding," by which he means the unconscious activity of the intellectual mechanism which structures perception in accordance with the understanding. The intelligibility which subjective judgement discovers in any matter is imprinted on that matter by the intellect as an objective quality before it enters the ego. Without such a schematism—in short, without the intellectual element in perception—no impression would conform to the corresponding concept, no category to the particular example; thought, not to speak of the system toward

such an approach self-validating, but it entails a delimitation of whatever is not verifiable within this relationship.

Herbert Marcuse, in his *One-Dimensional Man*, is able to indicate some of the logic of such an empirically-oriented rationality with reference to P. W. Bridgman's analysis of length.[124] Marcuse here maintains that the concept of length, taken as one example within the empirical paradigm, attains its substantive content through its operational function, where the latter is none other than the determination of length. Length therefore attains its substantive content by virtue of the fact that things are long and can be measured. Apart from its empirically verifiable component, length as a concept is meaningless, indeed, it cannot exist. The relationship of the concept to material utility, to empirical verifiability, apart from which it is meaningless, demonstrates also the ontologically and epistemologically formative relationship existing between the 'categories' and the observable world, where such a relationship not only prescribes what is cognitively valid, but thereby also constitutes reality substantively. Accordingly, that which cannot be verified through empirical method also has no real basis.

3.1.4 Juliette or Enlightenment and Morality

The third section of *DE*, titled "Excursus II: Juliette or Enlightenment and Morality," is a demonstration of the practical out-workings of Kant's system by way of Juliette, a fictional character of the work of Marquis de Sade. Parodied through exaggerated debauchery, the categorical imperative is taken to its logical extreme in the form of an indictment on the 'reasonableness' of Kant's system. The potency of Juliette's attack lies

---

which everything is directed, would be devoid of unity. To establish this unity is the conscious task of science." *DE 2002*, p. 64.

[124] "We evidently know what we mean by length if we can tell what the length of any and every object is, and for the physicist nothing more is required. To find the length of an object, we have to perform certain physical operations. The concept of length is therefore fixed when the operations by which length is measured are fixed: that is, the concept of length involves as much and nothing more than the set of oprations by which length is determined. In general, we mean by any concept nothing more than a set of operations: *the concept is synonymous with the corresponding set of operations*…To adopt the operational point of view involves much more than a mere restriction of the sense in which we understand 'concept,' but means a far-reaching change in all our habits of thought, in that we shall no longer permit ourselves to use as tools in our thinking concepts of which we cannot give an adequate account in terms of operations." Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, p.7

in Juliette's faithful observance of the logical strictures of Kant's system – she performs her acts of disobedience by imposing on them the rational order Kant celebrated thus evincing the instrumental function reason assumes within this setup, and ultimately revealing the failure of contemporary society, under-girded by enlightenment thinking, to provide anything like a social ethic. The result is an ironic protest given that Kant is at once seen as genitor of enlightenment morality and the cause of its downfall.

Reason doesn't automatically tend to moral anarchy (though in the course of bourgeois history this is its prescribed path) rather the bourgeois propagandists must cover up this fact and attempt to base moral impetus on something other than self-preservation (which is actually rational) since, though they know this to be false, they cannot afford complete civil degeneration. The anarchy enforced by science however is total and absolute, though still organised, where the locus of anarchic impulse essentially emanates from the subject and so is exacted on the subject.

Juliette recognises the truth of the matter and, in a form of protest, celebrates the logical outcome of reason's tripartite alliance with moral inclination and self-preservation namely, moral licentiousness resulting in the ultimate domination of one fellow being by another. However, in her accession of pleasure in such endeavours she betrays a vestige of the old heritage. Pleasure as principle has affinities to nature as anarchic regression. While demonstrating the hypocrisy of bourgeois civilisation, this regression is not entirely wholesome. The venerable qualities of the bourgeois subjectivity formulated early on – love, fidelity, integrity – are likewise sacrificed on the altar of Juliette's misdeeds. Contained in the supposed protest then is an implicit acceptance of the outcome of the system's internal logic, namely a society devoid of love.

The authors' thesis therefore, presupposes in the first two pages of the Second Excursus that science, reason and enlightenment thinking posit self-preservation as both goal and orientation of the system.[125] The paradox, as the authors go on to explain, is that the

---

[125] *DE 2002*, pp. 63-65. "The system's principle's are those of self-preservation. Immaturity [i.e. failure to apply reason independently] amounts to the inability to survive."

ultimate fate of the system consists in the opposite, enlightenment's self-destruction. Reference is made to Kant's conception of a utopia based on the "conscious solidarity of the whole" where the "whole represents the idea of true universality, utopia".[126] In such a theoretical construct ideas such as the categorical imperative can be implemented where one person's needs are subjected to those of another and in favour of the collective, making the idea of a collective self-preservation perhaps more plausible. Yet in reality the "subjects [of Enlightenment], the bearers of one and the same reason, are in real opposition to each other" where the "true nature of the schematism…finally turns out…to be in the interest of industrial society."[127]

Once this process has been set in motion it is difficult to reverse. Thought, or any kind of critique raised in objection to the system is rendered obsolete by the system's internal logic: "[i]n confirming the scientific system as the embodiment of truth—the result arrived at by Kant—thought sets the seal on its own insignificance, because science is a technical operation, as far removed from reflection on its own objectives as is any other form of labour under the pressure of the system."[128] Not only does this leave no ground for protest, but paves the way for organised anarchy. Kant treated "moral forces as facts" yet still recognised the logical benefit of a categorical imperative.[129] Any hint of moral inclination is in fact obliterated by enlightenment seeing the only worthwhile pursuit as rational formalisation – domination as the rigid classification of the material universe.

If reason, in its instrumentalisation through its pairing with technological capitalism, tends to domination, Kant's categorical imperative is reversed – instead of benevolence toward one's fellow being, to be praised by the system, one should seek to dominate wholeheartedly (à la Sade). But pleasure as an end betrays a vestige of the older mythological order (or as a pining after this) for it is in pleasure that people identify with nature, even if this is demonstrated in a perverse, sadistic fashion, i.e. as the extirpation of the perceivably week, those parties which themselves display the qualities of nature – the

---

[126] *DE 2002*, p. 65.
[127] *DE 2002*, p. 65.
[128] *DE 2002*, p. 66.
[129] *DE 2002*, p. 67.

potential to be dominated. The extirpation of the weak is thus unconscious willingness for dissipation, identification with chaotic, and thus a revealing of mythological principles.

Despite this, in enlightenment's manifestation, organisation becomes the end, where what matters "more than pleasure itself, is the busy pursuit of pleasure, its organization" and "harmony and perfection" become the "criteria for human endeavour or within the form of the system" – reason becomes "purposiveness without purpose" and "planning considered as an end in itself".[130] – "The market economy it [i.e. bourgeois philosophy] unleashed was at once the prevailing form of reason and the power which ruined reason…[where t]he Romantic reactionaries only expressed what the bourgeois themselves had realized: that freedom in their world tended toward organized anarchy."[131] "[R]eason posits no substantial goals, all affects are equally remote to it"[132] and "[i]f all affects are of equal value, then self-preservation, which dominates the form of the system in any case, seems to offer the most plausible maxims for action"[133] such that "self-preservation…[becomes] the reified drive of each individual citizen and prove[s] to be a destructive natural force no longer distinguishable from self-destruction."[134] The authors go on to say that "despite feeble moralistic attempts to propagate humanity as the most rational means, self-preservation remains unencumbered by a utopia denounced as myth. For those at the top, shrewd self-preservation means the fascist struggle for power, and for individuals it means adaptation to injustice at any price."[135]

The net result of this is that forms of cultural expression are relegated to the realm of feeling, and thereby are non-compatible with reason, indeed, reason is hostile towards them.[136] Furthermore, in such a society, there exists a tendency to hold in contempt those (aspects of) races or people groups which exemplify pitifulness which at the same time suggests the potential to be dominated while these tendencies always increase

---

[130] *DE 2002*, pp.69-70.
[131] *DE 2002*, pp.70-71.
[132] *DE 2002*, p.70.
[133] *DE 2002*, p.71.
[134] *DE 2002*, p.71.
[135] *DE 2002*, p.71.
[136] *DE 2002*, p.72.

proportionally to the "advancement" of society.[137] Finally, "the extirpation of animism," which the Enlightenment first aimed at, becomes fully and actually realised in the relegation of whole peoples to the gas chamber.

Enlightenment's antiauthoritarian impulse becomes its "own antithesis, the agency opposed to reason: its abolition of all absolute ties allows power to decree and manipulate any ties which suit its purposes." Enlightenment reveals "authority and hierarchy…as lies" and "strives to undermine any order which has become repressive".[138] Its absolute adherence to this principle thus proves its self-destructive tendency. In striving earnestly to stamp out authoritarian impulse it becomes authoritarian and furthermore, in its adherence to the abolition of absolutes becomes ultimately dissolvent. Brute power, which is comparatively arbitrary, necessarily becomes the order of the day. Morality is seen as a vestige of the old pantheon, a belief that cannot be proven. Belief in general, values, virtues all must succumb to the totalising logic of the system.

Sade's work is "an intransigent critique of [such] practical reason" where "Juliette…embodies…intellectual pleasure in regression…the joy of defeating civilization with its own weapons. She loves systems and logic" and "wields the instrument of rational thought with consummate skill" – Juliette's self-mastery stands "in the same relation to Kant's as the special application to the principle."[139] In such a schematisation "[t]o be free of the stab of conscience is as essential to formalistic reason as to be free of love or hate."[140] Faithful application of such reason therefore requires one to be completely devoid of emotion; one must be devoid of remorse especially which is useful only in the subjugated as a control mechanism. The dominant are instead to maintain a strict apathy, while this arises in any case concomitantly with the bourgeois class legitimising the private sphere as a valid form of existence.[141]

---

[137] *DE 2002*, p.72.
[138] *DE 2002*, pp.73-74.
[139] *DE 2002*, p.74.
[140] *DE 2002*, p.75.
[141] *DE 2002*, p.76.

Apathy is the opposite of pity/empathy, signalling again the transvaluation of values by the system.[142] Religion had long since celebrated pity/empathy based on the belief that suffering should not be, i.e. as a witness to its un-naturalness, thus implicitly protesting its presence. However, this protest was always incomplete and thus complicit with the system – "Pity…conflicts with justice…It confirms the rule of inhumanity by…limiting the abolition of injustice to fortuitous love of one's neighbour…[and so]accepts as unalterable the law of universal estrangement which it would like to alleviate."[143] Yet as a remnant of protest, however incomplete, pity must be stamped out and, as a reminder to the dominant of their affinity to the oppressed, in short their humanity, it faces inevitable vilification.[144]

This together with the moral implications of the system's internal logic, though for Nietzsche curtailed from the private sphere, also paves the way for fascism.[145] Although this "terrible pleasure in destruction…[and]taste for cruelty…proclaimed by Nietsche, has also taken hold of Juliette"[146] Juliette differs from the former in her application, indeed celebration, of the ethic within the private sphere. Reference is made to Christianity's "dead God" and the transvaluation of values which Juliette draws as a consequence and seeks to put into practice.[147] While "Nietzsche is aware of the still mythical nature of pleasure" Juliette seeks to "rescue pleasure by rejecting love in its bourgeois form as devotion".[148] In seeking such transvaluation and celebration of that which Christianity had previously forbade Juliette nevertheless is complicit in ordaining the outcome of the system's own logic – "This dissociation, which mechanizes pleasure and distorts longing into deception, attacks love at its core."[149] The attempt by Christianity "to compensate the suppression of sexuality ideologically by the veneration of women" is annulled by "theoretically emancipated pleasure".[150]

---

[142] *DE 2002*, p.76.
[143] *DE 2002*, p.80.
[144] *DE 2002*, p.81.
[145] *DE 2002*, p.79.
[146] *DE 2002*, p.77.
[147] *DE 2002*, p.76.
[148] *DE 2002*, p.83.
[149] *DE 2002*, p.85.
[150] *DE 2002*, p.87.

"Rather than with tenderness, pleasure makes its pact with cruelty, and sexual love becomes what according to Nietzsche it always was: "in its means, war; and at its basis the mortal hatred of the sexes". "With both male and female…love, or sexual attraction, is originally and preeminently 'sadic'; it is positively gratified by the infliction of pain; it is as cruel as hunger.""[151] There is ultimately little difference between the hypothetical implications of the ethic of Nietzsche and Sade and the real ones of German fascism, yet "whereas the unconscious colossus of real existence, subjectless capitalism, inflicts its destruction blindly, the deludedly rebellious subject [Nietzsche and Sade?] is willing to see that destruction as its fulfilment, and together with the biting cold it emits toward human beings misused as things, it also radiates the perverted love, which in the world of things, takes the place of love in its immediacy."[152]

In Enlightenment thought, everything is reduced to specimen – the only thing standing in contradistinction being the objective observer – the scientist. Yet with science generally, even this position is abstracted and the status of the scientist revoked, being expropriated by the system as a whole, for what becomes the end of science is not merely knowledge but technical knowledge embodied concretely in technology, its objectification. It subsists in this latter of necessity since, apart from it, it is not realised. Yet because it is also invested with power through labour and is really the material manifestation, or product of, sensuous activity, it possesses a dual power – both that attributed through the divestment of alienated labour and – in its technological capacity, by this stage which has assumed metaphysical status – as the embodiment of truth.

Technology becomes then the living force possessing the illusory quality of this force and of truth. In relation to Reason traditionally conceived technology shares only one similarity – the rational organisation of parts to meet the end of the whole. Concepts such as freedom, equality and brotherly affection are as far removed from technology, and thus the new embodiment of truth, as they are from the capitalist system as a whole, the end of

---

[151] *DE 2002*, p.89.
[152] *DE 2002*, p.89.

which, though certainly mere generation, is ultimately removed and irrelevant and since removed or irrelevant, the compositional/compartmental/particular aspects, given that they are most ready-to-hand, take precedence in dictating the essence of whatever subjectivity is still participatory, the overriding principle of which becomes purposive organisation. But where rational organisation is substituted, in the modern scientific paradigm, for truth technology attains the status as the ultimate realisation of this. Thought, or reason, thus forfeits "its sublating character, and therefore, relation to truth."

3.1.5 Elements of Anti-Semitism

"Elements of Anti-Semitism: Limits of the Enlightenment," the final section of the work and, though a later addition, has since been proposed as a hermeneutical key through which to interpret the work as a whole,[153] this in light of its apparently incongruous placement within the larger work as well as the nature of its subject matter. It is not difficult to justify this shift however if one follows the thesis contained throughout the book and its implications regarding the regression of Reason.

The concomitant tendency toward amorality which this brings about is plausibly demonstrated in something as appalling as the Holocaust. For scholars like Rabinbach however, and perhaps also for Adorno and Horkheimer, there is a deeper-lying pathogen which functions as the logic of gradated sacrifice which had marked the system's progression from the beginning and which, ultimately, is manifested in the extermination

---

[153] See, for example, Anson Rabinbach in ""Why Were the Jews Sacrificed?" The Place of Antisemitism in Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*" who states that "[T]he death of Benjamin and the arrival of his philosophical testament provided Horkeimer and Adorno, as Wiggerhaus notes, with a kind of "guiding star" around which the constellation of themes – the fate of the exile, the fate of the Jews, and catastrophe of civilization – that ultimately make up the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* could be organized." (Rabinbach, p.137) And later – "Those events, [Adorno] wrote, "make a mockery of the construction of immanence as endowed with a meaning radiated by an affirmatively positive transcendence." In other words, the "inverse theology" of non-identity, elaborated in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and almost all of Adorno's essays, underwent an important change with the discovery of antisemitism as revealing the essential truth of the philosophy of non-difference or homogeneity. By reflecting on antisemitism, the importance of non-identity, or "difference" as we would say today, is given concrete form and substance as a social and philosophical challenge to homogeneity and domination. The Jews, by virtue of their suffering, had revealed the truth of social and psychological domination [and, perhaps it could be argued, was a practical example of the logical outworkings, explicated in the second excursus of *Dialectic* on Enlightenment morality]." (Rabinbach, pp.138-139)

of the Jews. The Enlightenment had always aimed at "the extirpation of animism" and, as a return to the first section in which the central thesis of the work is contained, "Elements" once again finds the genesis of the logical trajectory of Enlightenment's eventual outcome.

3.1.6 The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception

The penultimate section, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," details the final triumph of enlightened reason in its actualisation on the silver screen. Culture's commodious nature is here abstracted through re-projection by a camera obscura of technified media, assuming the quality of a metaphysics thus doubling for entertainment and truth. Because of this dual function the transvaluation of the ideals originally espoused by Enlightenment is fully realised. Potential for any kind of critical awareness is obliterated. Whereas before, culture (or *Kultur* as conceived within the German context) had always been treated as witness to truth, humanity's true potential or essence, its role within the culture industry is the obfuscation of this function. In fact its effectiveness in this regard lies precisely in its semblance to its original role (nevertheless atrophied through its commodious nature) where the culture industry still reveals to men their actual situation namely, stupefication.

The 'ideological curtain'[154] to which the authors make reference in the preface, which assumes that status of metaphysics, is realised not merely in relation to artistic expression, though an integral component of it given its traditional relation to truth content, but to the coalescence of what constitutes 'the real' in the form of mass media. The aesthetic value of brand-new motorcars is praised no less highly than classic works of art, and is more dangerous. As the estranged power of man's labour it possess authority over the would-be buyer and, in its aesthetic function, witnesses to the truth of this estranged relation. The extent of this ideological progression virtually guarantees Reason's irreversible decline – not only are critical modes of thought delimited, but the truth of the oppressive situation, the actuality of this scenario is entirely validated in the

---

[154] *DE 2002*, p.xvii.

material means of reproduction, in which pleasurable consumption and labour's estrangement have by now coincided. It is therefore mistaken to conceive of the culture industry as pertaining only to aspects of 'cultural' production such as theatre, music, art, but must necessarily incorporate industrial society in its entirety. The system of total rationalistic apprehension, which science had aimed for at the start, has been achieved, and this in inverse proportion to humans constituted as subjects.

Furthermore, the tendency of reason's instramentalisation under the modern scientific paradigm ultimately is towards fascism in its tripartite alliance firstly with technological rationality, which sees the pairing of instrumental rationality with the capitalist mode of production (science and technology, by which capitalist society is advanced, become inseparable), and ultimately in the manifestation of the culture industry which, because of its aesthetic function, demands unswervable ideological allegiance. In this capacity, and so inseparable from reason's progression towards instrumental rationality, is science's complicity, and ultimate identification, with technological progress, itself driven by motives of a capitalist production.

The preponderance of information therefore in contemporary society is directly proportional to the steady reign of unconsciousness, where information is not knowledge, but satisfaction of the senses. The more information produced for peoples' ready consumption, the more satisfied, and thus stupefied, they are. This facet of contemporary society is attested to by the industrious or commodious element by which the Frankfurt School theorists define the Culture Industry. Yet the notion as a whole is not unique to the theory of the Frankfurt School. Parallels, for example, may be found in such contemporary literature as Orwell's *1984* which has close affinities to the theoretical orientation of the Frankfurt School in its attestation to contemporary society's totalitarian capacity. Here totalitarian need not imply overt fascism but, on the contrary, is more effective where a society's freedom is defined in contra-distinction to overtly fascist regimes.[155] A prerequisite for this type of unconscious control is centred on the

---

[155] Democracy tends towards fascism and the totally administered state. Enlightenment is totalitarian and the best form of totalitarian thinking is that which upholds the rights of the freedom of the individual at all

epistemological categories that define a society's outlook where these allow for the delimitation of forms of knowledge offered in opposition to the status quo. The notion is captured well, for example, in Orwell's 'Newspeak' where Orwell recognises the inescapably determinative relationship between language and cognitive capacity.

Newspeak furthermore entails the subsumption of different fields of knowledge under a single category (the play on new/news is hardly coincidental). News, in contemporary society is all that which is deemed newsworthy, i.e. what is purported as desirably known about society. The ascribing of news with entertainment-value brackets this, from the perspective of Critical Theory, under the category of culture industry, in view of news' assumed commodiousness where it thus also forfeits criticality. The notion of Newspeak encompasses not only that which is 'new and up-to-date', itself coincidental with the rationale of technological society thus providing a logic of self-legitimacy by obsoletising that which it outdates, but substantively includes the notions of news and entertainment. News qualifies as knowledge to the extent that it is deemed worthy of the latter, that which is 'news-worthy'. But, in today's society, news derives as much value from its capacity to entertain, interest and excite. Thus news, becomes entertainment, while already having delimited itself in terms of what qualifies as news, namely only that which has the capacity to entertain, that which is deemed sufficiently news-worthy.

Furthermore the underlying rationale of Newspeak explicated by Orwell bears strong parallels to the emergence of one-dimensional society in Marcuse's work where the delimitation of knowledge/knowledge enquiry is guaranteed through the literal destruction of words – a limited vocabulary limits the range of consciousness (the word 'oppression' must exist before it is brought to consciousness; where the word is nonexistent, so too becomes the concept). The difference in Orwell's fictional account is that the process appears to occur overtly through state-implemented procedures while for Marcuse and the Frankfurt School it is seen as concomitant with enlightenment thinking.

---

costs. By making each man into sovereign subject, each man disappears beneath the veil of individualism where the tendency toward individuation is likewise the enforcement of homogeneity. The guaranteeing of the rights of the individual is the best path therefore to establishing the state as totally administered.

3.1.7 Preliminary conclusions

It should be clear by now that critique offered by Adorno and Horkheimer's enlightenment rationality is devastating, and that their prognosis of contemporary society is likewise seemingly without hope. Three things can be said at this point. Firstly, to my mind, the authors are by no means exaggerating the desperate state of affairs which they perceive contemporary society to be in. They really believe that society is devoid of Reason, and where devoid of Reason, for all intents and purposes irredeemable. Thus their prognosis is hopeless, not because they choose to adopt a position of hopelessness from the outset but because they can help but reach this point through their prognosis and what this implies about contemporary society.

Secondly, because of this dire state of affairs, and in line with the authors' philosophical method, there is no alternative in the face of contemporary society's dissolvent rationality but an attempt at its negation. By denouncing society for what it is, and by characterising the situation as hopeless, the authors hope to affect this. Critical Theory, and the philosophy of Adorno and Horkeimer, in line with Western Marxism generally, presupposes a deficiency in contemporary social structures on the basis of its constitution by inherently irrational relationships. Their stance necessarily entails negation of the status quo in order to facilitate awareness of the state of affairs, and hopefully a new round of dialectic in which positive substantiation may take place. The problem, or paradox, in relation to this is that historically the dialectical unfolding of history (ala Hegel) was always supposed to be presided over by Reason (or rationally constituted subjects) yet, as we have seen, the authors discern the real disappearance of Reason in contemporary society, ushering in the hopelessness required for utter negation which the authors seek to achieve. Indeed that the authors propose no practical solution to the social maladies they diagnose leaves the reader precisely at the necessary point of despair.

Having said that we would also do well to take account of the authors' appraisal of contemporary society for our own task of social critique in relation to reading the bible and particularly at the stage of contextualisation within our Tri-Polar schema. Yet this

itself is not without difficulties. Aside from the obsoletisation of religion and the bible in much of Western public discourse initiated by the Enlightenment, consumerist forms of culture likewise pose a threat to critical religion, or a critical component within religion, such that where religion and the bible still contribute to the constitution of social structures, such activity is inevitably and increasingly informed by an ethic, not of emancipation and criticality, but one complicit with capitalist modes of thought. Thus not only should students of the bible seek the insertion of a critical voice into areas of public discourse, wherever this might be possible, but should seek to create counter-cultural discourse within the religious institutions and communities of which they are a part in the hope of ushering in alternative and subversive praxes.

In my initial research proposal I had intended to undertake a reading of the re-creation theme in John with the hope of this being, to some extent, libratory, i.e. as providing a necessary counter to what was viewed as the negative role played by Genesis 3 in the perpetuation of patriarchy. Following this, a logical step might be towards clarifying the quality or nature of this re-creative activity. Though in my proposal I had indicated that patriarchy was to be a prevalent concern of the study, to the extent even that the question would be posed whether the Genesis 3 or 'Fall' narrative could be seen as representative of patriarchy, this was still an insufficiently clear articulation of the dynamic that I hoped to achieve between the texts of Genesis and John.

To this end I intended to structure at least some of my argument around a favourable assessment of the notion of a matriarchal prehistory, assumed either implicitly or explicitly by the Feminist authors I had chosen. The inclusion of this however was to work conjunctly with my reading of Genesis 3 in a way that was mutually reinforcing where, if the supercession of a peaceful, egalitarian matriarchal/matrifocal society by an oppressive, violent patriarchal one could be assumed on the basis of historical precedent in the text of Genesis 3 then this could be seen as concomitant with notions of the 'Fall'. Hence the phenomenon of 'sin' would then not simply relate to a moral or spiritual degeneration understood in metaphorical terms but to the systemic introduction of socially oppressive structures within society.

In thus equating an advent of sin with the structural genesis of patriarchy and in seeing its entrance as detailed in the Genesis 3 narrative I was of the opinion that this would somehow allow me to conceive the ministry of Jesus in a counterpoised fashion where Jesus or Jesus' ministry is ethically opposed to the introduction of patriarchy. In support of this schematisation I had proposed the hermeneutical/interpretative key of '*helper*' in order to bridge the two texts (Genesis 3 and John 20), and this against a Feminist backdrop. In relation to John, ascertaining the role of the 'helper' was to be supported by readings of John sympathetic to female characters and thus Feminist concerns. This included viewing the garden scene of John 20 as a possible parallel to that of Genesis 3 with the garden in John as the site of new/renewed eschatological activity.

This fairly neat schematisation was disrupted however by my engagement with the chosen theory, both that which related the inseparability of text and context, as well as what was intimated by *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in its assessment of oppressive forces occupying an ambiguous dialectic. These considerations relate, in the first instance, i.e. with regard to an exegesis of John, to the way in which the Genesis myth potentially could be taken up unwittingly and reinforced, where the problem stems not least from John's own patriarchal context. Thus John, despite being 'Gospel', and thus assuming implicitly a libratory character in the mind of the exegete, still remains a product of patriarchal culture and thus is bound to reflect such concerns. The question had then to be broached whether the Jesus of John (or the cultural milieu this represents) reflects the concerns of the same patriarchy which was posited as represented in Genesis 3.

The critique offered by *Dialectic of Enlightenment* stands in relation to the present debate in its ability to map the trajectory of domination inherent to the relationship of myth and enlightenment. Needless to say this may seem an oblique way to incorporate a critique of patriarchy and yet the work of *DE* and the work this subsequently lead me to helped unearth not only my own un-criticality on the issue of appropriating texts such as John, but also demonstrates the profound difficulty with which one is able to successfully articulate the dynamics of domination and oppression within society. What I

subsequently came to accept then is the inescapability, not only of aspects of domination, but the mythical modes of apprehension which perpetuate this domination.

This realisation necessitated therefore a change in approach, one which did not seek to uncover or untwist the mythical cords of Genesis 3 by application of a wholly positive assessment of Jesus' ministry in John, but rather, one which sought to reformulate the mythical terms of the discussion, in which both texts are re-appropriated, in the hope of advancing a reading of both texts which sought to be both critical and cautious – critical in not wanting to be complicit in taking over oppressive strains of mythical thinking and cautious in positing new ones that were not overly essentialising or absolutist.

In the following and final section I have proposed two case studies which are suggestive as to how such counter-cultural discourse might be injected into areas of public concern. The first relates to a review of the construction of a counter-mythology in the form of a matriarchal prehistory posited in opposition to notions of male dominance, and focuses on how this has impacted public perception of gender relations via mainstream academic fields such as anthropology.

Necessarily, this is a highly generalised case study focusing on the Feminist movement and the perception of women at large within society. Yet its purpose is to demonstrate the viability, indeed through concrete examples, of altering social consciousness by alternative forms of apprehension/appropriation through the engaging/constructing of counter-mythologies. The first case study is retrospective but also descriptive in that it has the privilege of remarking on an already-occurred change in Feminist consciousness.

The second case study is of a slightly more tentative nature primarily since the field with which it is concerned, Feminist ecclesial praxis, is one still very much in flux. In its attempt to be somewhat prescriptive then it also tries to infer possibilities from the work of contemporary Feminist authors where such possibilities are not as verifiable as in the first case study. Finally, I would like to qualify both case studies by saying that they serve as cursory applications of the theory of text production set out at the stage of *distantiation*

while at the same time attempting to take into account the contextual concerns raised at the previous section on *contextualisation*.

CHAPTER FOUR: APPROPRIATION

4.1 Case study one: Genesis 3 and Matriarchy as counter-myth

Though its relationship to Feminist theology, or Feminist biblical scholarship, is by no means exclusive, aspects of matriarchal myth may be arguably seen as having developed in response to a Feminist critique of Genesis 3 where many of the substantive components of matriarchal myth bear close parallels to the conventional synopsis of Genesis 3: an 'ideal' or utopian-like period is posited as the original state of affairs, characterised by relative peace and social equality; an unforeseen or unintended event disrupts this causing an imbalance in power relations and a general destabilisation of social cohesion which persists interminably thereafter.

4.1.1 Outline of matriarchal myth

In her survey of its historical development Cynthia Eller cites J.J. Bachoffen's *Das Mutterrecht* as seminal in the genesis of matriarchal myth – "Bachoffen postulated an era of matriarchy ending in classical times with the rise of men and the "male principle"…[and] was quickly joined by a…group of scholars pioneering the discipline along evolutionary lines".[156] Friedrich Engels then took up the myth basing it on Marx's "fragmentary notes" on prehistory and the theory of one Lewis Henry Morgan which resulted in the *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* serving to "institutionalize the myth of matriarchal prehistory as a socialist origin story."[157]

Despite the myth falling into relative disuse, within both popular and academic streams subsequently it "emerged with new vigour in the early 1970s, as second-wave feminists began to take it over in earnest, engineering a decisive shift in its meaning in the

---

[156] Eller, C. 2000. *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory : why an invented past won't give women a future*. Boston: Beacon Press. p. 31.

[157] Eller 2000, p. 32. In an endnote to chapter three, Eller writes that "Engels was far more enthusiastic about both Morgan and the concept of matriarchy than Marx had been, though in the *Origin* Engels claimed to be representing Marx's ideas." Eller, p. 194.

process."[158] Eller explains that "[p]rior to this, most matriarchalists regarded the patriarchal revolution as either a signal improvement over matriarchy, or at least a necessary, if regrettable, step toward progressive civilization of humankind…[but] by the mid 1980s, the myth of matriarchy had definitely become a myth of regress, of paradise lost. These days it is virtually impossible to speak of ancient matriarchies and their overthrow by invading patriarchs without drawing feminist, or at least quasi-feminist lessons from the story."[159]

Eller notes that despite the myth's re-emergence at this point, those Eller calls "feminist anthropologists" (though I think she is referring to anthropologists who happened to be women) did not take up the myth wholeheartedly but, on the contrary, failed to find corroboration for the myth in their respective fields.[160] There was, explains Eller, "a small group of socialist feminist anthropologists" who during the 70's and 80's began working closely with Engel's hypothesis but, explains Eller, the real shift, and what really prompted the subsequent momentum gained by the myth, was its adoption by the Feminist spirituality movement where, Eller suggests, the myth is first used within an explicitly religious framework, i.e. functioning to shape/inform religious belief. She states that "[i]ntroducing religion into the matriarchal equation…freed up an enormous amount of imaginative energy for feminist matriarchal myth."[161]

Comparing it to the religious potency of the Exodus and Passion narratives, Eller states that "the myth of matriarchal prehistory is foundational for feminist spirituality. Goddess worship itself is sometimes taken as shorthand for matriarchal myth: goddesses are proof of matriarchy, reminders of it, and calls to recreate it"[162] – an interesting observation given that it highlights the affinity between mythological discourse and religion. Indeed, Eller seems to intimate that it is difficult to speak (in terms) of matriarchal myth without at the same time invoking some kind of spirituality, regardless of how overt or implicit.

---

[158] Eller 2000, p. 34.
[159] Eller 2000, p. 34.
[160] Eller 2000, p. 35.
[161] Eller 2000, p. 36.
[162] Eller 2000, p. 36.

Eller subsequently makes mention of some of the less scholarly accounts of the myth such as that of Stone and Eisler which succeeded in popularising the myth in mainstream Feminism.[163] Of particular importance however was the work of Marija Gimbutas who lent significant academic credibility to the myth whereupon its adherents subsequently adopted Gimbutas as an ambassador of matriarchal hopes and aspirations. Eller writes that "[i]t is hard to overestimate the significance of Gimbutas and her work to the contemporary feminist myth…Gimbutas loaned her impressive archeological credentials to the myth at a time when other academic archaeologists were steadfastly unwilling to do so. Though there are many intelligent and well-read partisans of the myth, Gimbutas is the only one who is an archaeologist. Her very existence—to say nothing of her work— has done much to enhance the credibility of feminist matriarchal myth in the eyes of more mainstream audiences that feminist matriarchalists have been endeavoring to win."[164]

This is another point of Eller's analysis which we can pick up on in pointing to the link between intellectual assent or belief, which in this case is also existentially validating, and what is taken or regarded as cognitively valuable, i.e. what counts as truth. The fact that a figure academically recognised served to validate claims implicit in matriarchal myth illustrates the affinity, within contemporary culture, between what is regarded as objectively/scientifically verifiable and what is deemed cognitively valid.

4.1.2 Critique of matriarchal myth

Scholars such as Eller, while identifying with many of the aims of Feminist studies, remain critical or ambivalent about the nature, function and effect of matriarchal myth. Indeed, Eller's entire book is devoted not only to revealing in what her opinion are the spurious historical premises upon which the myth rests but, through an investigation of its internal logic, underscores the myth's implicit gendered assumptions, binary thinking, and thus tendency to simply reinstate old prejudices taken over from patriarchy.

---

[163] Eller, p. 36ff and p. 51.
[164] Eller, pp. 38-39.

M.A. Hewitt, along similar lines, poses the question of whether women within the Judeo-Christian tradition really need a feminine deity to "save" them.[165] Within the Church, or within Feminist biblical scholarship, Hewitt states that the Feminist enterprise is motivated by both the securing of "an equal place for women within the Christian theological and ecclesiastical traditions" as well as a restoration of "Christianity to what many believe is its "true" or "genuine" emancipatory and egalitarian impulse."[166]

Hewitt describes the intention of replacing a male construct of God with a female Goddess as "one of the major preoccupations of Christian feminism" where the notion of a feminine divinity "seeks to reverse the harmful psychological, social, and political effects"[167] of a male divinity by the telling and appropriating of matriarchal myth. Despite the often explicitly religious intensions associated with matriarchal myth for Christian Feminists, Hewitt points to a common concern uniting Feminists across all disciplines locatable in their identification with the broader Feminist movement.[168]

Though with a particular emphasis, Hewitt like Eller, does not regard the notion of a feminine deity in unproblematic terms. Focusing on the work of Irigaray, Hewitt points to a more fundamental problem in the construction of a feminine deity:

> The focus on non-identitary thinking in the work of Irigaray and others continues to provide an important critical tool within feminist theory as it interrogates the notion of gender identity, which it attempts to subvert by focusing on the difference and diversity of female identities…Non-identitary thinking or reason refuses to colonize others within predetermined concepts whose logic is to compel objects to conform to its pregiven idea. Identitary thinking, which seeks to capture the objects of its own inquiry, does violence to others, destroys difference, and expels that which it cannot fully absorb to the margins of theory and practice. Irigaray and other non-identitary theorists not only critique this mode of reason, they also

---

[165] Hewitt, M. A. 2003. "Do Women Really Need a 'God/ess' to Save Them? An Inquiry into Notions of the Divine Feminine" in *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion: A Selection of Critical Readings*. Olson, C. (Ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth/Thompson.
[166] Hewitt 2003, p. 507.
[167] Hewitt 2003, p. 507.
[168] Hewitt 2003, p. 507.

expose the harmful effects that intellectual traditions structured in terms of identitary logic have had on women.[169]

Yet in spite of this Hewitt maintains that Irgaray is still complicit with essentialist notions of gender. According to Feminist non-identitary thinking "[t]he projection of an image or concept of a female deity can only occur with the mobilization of identitary reasoning, where the attributes of the Goddess are meant to mirror female attributes and potentialities back to individual women."[170] The problem seemingly then is that, try as it might, matriarchal myth, or Feminists positing the existence of a feminine deity, cannot escape the constructed and thus gendered representation of God where much of what we understand the terms "woman" and "feminine" to encompass has been constituted within a patriarchal system. Hewitt goes further in her critique of Irigaray saying that:

Irigaray offers…a feminist corrective to a fundamentally questionable psychological process without interrogating the process itself. She appears unhesitatingly to accept the *homo religiosus* thesis about the nature of humanity, failing to consider that human subjectivity may not absolutely require religious symbols and myths in order to develop…Surely it is possible for contemporary women to achieve a creative and positive sense of identity without adopting a notion of a feminine deity. A feminist approach to the study of religion needs seriously to consider Feuerbach's criticism of the psychological process itself that requires illusions as a necessary and intrinsic stage in the maturation process of the human species and individuals…The point of both [Feuerbach and Freud's]…critiques of the psychological dynamics of religion was to expose the ways in which ideas and beliefs function to enslave human beings, preventing them from achieving their full mature potential…feminism still must contend with the fact that in urging women to embrace a female divinity in any way is to suggest at least a partial abdication of their subjectivity and autonomy as fully active agents of human history, and in their own lives.[171]

Hewitt then closes her article by saying that

In whatever way a deity or divine image may contain the projected ideal attributes of humanity, the divinity remains an abstraction, no matter how conditioned by social, cultural and historical

---

[169] Hewitt 2003, p. 508.
[170] Hewitt 2003, p. 508.
[171] Hewitt 2003, p. 509.

factors. As a posited abstraction that is meant to represent women in the ideal—and thus unreal form—the consequent danger lies in its becoming a reified category which, like all reified categories are non-human.[172]

Hewitt thus advocates an ideal that is secularised where, rather than proposing countervailing metaphors, symbols and myths so as to 'undo' the perceived adverse effects of dominant thought-systems and their exclusivising tendencies, we should disband the practice of religious/myth construction altogether since, regardless of what symbols we posit or what alternatives we suggest, they will all have their own 'baggage'. Religion, in line with Feuerbach's theses, traps people in inauthentic and immature modes of existence.

4.1.3 The need for matriarchal mythologising

Yet in lieu of the assessment and diagnosis provided from within the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, though it may be legitimate to posit that religion (understood in an organised/institutionalised sense) should and ultimately will be discarded, the dialectic posited between myth and enlightened forms of reason suggests that we can never escape mythic thought entirely. It would be interesting to see what Hewitt proposes as an alternative to religious symbol or how she suggests we dispense with it since the modern, scientific (and we could add, technological) paradigm predominant in contemporary culture, has assumed a highly, though necessarily subtle, mythic quality, and indeed has become the 'religion' of the modern subject.

While it is true that however meticulous we might wish to be, all religious conjecturing, including the construction of counter-myth, will never be free from exclusivising tendencies, the goal should not be about creating a perfect religious vision, but about correcting or counter-acting oppressive and totalising religious vision through the language of symbol and metaphor.

---

[172] Hewitt 2003, p. 510.

Drucilla Cornell indeed takes a line opposite to that of Eller and Hewitt in regarding the role of myth for spirituality generally and for Feminists in positive terms. Coincidently, she arrives at this assessment also by way of Irigaray's work, stating that:

> [t]he inability to simply escape our genderized context explains why the role of myth in feminist theory is essential to the reclaiming, and retelling, or "herstory" through the mimetic writing that specifies the feminine…[where M]yth is one important way in which the feminine achieves what Blumenberg calls "significance." Significance is the deeper meaning we associate with myth's capacity to provide our life-world with symbols, images and metaphors that not only give us a shared environment but an environment that matters to us and inspires us.[173]

The thesis attested to in *DE*, that myth becomes enlightenment and enlightenment reverts to mythology, where the very paradigm which denounces and refutes all links to the mythical, becomes, through the course of such refutation, itself totalising myth, demonstrates the need to reconceive our mythical social praxis. To my mind, there is in impasse reached if we attempt to counteract such totalising tendencies by either recourse to discourse that is objectively verifiable, or by apathetic ascension to the secularised mythology perpetuated in mainstream media. The terms of mythological discourse then have to be re-appropriated critically with an end of realising certain concrete social and political goals where this is not to accept our mythologising praxis uncritically but to recognise that inevitably it will be couched in ambiguities.[174] This however should not serve to negate the mythologising process in its entirety, given once more that this is possibly one of the few viable paths to subversion that lie open to us. In light of Hewitt's argument, if Feminism does not orient itself mythically, whether by positing a matriarchal pre-history or feminine deity or by employing whatever metaphors it deems

---

[173] Cornell, D. 2002. "Feminine Writing, Metaphor, and Myth" in Glowacka, D. and Boos, S. (Eds.) *Between Ethics and Aesthetics: Crossing the Boundaries*, State University of New York: Albany. pp. 161-162.

[174] In relation to the work of Gayatri Spivak, Cornell demonstrates the necessity of such concessions where she states that the "writing and speaking of Woman she [Spivak] refers to as strategic essentialism; strategic, because it is consciously directed toward a political goal, and essentialism, because it reinstates some version of the essence of Woman and the feminine, even if only temporarily and for a political purpose." Cornell 2002, p. 168.

symbolically relevant, it runs the inevitable risk of being co-opted and coerced by hegemonic mythologies already in place.[175]

Having said all this, what seems to be Eller's failure to appreciate the value of mythological language, when employed in the right way, should not blind us to the uncritical acceptance of matriarchal myth proper where indeed, such critical evaluations have enabled a more nuanced appropriation of the myth for Feminist consciousness. Eller's position seems to represent something of a consensus among more cautious Feminist treatments which would seek to appropriate the myth on socio-historical premises more thoroughly corroborated.

4.1.4 Matriarchal myth and the field of anthropology

Permeated as my undergraduate studies were by liberationist and emancipatory vocabulary I never fully understood the importance of such slogans, oft-repeated in classes involving Feminist studies, as 'the private is public' or that 'the private is political'. It is only now, approaching the issue of gender from the field of anthropology, that the significance of these claims begins to register for me, where it seems to me to refer to the social structuring/social identity formation around the spheres 'public and private'/'domestic and social' and the reciprocally-defining affect this exercises on the sexes and the gendered roles assigned to them.

This was made clearer for me while surveying some of the work of Feminist anthropologists which demonstrates the significance of a Feminist consciousness for fields of mainstream academic discourse. On the above points, one scholar states that

---

[175] "The reinterpretation and recreation of mythical figures can also help us to give body to the dream of an elsewhere beyond patriarchy and the tragedy imposed by gender hierarchy that blocks the alliance between the sexes of which Irigaray writes." Cornell 2002, p.162. To extend this, and again in connection with Hewitt, we have not even begun to consider (indeed, Hewitt seemingly does not address this) the issue of utopian hope, which is fundamental to any religiously-oriented framework and, some would contend, an entirely necessary component in light of our present condition.

"[T]he household is, in effect, politicized in that its internal relations are inextricable from the larger economic and political structure of society".[176]

Admittedly, this recognition might not have been possible apart from insights contributed by a Marxist framework, yet as we will go on to see, the incorporation of gender as a legitimate category of analysis, inevitably alters the perceived roles of gender in society whereas before, without such categories, women had been largely absent from socio-historical (and indeed, economic) analysis. To push the example further, whenever I had thought about the Marxist notion of division of labour I conceived of it in terms of the division and diversification of trade or certain types of craft, properly set in motion at the start of the industrial revolution, whereas in fact, division of labour first necessarily occurred between the sexes, and this at some of the earliest stages of civilisation.[177, 178]

Part of the importance for the consideration and inclusion of gender as a category of analysis in fields such as anthropology and archaeology relates to the way in which the development or progression of civilisation has traditionally been conceived, namely that 'man' has typically been responsible for this, i.e. the development and innovation of technology and modes of production. The inclusion of gender as a category of analysis forces us to reconsider the gendered nature of work and the historical developments within the sexual division of labour with the result of increasing awareness around women and the role they play in the material formation of society.[179]

The notion, by itself, that from the earliest times men and women shared manual work more or less equally changes the perception of how women have contributed to material

---

[176] Hendon, J. 1996. "Archeological Approaches to the Organization of Domestic Labour: Household Practice and Domestic Relations" in *Annual Review of Anthropology*. Vol. 25: 45-61. October 1996. p.46.
[177] Of course, within a Marxist framework, one cannot apply the term 'labour' to economic modes prior to capitalism, notwithstanding the possibility, perhaps likelihood, that earlier modes of economic activity were themselves not immune to exploitation.
[178] Interestingly, one volume assessing gender and anthropology seemed to indicate evidence for little physiological difference, beside sex organs, between male and female Neanderthals, casting doubt on the notion of biological determinism as an initial factor in the division of labour.
[179] Besides their biological function, by which their material/economic contribution is often side-lined, anthropologists now concede that practices as vital to the development of early economy such as pottery and sedentary agriculture are attributable to women.

economy historically. If man is solely responsible for material production, the material world produced will reflect this. Yet, to be more precise, we should say that if man is *perceived* as having been solely responsible then our *perception* of historical modes of production, as well as how this translates to our construction of gender identities for the present, will likewise reflect this. If we accept, however, that the production process was at significant points shared, then we must admit that the shaping of our earliest social and cultural history was contributed to equally by both men and women.

Henrietta Moore speaks of the role of contemporary conventional perception in influencing our understanding of these historical relationships saying that:

> [t]he apparent invisibility of women's work is a feature of the sexual division of labour in many societies, and it is reinforced by the ethnocentric assumptions of researchers and policy-makers, and by indigenous gender ideologies. If work is conventionally understood as 'paid work outside the home' then the value of women's subsistence and domestic labour goes unrecognized. This definition of work may persist even when it is clearly contradicted by people's experiences and expectations. The literature abounds with cautionary examples of women who are defined as 'housewives', when they are actually involved in agricultural labour and small-scale production, in addition to their household maintenance and childcare tasks. Through their activities, these women make a significant contribution to household income, both indirectly in terms of their unpaid agricultural and household labour, and directly through the money they earn in market-trading and petty commodity production.[180]

Referring to the work of Esther Boserup, Moore goes on to say that by

> [U]sing material from African farming systems, she [Boserup] showed that it was not always men who were the primary providers of food. In many societies in Africa, men cleared the land for cultivation, but it is women who actually cultivate the crops. Boserup's comparative method enabled her to contrast the situation in Africa, where women play a fundamental role in subsistence agricultural production, with that in Asia and Latin America, where their role is less marked. She explained this difference by linking aspects of the sexual division of labour to population density, landholding systems and technology. Boserup also pointed out the negative effects that colonialism and the penetration of capitalism into subsistence economies had had

---

[180] Moore, H. 1988. Feminism and Anthropology. Polity: Cambridge, Chapter 3: "Kinship, labour and household: understanding women's work", p. 43.

on women. In some case, colonial administrators introduced land reforms which dispossessed women of their rights to land.[181]

In discussing the significance of Boserup's work for the field of anthropology Moore states that it "is an important starting point because it raises issues which have dominated the discussion on women's status and their economic roles in society, and which have subsequently inspired much of the empirical work conducted over the last ten to fifteen years."[182] Following from this, Moore considers the study by Jack Goody, *Production and Reproduction*, which is related to Boserup's study in that if further develops, or focuses on, the theme of gendered economy. Moore summarise this as follows:

> Goody is concerned to link forms of marriage and patterns of property transmission to types of agricultural production, and, to this end, he contrasts the African and Asian systems, just as Boserup does. The chief value of Goody's work is the specific linkages it suggests between kinship relations and economic organization. He argues that the major difference between African and Eurasian inheritance systems is that the Eurasian forms are characterized by diverging inheritance (where property goes to children of both sexes) and by dowry (where parental property is given to a daughter on her marriage), both of which are unusual in Africa (Goody, 1976: 6). Goody links the existence of diverging inheritance to 'relatively advanced' economies with intensive plough agriculture. African hoe-agriculture societies, on the other hand, are characterized by homogenous inheritance.[183]

Moore then summarises the common significance of both authors saying that

> Boserup draws very similar conclusions regarding the relationships between the sexual division of labour, marriage systems and types of agricultural production. She argues that where hoe agriculture predominates and most agricultural work is done by women, as in the case of many African societies, there is a high incidence of polygyny (men having more than one wife) and bridewealth. In such systems, women have only limited rights of support from their husband, but they may have some economic independence from the sale of their own crops. However, in areas where plough agriculture predominates, and women do less agricultural work than men, as in the Asian examples she cites, few marriages are polygynous and dowry is usually paid. In

---

[181] Moore 1988, p. 44.
[182] Moore 1998, p. 44.
[183] Moore 1998, p. 45.

these communities, women are entirely dependent upon their husbands for economic support, and the husband has an obligation to provide for his wife and children (Boserup, 1970: 50).[184]

Moore goes on to say that the relevance of the work of authors such as Boserup and Goody "lies in the demonstrable links between women's status, the sexual division of labour, forms of marriage and inheritance, and the economic relations of production."[185]

4.1.5 Matriarchal Myth's impact on the realisation of Self-Consciousness

It should be clear from what has been said thus far as to matriarchal myth and its influence in the mainstream academic fields that the development or insertion of gender into these fields as a legitimate and even central category of analysis is not incidental primarily because proponents of matriarchal myth sought historical premises within the fields of archaeology and, later, tried to corroborate their hypotheses through the comparative method developed within anthropology.

The crux of the issue is not, on the side of scientific studies in the fields of anthropology/archaeology, necessarily whether such premises can be corroborated (though in many aspects they have been) or, on the side of the Feminist spiritualist movement, whether there exists sufficient historical evidence to render the matriarchal myth plausible. The central issue or concern should rather be the change in perception which the introduction of the myth has facilitated.

Gender has become a legitimate and central category of analysis within archaeology and anthropology as a result of the increased awareness of Feminist concerns, itself facilitated by the change in consciousness which matriarchal myth accompanied in turn facilitating renewed academic interests that might substantiate these. Yet the introduction of the category itself was already the starting point of a shift in consciousness. Findings within both fields through empirical research have been interpreted and understood in a way fundamentally different to the way they would have been within the paradigm common to

---

[184] Moore 1998, p. 45.
[185] Moore 1998, p. 45.

these fields more than fifty years ago, one which operated without gender as a category of analysis prior to the development and promulgation of matriarchal myth. These findings, though in some respects supporting the *possibility* of certain tenets of the matriarchal myth as traditionally conceived, have more importantly altered the way men and women in the present understand themselves through their observation of the past.

Such appropriation of matriarchal myth by Feminist biblical scholars is discernable, for example, in the work of Carol Meyers, where she seeks to incorporate aspects of the myth through an analysis of the socio-historical conditions attendant to early Israel's formation. In Meyers' analysis she applies social scientific and anthropological models to biblical texts in order to infer the necessary imbalance in gendered social relations that would have accompanied the socio-historical transitions, with the rise of patriarchal tendencies, to which the myth bears witness.

Meyers' appropriation of aspects of matriarchal myth itself seems to undergo a shift in the degree of its emphasis. This is discernible when one compares Meyers' early work, in which there seems to be an explicit endorsement of aspects of the myth in forms similar to that initially propounded by the Feminist spirituality movement while, by the time of her later work, she appears more restrained in such assertions with regard to what is historically inferable from the biblical text, though still seeking to ground these assertions in comprehensive sociological analysis.[186] In the first of two articles that may be taken as representative of Meyers' work the resonances with matriarchal myth as far as an identification with its attestation of historical change in connection to gender relations are clearly discernable, though Meyers seeks to appropriate this within the specific socio-cultural context of early Israel. Meyers states that:

> an examination of women's social position, while eminently cogent and important for historical
> studies of any period of our past, becomes extraordinarily pertinent and imperative in

---

[186] See for example Meyers, C. 1978. "The Roots of Restriction: Women in Early Israel" in *The Biblical Archaeologist*. Vol. 41, No. 3 (Sep., 1978), pp. 91-103 and Meyers, C. 1996. "Procreation, Production, and Protection: Male-female balance in Early Isreal" in *Community, Identity and Ideology: Social science approaches to the Hebrew Bible*. Carter, C. and Meyers, C. (Eds.) Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns.
[186] Eller, C. 2000. *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory : why an invented past won't give women a future*. Boston: Beacon Press. p. 31.

consideration of biblical society, especially in its formative and idealistic period…
Archeologically, this formative period coincides with the closing decades of the Late Bronze
Age and the beginning of centuries of the Iron Age in Palestine…Concern for the evaluation of
the social history of women during the early Israelite experience arises from the fact that this is
precisely the period in which one of the major - if not the major - transitions occurred in the
history of the position and role of women in the world. Some three thousand years of male
dominance in western civilization, and in particular in religious institutions, have clouded our
vision of the prebiblical past and have led to the belief that the exclusion of females from
regular leadership, at least in public and/or religious life, has been the norm in human
history.[187]

Meyers' invocation of the symbolism attendant to matriarchal myth is apparent later in
the article where she states that the

mystery of birth and of all creation and thus of human existence itself rested in the female
power. From as early as the Old Stone Age onward (ca. 30,000 B.C.E.), material expressions of
religious convictions by which mankind sought to establish links to that divine creative power
have been found (James 1958: 113ff.). In the various places of Stone Age habitation, the naked
female figurines with exaggerated sexual features are found, attesting to the cult of the Great
Goddess. By the time of the great Bronze Age cultures of the Near East, the supreme Mother
Goddesses were joined by or in some cases superseded by male deities.[188]

Relating to the specific socio-culture context of early Israel, Meyers' hypothesis in this
article rests on the proscription of harlotry by the emerging Israelite priestly class where
this was associated with cultic practice of the neighbouring nations against which early
Israel was in opposition. This together with the excessive pressure placed on women in
the early pioneer period, due to increased reproductive and economic demands, resulted
in an almost complete preclusion of female participation in official religious practice.[189]
Yet for Meyers' the negation of female participation in cultic practice does not
necessarily mean that women as such were culturally devalued, on the contrary. Because
of the attendant pressures facing Israel as a fledgling state competing with their

---

[187] Meyers 1978, p. 92.
[188] Meyers 1978, p. 93.
[189] Meyers 1978, pp. 100-101.

economically superior neighbours, women necessarily took on more social significance in lieu of a communal ethic which necessitated social participation across sexes yet the value of this translated culturally in ways other than involvement in the priestly office.

Meyers suggests then that within Israelite society although the possibility of a goddess cult was non-existent, biblical accounts such as Genesis 2 could represent something of a parallel in terms of feminine deference in light of the fact that it "seems to defy the overwhelming patriarchality of Israelite society…[where i]f in early Israel there existed a male-female balance of labour approaching parity, a balance which can in some societies give rise to an amplification of female deities, then perhaps the second creation account represents an ideological and functional equivalent."[190]

Given the predominant exclusivity of formulations of deity within Israelite religion Meyers goes on to suggest ways in which a heightened valuation of women might have been culturally expressed. She states "[a] situation in which females have entered the subsistence sphere in significant ways and have gained status thereby is not expressed in equal legal rights, which could hardly be expected amidst the realities of the ancient world and the emerging social systems of the Israelites, but rather in a theoretical (or Edenic) equality. With no provisions for goddesses to provide such legitimization in the monotheistic or at least monolatrous Yahwistic system, a beginnings account in which women and men were created equal supplied a phenomnelogically equivalent religious response to the social reality of a near equal participation of men and women in basic societal tasks."[191]

Meyer's approach therefore attempts to bypass what is often accepted as the predominantly patriarchal structuring of early Israelite society by an appeal, firstly, to the socio-historical conditions of material production where women necessarily assumed greater agency in light of the increased social pressures faced collectively and, in line

---

[190] Meyers 1996, p. 509. Meyers' standpoint here, needless to say, is dependent on a favourable assessment (from a Feminist perspective) of Genesis 2 which she adopts on the basis of readings such as Trible's and Byrd's. See Meyers 1996, p. 491.
[191] Meyers 1996, p. 509.

with the theoretical model she proposes, were afforded concomitant rise in social status. Secondly, she proposes that in line with its strict Yahwistic monotheism, early Israel nevertheless expressed this greater gender balance in terms that were ideological and theological, rather than practical. She explains that

> [t]he threat to patriarchal male authority when female power rises would be diffused by a symbolic or religious statement that God has ordained a mutual effort in the critical tasks of society and that a two-way dependency has divine sanction. For a community which had eschewed divine sexuality in the forms of binary pairs of gods and goddesses, biblical materials portraying an idealized sexual equality apart from the actual formation of patterns of inequality within society would have sustained a high status for women commensurate with their contributive roles within the patriarchal framework. Indeed, that actual societal patterns should not be expected to be mirrored in either ideological statements on the one hand or legal proscriptions on the other hand. Social reality hardly provides a one-to-one correlation with either its conceptual framework or its regulatory mechanisms.[192]

What Meyers' approach might be said to represent then is an attempt to create an authoritative biblical record, i.e. record of early Israel, that does not have recourse only to androcentric, patriarchally biased texts, which seem to represent only the religious attitude of the time, but is authoritative in revealing the conditions of socio-historical production under which early Israelite society was initially formed achieved partly by application of sociological models independent of Feminist studies.

For example, in the second of the two articles cited, Meyers, based on an analysis of Leviticus 27, for which she posits an early compositional date, is able to infer social status between sexes based on the monetary valuations set forth in the pricing schema for the redemption of people vowed to the sanctuary.[193] Given that males and females between the ages of 20-60, the category most economically productive, are valued at 50 and 30 shekels respectively, Meyers is able to deduce the close-to 60-40 ratio in

---

[192] Meyers 1996, pp. 509-510.
[193] Meyers 1996, p. 506 ff.

economic participation required for near gender parity within the sociological model Meyers' provides.

4.2 Case study two: John 20 as the site of eschatological activity

4.2.1 Introduction

The purpose of the preceding section, the treatment of Genesis 3 in conjunction with matriarchal myth and its impact on the social sciences, is meant to serve as witness to the interactive roles of mythical conception, society's self-understanding within this, and the way society then re-conceives or re-constitutes itself through what might conventionally be termed academic, scientific, or objective analysis. The following section then is an attempt to apply something of the same method to the New Testament content considered viz. in the form of Jesus' ministry as depicted in the Gospel of John.

Very broadly, the study had from the outset claimed to privilege Feminist concerns. In light of this, there arose a fundamental question from the texts which were chosen. Genesis 3 had long been viewed as a biblical lynchpin in the system of patriarchy by hard-line Feminist scholars. I wished to take this claim seriously and, as far as I regarded patriarchy to be a deeply ingrained societal phenomenon, wanted to explore the implications of linking an hypothetical 'advent' of patriarchy with an idea of original sin.

This not only identifies the two as being inseparably part of a human condition but it also allows us to develop or infer implications for the ministry of Jesus in the New Testament where most contemporary theologies understand this principally in terms of redemption from sin. In many Western contexts, this is often conceived in individual vocabularies which people more sympathetic towards liberationist approaches find unhelpful. Thus the question was to be asked – in what ways does Jesus' ministry mitigate, counteract, or undo the effects of patriarchy, if at all? – in the hope of challenging certain theologies to adopt a broader, more holistic approach to sin and its effects in society.

Initially, the hypothetical link between Genesis 3 and John had come in the form of what might be termed the hermeneutical key of 'helper', the link being between the respective 'helpers' of Genesis 3 and John where in the former, the helper refers to the woman created to be with man and, in the in the latter, the Holy Spirit.[194]

In line with my initial aim this would provide a further link or motivation for seeing or characterising the redemptive ministry of Jesus (in conjunction with the Holy Spirit) as somehow having a bearing on the 'advent' of patriarchy. In addition to this, or in an attempt to bolster this link, it was believed that usage of the theory of intertextuality, employed for example in John by scholars such as Kitzberger, would allow for a helpful conflation of characters where collectively, these could be seen to represent women's interests in John, as well as somehow coinciding with the redemptive ministry of Jesus/Holy Spirit in their opposition to sin/patriarchy.

The Gospel of John has been acknowledged, within both Feminist and non-Feminist scholarship, as affording a unique role to women. John's in-depth characterisation, one of the features distinguishing John from the Synoptics, and an apparently more overt presence of female characters within the narrative, have provided much material for Feminist scholars in terms of developing a feminist ethic and theology based on this Gospel.[195] It is highly significant, for example, that at at least three pivotal points of the narrative – Jesus' anointing before burial (John 12:1-8), Jesus' execution (John 19:25a-27), and Jesus' resurrection (John 20:11-18) – not only should women be present, but that they should form the main actants upon which the narrative's meaning is structured.[196] By making use of theories of intertextuality, and in particular two sub-components of this theory, configuration and interfigurality, we will attempt to view as composite the ministry and narrative function depicted by some key female characters within the text.

---

[194] Although the Greek of the LXX and NT text are not identical, their semantic fields overlap and, in contemporary English translations, both are often rendered 'H/helper'. The initial idea for the link came from a paper written by my supervisor Prof. Jonathan Draper.
[195] See Kitzberger 1995, p. 585.
[196] To this list might also be added the performance of Jesus' first sign at the wedding in Cana at which the mother of Jesus is not only present but seemingly initiates the performance of the miracle (John 2:1-12).

4.2.2 Framing the use of Intertextuality

In a helpful introduction to the way intertetxuality has come to be understood within the field of literary studies, Graham Allan makes the following comments:

Texts, whether they be literary or non-literary, are viewed by modern theorists as lacking any kind of independent meaning. They are what theorists now call intertextual. The act of reading, theorists claim, plunges us into a network of textual relations. To interpret a text, to discover its meaning, or meanings, is to trace those relations. Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts. Meaning becomes something which exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates, moving out from the independent text into a network of textual relations. The text becomes the intertext.[197]

Allan goes on to claim, in light of the rise of the term's usage in recent years, that "one might be forgiven for assuming that intertextuality is a term that is generally understood and provides a stable set of critical procedures for interpretation" where, in fact, intertextuality "is defined so variously that it is, currently, akin to terms as ambiguous as 'the Imagination', 'history', or 'Postmodernism'.[198] In trying to situate the basis of the term's (definitional) fluidity, Allan remarks that this is due in large part to the term's emergence "during a transitional period in modern literary and cultural theory…usually described in terms of a move from structuralism to postructuralism…characterized as one in which assertions of objectivity, scientific rigour, methodological stability and other highly rationalistic-sounding terms are replaced by an emphasis on uncertainty, indeterminacy, incommunicability, subjectivity, desire, pleasure and play" where "intertextuality was initially employed by postructuralist theorists and critics in their attempt to disrupt notions of stable meaning and objective interpretation."[199]

In his introduction, Allan goes on to mention the socially constituted and constituting nature of text though he seems to do so by still implicitly maintaining the traditional distinction, or cordoning off, of the aesthetic dimension of texts from that of its impact on other social realms. Thus he says that textuality "is a term by no means exclusively

---

[197] Allan, G. 1997. *Intertextuality*. London: Routledge p.1.
[198] Allan, 1997, p.2.
[199] Allan, 1997, p.3.

related to literary works, or even to written communication...[where] intertextuality has been adapted by critics of non-literary art forms such as painting, music and architecture…[to the extent that] the manner in which accounts of intertextuality reflect visions of society and human relations" is made evident.[200]

Allan then goes on to describe how intertextuality may be used to describe and comment on the cultural trends and characteristics of particular historical periods.[201] Thus Allan seems to view intertextuality here as the means by which ideas become fluid and are transferred to, from, and through various forms of (aesthetic) media. Intertextuality, however, should not simply refer to the transfer and liquidity of ideas through what might be characterised as predominantly aesthetic texts, but to the way also in which relations of people, relations between people, are formed, augmented, challenged, changed and constituted by and through *production*.

This is admittedly a borrowing from a Marxist framework, the implications of which, for text production have already been demonstrated. Yet whereas this shift has been more readily accepted within the field of literary studies, it seems to me, that the field of biblical studies often still employs the now outmoded distinction and separation between aesthetic (or in the case of biblical studies – theological) judgement and the ethical, political or social judgements where the central character of a Marxist framework seems, to me, fundamentally opposed to any such strict separation. The *spirit* of the people is formed and constituted by and through the relationships of sensuous activity that exist in a given society, i.e. those relationships constituted by a coming together to materially produce and reproduce that society. Material (re-)production therefore, of any kind, is always inseparable from what constitutes the people religiously, socially, politically.[202]

---

[200] Allan, 1997, p.5.
[201] Allan, 1997, p.5.
[202] Though it is true that Marx denigrated any positive role of religion and so thus would likely not speak of societal relationships in 'religious' terms, nevertheless the relationships of material reproduction were still, for Marx, inseparable from and determinative of, all other social relations, regardless of the terms in which one chose to speak of them.

In a slightly older but more extensive introduction to the theory of intertextuality Judith Still and Michael Worton write that "[t]he dominant relations of production and the socio-political context – which could be included within a broad definition of *text* – are of course a major force influencing every aspect of a text."[203] They go on to state that "[t]he theory of intertextuality insists that a text (for the moment to be understood in the narrower sense) cannot exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole, and so does not function as a closed system."[204]

The authors talk of texts as instances of repetition throughout history and as "references, quotations and influences of every kind" which "can range from the most conscious and sophisticated elaboration of other poets' work, to a scholarly use of sources, or the quotation (with or without the use of quotation marks) of snatches of conversation typical of a certain social milieu at a certain historical moment."[205]The authors also speak of the "cross-fertilisation"[206] of texts, by other texts which, despite its essentialist implications, lends itself to the type of organic process in which the production of literature and texts generally are involved.

Finally, the authors speak about the "axes of intertextuality" along which such fertilisation might take place where texts enter "via authors (who are, first, readers)" and readers who are "co-producers". Hence the conception of 'text' within theories of intertextuality not only includes non-literary texts, where this is extended to material phenomena, but also includes people, whom at least the authors apparently regard as co-constitutive in the formation of social texts.[207]

Such notions of intertextuality are not often explicitly employed in the area of biblical studies, and indeed seem still to defy the conventional understanding of 'text' within this field. Usually when biblical scholars use the term intertextaulity, or associated terms

---

[203] Still, J and Worton, M. 1991. "Introduction" in *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*. Worton, M. and Still, J. (Eds.) Manchester: Manchester University Press, p.1.
[204] Still and Worton 1991, p. 1.
[205] Still and Worton 1991, p. 1.
[206] Still and Worton 1991, p. 1.
[207] Still and Worton 1991, p. 3.

relevant to the field of literary studies, they still have in mind issues of an historical nature related to dependency or authorial intent. This is perhaps not surprising given the at least tacit assumption of the bible as inspired literature where meaning derived must, to some extent, be shown to (historically) objective.

As an exception to this practice Jean Zumstein reviews the effect of intertextuality on John and begins by citing the work of Kristeva and Barthes who were amongst the first to explicitly develop the concept. Zumstein says the following in which she quotes both Kristeva and Barthes:

> Kristeva proposed that no text can be formulated independently of what has already been written in other texts (Kristeva 1978). The tradition of the "already said" is a deep well from which every author draws. On this point, Roland Barthes stresses that "every text is an intertext; other texts can be perceived within it at various levels, in various forms which may be more or less clearly discerned: the texts of earlier culture and those of its contemporary context. Every text is a new construction of past quotations" (1996, 998). The gospel of John is no exception to this rule. It too is a networked text, that is, an intertext.[208]

Zumstein goes on to make a distinction between what she terms *intertextuality* and *intratextuality*, the former referring to confluence between different or separate texts, and the latter, that within the same text.[209] When applying the notion or theory of intertextuality to the Gospel of John, there are also, to be sure, instances where one might be able to propose and even suppose intertextual dependence on relatively indubitable grounds and thus, in the same way, gain a better understanding of John's intensions. Primarily, however, this is not the focus of this study where we seek, on a methodological

---

[208] Zumstein, J. "Intratextuality and Intertextuality in the Gospel of John"*Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature*. 2008. Thatcher, T. and Moore, S. D. (Eds.). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, p. 121

[209] Zumstein states that "*intertextuality* refers to the basic fact that a reading always takes place against the backdrop of certain pre-texts or in correlation with other texts…Put more precisely, the phenomenon of intertextuality exists in the interplay between, on the one side, a "hypotext" or reference text, and, on the other, a "hypertext" or reception text (see Piégy-Gros 1996). This general definition can be further sharpened: the term *intratextuality* is used in the more narrow sense of an interplay within the work itself; on the other hand, *intertextuality* refers, *stricto sensu*, to the phenomenon as developed between separate literary works." p. 122.

level, rather to gather the force of composite characterisational attributes for informing the more broader, though definite, Feminist ethic assumed at the outset.

As we have seen from some of the definitions quoted above often, quite apart from our own volition, texts take on a life independent of the author's intensions, even more so once they enter the world of broader public consumption. Scripture, I believe, is no exception to this rule. Not only does Scripture comprise texts which are ancient, but ones which have been read, re-read, re-interpreted and re-produced through the centuries by countless generations. They have been irreversibly imbedded in collective cultures in repeated fashion where the collective conception of these texts has shaped the material manifestation of the cultural. They also, according to Christian tradition, have the peculiar characteristic of being inspired meaning that they carry a special and unique truth of some kind. Yet if we concede, as is proposed in theories of intertextuality, that texts extend into the material circumstances of society and even people within those societies, implications must be drawn as regards the process of Scripture's own production and development.

4.2.3 Interfigurality/Configuration as instances of Intertextuality[210]

If my understanding of Kitzberger's approach is correct characterisation bears some parallels to the component of figuration within theories of intertextuality. Configuration and interfigurality are central to Kitzberger's approach as modes and mechanisms of intertextuality. Characterisation, according to literary theory, like figuration, is the process by which individual characters are formed on the basis of detail about them provided by the author. Yet this process is as much dependent on this provision and description as it is on formulation of these characters in the minds of the readers/hearers.

---

[210] I have followed Kitzberger's methodology as set out in Kitzberger, I. R. 1995. "Mary of Bethany and Mary of Magdala – Two female characters in the Johannine passion narrative: a feminist, narrative-critical reader response". *New Testament Studies*. Vol. 41, pp.564-586. Similar accounts of this may also be found in other articles where Kitzberger's methodology remains basically unchanged. See Kitzberger, I.R. 2003. "Transcending Gender Boundaries in John" in *A Feminist Companion to John, Vol.II*. London: Continuum and "Synoptic Women in John: Interfigural Readings", in *eadem* (ed.), *Transformative Encounters: Jesus and Women Re-viewed* (Biblical Interpretation Series, 43; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), pp. 77-111.

Characterisation, or figuration, must therefore necessarily precede both configuration and interfigurality where the former two both represent the process in which characters are built up and extended as they begin to be associated with other characters, through various details, in the unfolding of the narrative. Thus Kitzberger states that "characters are not only evaluated by the functions of their actions in relation to the plot, but are treated as autonomous beings and are assessed in the way we evaluate real people."[211]

Citing David Rhoads Kitzberger says "[t]he interpreter reconstructs what kind of 'persons' the characters are from the narrator's descriptions and characterisations, the character's interactions with others, their motives, and so on, then assigns them traits, noting how the traits are revealed and whether they change in the story."[212] The activity of assigning traits, or the process by which characters come to develop traits and qualities is important, not simply in that they will help the naratee to determine how the characters navigate plot lines, but later on, in the process of con- and interfiguration, in relation to what traits or characteristics are shared between characters. Kitzberger cites W. G. Müller's definition of the terms configuration as "constellation or grouping of characters" while interfiguration denotes the "interrelations that exist between characters of different texts". Müller also, according to Kitzberger, maintains the former as "one of the most important dimensions of intertextuality".[213, 214]

Kitzberger invokes what she calls a "*strictly reader-oriented approach* to narrative" which "implies that story and discourse, content and form are inseperable" and

---

[211] Kitzberger 1995, p. 565.

[212] Rhoads in Kitzberger 1995, p.566

[213] Müller in Kitzberger 1995, p.566. While authors such as Zumstein maintain a distinction between *intra-* and *intertextuality* where the former refers to 'intertextual' dimensions within the same text, Kitzberger seems to take intertextuality as referring to such dimensions either within an individual text or between texts. See Zumstein, J. "Intratextuality and Intertextuality in the Gospel of John", p.122.

[214] Kitzberger's introduction of these terms is informative in explaining what she means by employing an "interfigural view" of (certain) characters. "I will show that the author of John must have known the Synoptic Gospels and transformed the 'material' provided by them. I also assume and consider it very likely that not only the author, but also his audience, readers or listeners, were familiar with the Synoptic traditions. Otherwise, as I will show, some text-signals which indicate intertextuality could not have been noticed as such by the readers and consequently several dimensions of the texts would have remained concealed to them and some puzzles would have remained unsolved." (Kitzberger, pp. 566-567) Thus it is apparent that Kitzberger is using intertextual theory at least to some extent to establish authorial intent and even dependency. As was indicated earlier this is not the primary concern of this paper.

"necessitates the close reading of the texts…[reflecting] the (possible) communication process between text and reader."[215] Kitzberger goes on to mention some of the ways by which the relationship between text and reader functions to produce meaning saying that "*Gaps, discontinuity, ambiguity,* etc. in the text deserve…special consideration because they have a unique function within the reading process and are the real turning points of the narrative. The reader is forced to fill in gaps, and make decisions, and by doing so he/she creates the meaning of the text accordingly and uniquely. Thus, texts are experienced by the reader as *texts* which are *open* to different possible and legitimate interpretations."[216]

Because Kitzberger's is a "narrative-critical reader-response" approach undertaken with Feminist concerns she opts for "a *female first reader, i.e. a woman of the Johannine community*" as a paradigm through which to view the Gospel. This "imagined female first reader" as Kitzberger explains remains a "construct" and, as such contains "much of a self-portrait" and therefore notes that historical reconstruction because it "belongs within the historical-critical paradigm" which may be contrasted with imagination is therefore "not at issue here."[217]

Kitzberger justifies this by saying that while "to some extent the response to the texts might be independent of gender issues" Kitzberger is "convinced that it makes a difference whether a man or a woman encounters these characters during the reading process because this takes place not only at an intellectual level but also at an emotional level."[218] While making these qualifications vis-à-vis the historical-critical paradigm, Kitzberger herself does not dispense with focus on the historical dimension entirely and it would seem, judging by the comments immediately following this section, that she is concerned both for the existential well-being of modern (most likely Western) women

---

[215] Kitzberger 1995, pp. 568-569.
[216] Kitzberger 1995, p. 569.
[217] Kitzberger 1995, p. 569.
[218] Kitzberger 1995, pp. 569-570.

reading the text of John,[219] but also, from a historical perspective, for the "reconstruction of women's history" in more general terms.[220]

Kitzberger explains that essential to first-time reading is the notion of sequential and temporal reading which involves the notion of plotted time. This may be contrasted with what Kitzberger calls narrative or "story time" in that plotted time perceives events and actions as they unfold sequentially in the narrative so that while, for example something might have already occurred within the narrative or story time but not yet have been narrated, this information is viewed as being still inaccessible to the narratee.[221]

To my mind the notions of configuration and interfigurality can be employed in three ways. First, as a literary device by the writer/composer of the given material, i.e. where certain characters are given, intentionally by the author, similar characteristics so as to create character groups or identify certain characters with others (the reasons for which may be rhetorical, theological, polemical etc.). The second refers to similarities, links, resonances which the subsequent reader is able to discern (explicitly or implicitly) which can be independent of the intensions of the author (the fact of being able to perhaps dependent on the reader's issuing from different context, social or temporal). Thirdly, the notions can be employed as a critical tool within literary analysis whereby the critic intentionally and explicitly looks for and names similarities and resonances, again which can be independent of the author's intensions (the reasons for which, on the part of the critic, may be rhetorical, theological, polemical etc.).

Obviously, an example of the first instance might be applicable in where both the second and the third occur. The second type is important, while its distinction from the third might seem superfluous, since it lays the basis for an integral part of both the text's production and reception, that of independence – a key theme within the notion of intertextuality. Thus, independently of the author, and seemingly of the reader where this

---

[219] Kitzberger writes "By learning about female characters [presumably who have some historical basis] a female reader is offered some models of identification and this makes an impact on her identity and self-esteem." Kitzberger 1995, p.570.
[220] Kitzberger 1995, p.570.
[221] Kitzberger 1995, pp.570-571.

happens at a subconscious level, themes or aspects of the text which may have been dormant in terms of meaning-producing affects, are catalysed by factors particular to the person of another context precisely because this context differs from that of the text's authors and its initial/intended readers/hearers.

Though Kitzberger assumes an "imagined first reader" and thus superficially her approach embodies the second of the above, she acknowledges that this is really a construct and even "self-portrait" and so we must revert to assign her use to that of the third, i.e. as literary critic, concerned to reconstruct the role of women in the Johannine community. The major difference however between Kitzberger's approach and the one I wish to adopt, centres on the issue of intentionality, which I believe Kitzberger still holds on to (thus, in actual fact, her approach can be considered to be a engagement of all three uses). But since it is only the first that deals with the author's intent she still maintains an overdependence on intentionality as means towards achieving historicity/objectivity as grounds for the legitimacy of the role of women within the Johannine community.

4.2.3 Cautions from Schaberg

Given that we are seeking the specific methodological application of intertextuality where attention is given to particular female characters in John, I have included an assessment of Schaberg where she cautions against the practice of character conflation to which applications such as those of Kitzberger are potentially prone. Jane Schaberg, in her work around the figure of Mary Magdalene, provides a cautionary warning against the pitfalls of conflation where she sees this as jeopardising valuable historical information and, in some cases, even distorting that information.[222]

Though Schaberg's analysis is here mainly historical and she is not dealing explicitly with theories of intertextuality, the dangers of employing such theories imprudently are apparent, for example, when one is dealing with a figure as iconic as Mary Magdalene. Schaberg writes that:

---

[222] Schaberg, J. 2003. "Thinking Back through Mary Magdalene" in Levine, A. J. with Blickenstaff, M. (Eds.) 2003. *A Feminist Companion to John*. (Vol.1). London: Sheffiled Academic Press. pp.175ff.

[T]he process of harmonizing and "legend-making" with regard to the anointing accounts of Jesus (by a woman in Matthew and Mark, by a sinful woman in Luke, and by Mary of Bethany in John) yields one [i.e. as conceived in the popular mind] actual anointing of Jesus: by Mary Magdalene 'the sinner', whose act is penitential and loving, not prophetic…One reason the conflation was and is so popular is that it fulfils the desire to fill in the gaps in the texts concerning the Magdalene (and perhaps, earlier, concerning the unnamed anointing woman, whose deed was to be told 'wherever the Gospel is preached in the whole world…in memory of her' [Mk 14.9]). Conflation produced a biography of the woman who was clearly more important to the story of Jesus than the gospel writers explicitly indicated…[T]he fact [is] that this biography gave the Magdalene a past of sexual 'sin' that could be and was exploited and expanded…It was Luke who downgraded the anointing woman from prophet to 'sinner', implying that her sin was sexual promiscuity, prostitution…Inclusion of the element of prostitution in the later Magdalene legend fulfils the desire, the need, to downgrade the authority of a woman, as well as the desire to attach to female sexuality the notions of evil, repentance and mercy. Unless one would want to hold that the anointing prophet historically was Mary Magdalene—and I do not—it appears that the Magdalene inherited the slur Luke directed at the unnamed prophet.[223]

Schaberg goes on to examine some of the major traditions associated with Mary Magdalene which appear to be contingent to their geographical location and which became the sites of their later development and embellishment.[224] While many of the popular traditions regarded Mary Magdalene as a figure for emulation, Schaberg shows, in light of the tradition of Magdalene as 'sinner', which she contests developed early on and was a product of the conflation already mentioned, that these were not always for the 'right' reasons, viz. that by the time of the Reformation the Magdalene "became almost exclusively a figure of penitence for Protestants and of penitence and contemplation for Catholics."[225, 226]

---

[223] Schaberg 2003, p. 180.
[224] Schaberg 2003, p. 183.
[225] Schaberg 2003, p. 182.
[226] In reference to the conflation of the Magdalene with Mary of Bethany in John's gospel Schaberg writes, "Again, the women from the other stories have overwhelmed the New Testament Mary Magdalene. In this case, the power to tame her comes most strongly from the story of Mary of Bethany, listening and silent at the feet of Jesus. It comes from the story which many have thought of as promoting the liberation of women, but which…promotes with dangerous subtlety the patriarchal restriction of women." Schaberg 2003, p.188.

While it is apparent, given the tradition attesting to Mary's presence at the tomb in all four canonical Gospels, and thus, by implication, her witness of the resurrection, that Mary Magdalene played a significant role, not only in the narrative re-telling of the Gospel tradition, but in the historical life of Jesus, the effect of the New Testament conflations, popularised through later traditions as well as the embellishment of the latter through legend is, in Schaberg's opinion, to reduce the Magdalene figure to one of penitence and contemplation, thus effectively neutralising subversive potency otherwise granted to one apostolically commissioned:

> The conflations and accretions successfully reduce the significance of the New Testament Magdalene, with the focus even in the *Life of Saint Mary Magdalen* on penitence and contemplation, rather than on prophetic action, courage, perception. Single, she functions as a sexual being only as a whore, then lives as a chaste penitent whose love is spiritual and whose beauty—especially her hair—one is allowed to admire. In the *Legenda aurea*, however, she has miraculous power to aid others in conception, and is in this sense a 'mother'. As long as the legend emphasizes her Easter role and her apostleship, she is contrasted with the fearful and unbelieving male disciples, and so is a somewhat subversive character. But she offers no real challenge to the hierarchy of the medieval church, subordinating herself in the story to Peter and Maximinus (who are threatened by her), and living a life more contemplative than active. Authorized by the risen Christ, she strangely has no official authority. Even though her characteristic is extravagant love for Christ, from whom she draws all her meaning, and her life is depicted as one of extremes, there is a controlled calmness and prudence about her in these legends. She is a woman of warm emotion and loyalty, but not of ideas or great intelligence. She is presented as understanding herself as a sinner who has been given mercy, and in the end she has nothing much to say to others except to point to herself as a sinner. In short, even though she is acknowledged as the most extraordinary woman, she does not disturb but rather confirms the patriarchal structures. She is at their service.[227]

As Schaberg tries to show, while the Gospel tradition involving Mary, and the other women at the tomb, might be assumed as historically reliable, its affect and impact have nevertheless been diminished through subsequent downgrading of the Magdalene figure. As we will go on to see, Schaberg maintains that this occurs not only through later

---

[227] Schaberg 2003, pp. 188-189.

legend-making but already at the level of Gospel compilation to the extent that little significance is ultimately afforded Mary Magdalene, or the other women disciples, as regards their apostolic leadership. Schaberg therefore aims at countering this tendency by re-configuring/re-conceptualising the role of Mary Magdalene thus restoring to her some of the credibility indicative of a tradition of this significance.

To say something on the point of the historicity it seems plausible that, to some extent, a deflation of the Magdalene figure has occurred already at a compositional level in John. If we consider her role from an historical perspective the evidence seems to be in favour of a (first) appearance to a group of women to which Mary Magdalene was party in light of the tradition's inclusion in all four Gospels.[228] Given the wider patriarchal context it seems unlikely that all of the Gospels would prioritise this account if it were not in some way historically reliable. Schaberg (and others) are right in discerning a tension within the Gospel accounts, particularly John, where there is evidence of competing traditions to apostolic authority, as evidenced by the subsequent resurrection appearances to male disciples in John 20 as well as in the contestation around the authority of the beloved disciple in the addendum of John 21.

As to the attribution of the label 'repentant sinner' due to conflation with the Lukan accounts and the negative impact this might have had in subsequent church tradition upon the Magdalene figure, the argument can swing both ways. While it seems obvious that were a serious contender for leadership within the Jesus movement post-resurrection to be of questionable moral integrity this would have detracted from the person's credibility, it would, at the same time, have been equally damaging and scandalous for Jesus to have been closely associated with such a person in as far the public relations of the Jesus movement was concerned.

On the one hand we have the argument, which Schaberg supports, that such attributions were for reasons of denigration and discreditation in lieu of patriarchal bias. But, like the fact of the initial inclusion of the tradition, i.e. the appearance of Jesus first to a woman,

---

[228] Mt. 28: 1; Mk. 16: 1 (and 16: 9); Lk. 24: 10 and John 20: 1.

the inclusion, or even later conflation of Mary as sexual sinner is something perhaps that Gospel writers would not have included had it not been based on solid tradition. The question then should be whether such detail, if taken in conjunction with our conceptualisation of the figure of Mary Magdalene, expands or diminishes the inclusive view of the ministry of Jesus.

To some extent then, Schaberg has a valid point which should be heeded, namely that it is possible that a Mary, who had no historical association with sexual promiscuity was attributed with such characteristics simply in the service of patriarchal authority, and that, at the same time, it presents us with a false picture of the type of woman disciple that was suited to Jesus' ministry, viz. the repentant sinner. On the other hand, in reference now to emphases characteristic of a Liberationist approach, Jesus is usually conceived of as having associated with the outcast and marginalised in society and, indeed, this is largely from where Liberation theology draws its potency. Thus, instead of uncovering the historical processes of how and why Mary Magdalene came to be (falsely) regarded as a sexual sinner, the question perhaps more subversively, could be posed as to what significance the Jesus movement could draw from association with someone of this calibre, to the extent even (at least on the basis of some claims) that there existed the possibility of Mary's apostolic succession of Jesus.

Thus Schaberg's analysis serves as a poignant and not-at-all unhelpful reminder of the dangers in disregarding some of the historical nuances around conceiving of biblical characters, whether in the popular psyche or within scholarly circles. The difficulty is unfortunately amplified when dealing with characters who, because of the patriarchal context, already receive only marginal and sometimes underdeveloped characterisation within the narrative. This gives rise to the gaps in the text, to which Schaberg also makes reference, where the desire to flesh out historical detail of characters obviously more than marginal to the Jesus story becomes felt. Behind this, there is arguably still subversive potential when theories of intertextuality are enlisted. While not wishing to downplay the historical detail discernible in the text as per individual female character, perhaps the voice of female characters, taken collectively, is stronger and issues more of a challenge.

I have included this article by Schaberg primarily for two reasons. Firstly, as already indicated, given that I am employing theories of intertextuality which by their nature tend towards what seems to be the natural assemblage of detail around certain characters who might share similar traits, qualities and characteristics, care must be taken to avoid a characterisation of Mary Magdalene which counteracts rather than strengthens her subversive potency. Secondly, Schaberg's study shows how, quite independently of what detail appears in the literary text, and subsequent to the text's final formal formation, a figure/character such as Mary Magdalene can take on a life of their own in the popular mind of succeeding generations. Schaberg therefore demonstrates, perhaps unwittingly, the effects, and indeed processes, of intertextuality.

To my mind Schaberg reaches something of an impasse in this article as a result of being bound by strictures of the historical-critical paradigm in order to validate her claims while still wanting to transcend these in her employment of concepts such as the 'exegetical imagination.' Schaberg is at pains to detail the adverse affects of Magdalene legend-making and, in so doing appeals to the power of this process while, at the same time, fails to exploit this power for countervailing traditions in being bound to the historicity necessary to authorise these. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Schaberg's attempts are without effect. We should by now be familiar with the notion that all historicising is at the same time a form of legend-making, and to this end her work has undoubtedly contributed to a greater consciousness around the Magdalene figure. Having said that I believe there are still ways by which this can further be enhanced and to this end we now turn to an intertextual approach in considering Mary Magdalene, as well as the other 'Maries' of John's Gospel.

4.2.5 Interfigurality/Configuration and the Maries of John's Gospel

Kitzberger makes her first substantial observation as she comes to deal with the text of John 11: 1-46, the raising of Lazarus, namely that, because no prior mention or information is given pertaining to the figures of Mary and Martha, yet Bethany is identified to the reader as the village of Mary and her sister Martha, John's implied reader

must have already heard or known about Mary and Martha from another source.[229] Likewise, Mary is introduced as the "one who anointed the Lord" and yet no prior indication is given of her role in this within the plotted time of John's Gospel, leaving us to assume, again Kitzberger argues, that John's readers have ulterior access to (other) traditions. On this basis, Kitzberger begins the process, or shows how the process, of interfiguration, unfolds.

Because, in John's version, Mary of Bethany performs the dual action of feet-wiping and anointing, Kitzberger maintains that John's Mary (of Bethany) invokes the images and thus characters of the similar accounts contained in Mark/Matthew and Luke with the result that the character traits or qualities of being prophetic, i.e. foreseeing the death of Jesus and acting appropriately, acknowledging/confessing him as the Messiah, and demonstrating love for Jesus, are all assigned to Mary of Bethany. Of significance here is the fact, as Kitzberger highlights, of Martha and Mary's implied confession of their faith in Jesus over the power of death which forms the first dialogue of Jesus' encounter with Martha and then with Mary, a confession which John places on the lips of Martha and Mary word for word – "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."[230] Furthermore, the fact that Jesus is referred to as "the teacher" by the Mary/Martha couplet implies discipleship on their part.[231]

Important motifs for this pericope include life death, faith, presence (of Jesus), and weeping. Notice also the conspiracy of the Jew's to put Jesus to death because of Jesus' sign of raising Lazarus. This is both ironic and paradoxical when one considers that the appropriate response from such a sign should be to engender faith or belief, and even that faith or belief should precede and thus precipitate such a sign, as it did in the case of Mary and Martha. Yet this was not the case with the Jewish council for whom the sign instead precipitates (the desire for) more death.[232]

---

[229] Kitzberger 1995, p. 571.
[230] John 11: 21 NRSV.
[231] John 11: 28.
[232] John 11: 45 -53.

Kitzberger then proceeds to analyse John 12:1-8, the pericope narrating the anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany. Once more, using the mechanisms of interfigurality and configuration, Kitzberger is able to draw connections between Mary of Bethany in this Johannine version of the anointing with those in the Synoptics (Luke 7:36-50; Mark 14:3-9; Matthew 26:6-13). The fact that Mary, in John's gospel, performs the dual action of both anointing and feet-wiping establishes, according to Kitzberger, intertextuality on two levels—both with the Matthean/Markan accounts, in which only an anointing is recorded, and with the Lukan account in which both foot-wiping and anointing is recorded.[233] Thus not only are Mary's actions, with regards to the foot-washing, pre-emptive, but demonstrate that Mary, as disciple, already understands and embodies the appropriate action required by Jesus of his disciples.[234]

Significantly, Luke's account of the anointing does not mention Bethany. The link to Bethany is made in Mark and Matthew. Luke adds the detail concerning the woman's spiritual status, labelling her a 'sinner' (Luke 7:37). Kitzberger's logic as to why Mary of Bethany is not mentioned specifically as a sinner and what this indicates seems speculative. She says the following regarding John's version:

> Now this narrative denotes that Mary, unlike the woman in Luke, is *not* a sinner [emphasis Kitzberger's]. This becomes obvious by the gap in the text. As Mary is no sinner she has no reason to weep and there is no need, therefore, to wipe tears away before being able to anoint Jesus' feet...[and concludes in light of this that t]he interfigurality established between Mary of Bethany and the sinful woman is thus marked by both identification and redefinition.[235]

While Kitzberger is keen to assert not just the similarities but also the way in which the characters of Luke's and John's account differ, her motivation for which is not clear, it seems to me she does not venture far enough in exploiting all of the creative surplus that exists between the two characters. Firstly, though it is true that in John's account Mary of Bethany's spiritual integrity is not explicitly questioned, this does not mean necessarily

---

[233] Kitzberger 1995, p. 579. Though Kitzberger deals with this in a separate article, the incident in John also establishes intertetxuality/interfigurality between the anointing by Mary of Bethany and her foot-wiping with the foot-washing by Jesus himself which takes place later in John's gospel. See Kitzberger, I.R. 1994. "Love and Footwashing: John 13.1-20 and Luke 7.36-50 Read Intertextually", *BibInt* , pp. 190-206.
[234] Kitzberger 1995, p. 580.
[235] Kitzberger 1995, p. 579.

that she was not a sinner. The fact of having been deeply connected to one of the main signs Jesus performs prior to his death, that this sign involves such close proximity to death, implicates all three, Jesus, Martha and Mary in what must have been questionable, if not scandalous, activity as might have been viewed by Jewish authorities. John tells us that subsequent to Jesus raising Lazarus the Pharisees sought to put Jesus to death. While the justification given for this in the narrative is their fear of the people believing in Jesus on account of his signs and of the Romans,[236] the possibility of Jesus' raising Lazarus being regarded as scandalous and thus being used as political/religious grounds for Jesus' arrest and persecution seems, at the very least, plausible. Here Jesus commits the offence of associating not only with women in grief who, we must assume, would have had recent contact with the dead man, but proceeds to address and interact with the dead man himself. The comment on the smell at the tomb serves not merely to validate the miracle (i.e. that he really was dead) but to thoroughly implicate Jesus, and all those with him, in their proximity to death.

Secondly, intertextuality is being established here at yet another level. Kitzberger goes on to analyse and establish interfigurality between this pericope and that of the post-resurrection garden scene involving Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Using the same concepts and literary devices (interfigurality and configuration) Kitzberger is able to draw significant parallels pooling the theological resources of both characters and the events they precipitate. Though Kitzberger makes mention of the 'Maries' by the cross she does not deal with them in terms of configuration.[237]

In light of the intertextual reformulation of the role of Mary Magdalene, the situational priority ascribed to her in the narrative at John 20 should allow her to represent not just the voice of a single character or even historical figure, but that of composite voices, ascribed through the means of intertextual inference which we have already covered. This raises the stakes somewhat in as far as the outcome of the assessment of this pericope is concerned, since it is now representative of women's interests in general in John.

---

[236] John 11: 45-53.
[237] Kitzberger 1995, p.580.

If we then consider Kitzberger's treatment of the post-resurrection garden scene of John 20: 1-18 we see that it is significant for its many parallels with John 11:1-46 and 12:1-8 and therefore for the process of establishing configuration between the characters of Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany. Here, Kitzberger suggests that her 'imagined first reader' "knows that Mary Magdalene was the most eminent of Jesus' *female disciples*" from "her knowledge of the Synoptic Gospels, and most likely also from oral tradition alive in her community".[238] Of most significance here are the following connections: both pericopes involve a tomb; both involve death (the first of Lazarus, the second of Jesus); both pericopes involve a Mary who is considered to be a disciple of Jesus, since both use 'teacher' as a form of address for Jesus (c.f. John 11:28, 20:16); both pericopes involve weeping; both involve a Mary going to the tomb to weep/mourn for the diseased and finally; both are centred around characters between whom there exists an apparently close relationship. In other words, we can assign to both pericopes, even though they are different stories involving different characters, the same assessment: Mary, a disciple of Jesus, arrives at a tomb to weep/mourn for the loss of a loved one and experiences a transformative/revelatory encounter with Jesus.[239]

Though in the first pericope Mary's intention to weep at the tomb is not stated explicitly, this is presumed by the Jews and is the ultimate outcome thus establishing a direct link between the two Maries. Similarly, her state of mourning is presupposed given the death of her brother. The encounter with Jesus proves to be transformative in both instances in that it engenders faith and a manifestation of God's glory and further confirmation of the status of both women as disciples.[240]

---

[238] Kitzberger 1995, p. 581.

[239] Of possible interest here is an article by Adele Reinhartz who maintains that Jesus' use of the address 'woman' could be a narrative signal for ensuing revelatory moments in John. The address is common to Jesus' dealing with his mother (2:4), the Samaritan woman at the well (4:21), and his encounter with Mary Magdalene outside the tomb (20:15). See Reinhartz, A. 2003. "Women in the Johannine Community" in *A Feminist Companion to John, Vol.II* Levine, A. (Ed.) London: Sheffield Academic Press. pp.18-19. Thus Reinhartz, in a way similar to the grouping of characters by name, viz. Mary, groups certain female characters on the basis of their common term of address. The oddity of why Jesus' mother is not referred to by name anywhere in the gospel therefore could be a 'textual gap' in which the reader is being asked to establish a link between the 'Maries'.

[240] Kitzberger 1995, p.584

4.2.6 Tilling the grounds for eschatalogical mythologizing

The theme or motif of creation/re-creation has long been acknowledged as present in the Gospel of John.[241] Furthermore the idea of the garden scene, where Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, in John 20 as the/a locus of such activity is also not a novel one. But by laying down the basis on which to see this pericope as such, based on the work of scholars passed, and read against the backdrop of an investigation into the text of Genesis 3 the question is posed whether John 20, taken on the basis of an assumed emancipatory impulse, can be legitimately seen as counteractive to the patriarchy embodied in Genesis 3, as traditionally conceived. Following from this, and working within a liberationist paradigm sympathetic towards Feminist concerns, an analysis of the garden scene in John 20 will be undertaken where, having laid the foundations to see in John, and particularly John 20, the motif of re-creation as central, we will try to investigate the character and quality of such re-creative activity.

Perhaps not incidentally John and John 20 have also been significant focal points for Feminist scholars in recent years. There are a number of reasons for this some of which are worth mentioning at this point. Of all the gospels, John is replete with images, motifs and characters which may be seen as lending themselves toward the development of a Feminist ethic. The creation motif features here, though it should be noted that this motif can be used equally, whether consciously or not, to reinforce elements of patriarchal thinking.[242] The inclusion of women as central characters of the Gospel and John's tendency towards extensive characterisation, which surpasses that of the Synoptics, also

---

[241] See Suggit, J. 1999. "The Atonement in the Fourth Gospel as Re-Creation." *Neotestimentica*. 33. 1. Suggit explores the theme of re-creation in John, particularly the garden scene, with its parallels to Genesis and Jesus as the *kêpouros*. As Suggit shows, testimony for viewing the creation/re-creation motif in John exists from as early as the Patristic period within writers such as Chrysostom, Origen and Athanasius (Suggit 1999: 3,5). Deborah Sawyer, in "John 19.34: From Crucifixion to Birth, or Creation," *A Feminist Companion to John, vol.II*, surveys Augustine's treatment of John 19:34 in seeing in this as a birthing motif and possible parallel to Gen.2:21 where the LXX and John both make use of *pleuran*. More recently Joseph Mukuna has advanced the hypothesis of the issuing of the Holy Spirit in John 20 as a parallel to the Genesis creation account of 1:7 by focusing on the metaphor of breathing. See Mukuna, J. 2011. *Language and Theology: a case study of the breathing metaphor in John 20:22*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu Natal. See also J.K. Brown who advances this hypothesis in Brown, J.K. 2010. "Creation's Renewal in the Gospel of John." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*. 72, pp. 282-283.

[242] See Sawyer, D. "John 19.34: From Crucifixion to Birth, or Creation?" and Fehribach, A. "The 'Birthing' Bridegroom: The Portrayal of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel" both in Levine, A.J. (Ed.) 2003. *A Feminist Companion to John, Vol.II*. London: Sheffield Academic Press.

counts in favour of a Feminist ethic, where such characters have held the imagination of scholars and lay alike for generations.[243] The centrality of Mary Magdalene within the narrative structure and her proximity to Jesus has also provided much material for Feminist scholars.

Having said that, at least from the perspective of Feminist studies, John is not without its problems and, at times, it would seem that there is material of a sufficiently patriarchal bias within the Gospel which mitigates that lending itself to a Feminist ethic. In particular here, are the high christology of John, exclusively male imagery predominantly characterising Jesus' relationship to God, what appears to be tension around the issue of (male) leadership within the church in the form of the addendum of John 21, and, linked to this, the apparent supercession of Mary's apostolic commission by that of the other disciples in the form of the issuing of the Spirit in John 20.[244] Bearing these caveats in mind, some of which will later be picked up, we will nevertheless embark on the construction of a positive feminist ethic from the available material. To this end, we begin by surveying some of the literature that has posited 'garden-renewal' imagery in the Gospel.

4.2.6.1 De Troyer

In an intriguing article titled "The Garden: A Crucial Element or Later Addition to the Resurrection Stories?" Kristen De Troyer has proposed a novel way for understanding the garden as the site of God's eschatological/re-creative activity.[245] Without going into the detail of her use of OT and inter-testimental literature to arrive at this, it will be necessary to at least summarise her findings of the Genesis text with which she deals since its relevance is also suited to this paper.

---

[243] Kitzberger 1995, p. 585.
[244] See here Jane Schaberg's problemetising of the succession of the narratives in Schaberg, J. "The Empty Tomb and Appearance to Mary Magdalene" p. 63, finally published as Schaberg, J. 2004. *The Resurrection of Mary Magdalene*. New York/London: Continuum.
[245] De Troyer, K. 2012. "The Garden: A Crucial Element or Later Addition to the Resurrection Stories?" in Van Oyen, G. and Shepherd, T. (Eds.) *Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium). Leuven: Peeters.

De Troyer begins by pointing out that the Hebrew word most commonly used for "garden" is *gan* and that though *gan* is indeed used in the relevant Genesis passage (Genesis 2: 8) there is usually debate as to whether this includes the plant- and animal-life previously created by God or is a separately demarcated area.[246] De Troyer then shows, later in the article, how the Hebrew terms for garden, *gan* and *pardes* (the latter De Troyer describes as a "Persian loan-word" of which there are only three instances in Hebrew material[247]) come to be translated in the LXX as *paradeisos*. She explains that there are more instances of *paradeisos* than the Hebrew permits if one takes its direct equivalent as *pardes*. But the Greek often renders *gan* as *paradeisos* as well, as indeed is the case in Genesis 2: 8. According to De Troyer, it would appear that where "garden" is used in reference to, or associated with, the divinity, the Greek of the LXX tends to rend this *paradeisos* regardless of whether *gan* or *pardes* is used in the Hebrew.[248]

The remaining content of De Troyer's article then traces the etymological trajectories pertaining to the terms' subsequent usage in Hebrew and Greek material so that she is able to affirm at least some conceptual association between gardens, paradise, gardens of burial, eschatological hope/expectation, *and* gardens of burial *as* loci of eschatological hope/expectation. If De Troyer is correct in her surmising that a conceptual/associative link is progressively established throughout the Old Testament, Inter-testimental, and New Testament literature between *garden* and *paradise* such that *garden* carried eschatological connotations by the time of the New Testament and that gardens of burial

---

[246] De Troyer 2012, p. 41. To my mind, it seems illogical that the garden in Eden does not include jurisdiction over the rest of the created order since both creation accounts contain commissions to the humans to tend the plant- and animal-life. Gen.2:8-9a reads "And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." (NRSV) Thus while the man appears to be created outside of the garden, all creation subsequent to God's placing the man in the garden takes place here. The garden, at least in the creation account of Genesis 2, appears therefore to include the created order intended for human habitation. It is however the expulsion of the man and the women from the garden, necessitated by the disruption of their relationship with God, which provides the narrative basis for its demarcation from the rest of creation. (The commission to tend the plant- and animal-life in the creation account of Genesis 1 appears at Gen.1:28-29. Here there is no mention of the garden, thus no grounds for separate demarcated space.) The dispute as to whether the garden was intended as a reference to the whole of creation or as a separate demarcation of idyllic habitation is an important question since the answer would determine the range and character of the salvific work of Jesus, i.e. whether this too is to include natural surrounds.
[247] De Troyer 2012, p. 47.
[248] De Troyer 2012, p. 46.

were *gardens of burial* precisely because of this association then significant implications may be drawn from Jesus' burial narrative in John 19 as well as his appearance to Mary Magdalene in the subsequent chapter.

Before dealing with these, let us summarise De Troyer's detailing of this section of John.[249] De Troyer points out that John is unique in having Jesus buried in a garden.[250] She goes on then to suggest that this is an intentional theme included and developed by John with her reference to Jesus' appearance to Mary where she mistakes him for the gardener (John 20: 15). Interestingly, as De Troyer points out, the Greek term used here is more accurately translated as "garden-keeper" – *kêpouros*.[251] De Troyer notes that while John does not use the word "paradise" (*paradeisos*) to refer to his garden (remember that De Troyer had previously shown the consistency of the use of this term through the Hebrew *pardes* throughout OT and Inter-testimental periods to arrive at a conception of gardens as paradise-like places, hence her inference that burial gardens were loci of eschatological hope/activity) the link is still established and maintained in John given his development of this "garden-theme" – Jesus is both buried and rises in the garden, after which he is mistaken as the garden-keeper.

There is also mention throughout the gospels, Pauline and Catholic epistles of agricultural renewal as a component of salvation where agricultural imagery is used to portray the redeeming work of Jesus. This is not surprising given first-century Palestine's agrarian-based economy, which serves to strengthen De Troyer's hypotheses of gardens as loci of eschatological activity and of their inclusion, i.e. renewal, in such activity. If a typological link between Adam and Jesus is maintained the logical inference would be that Mary is the "new Eve" which could further be used as a basis to interrogate the similarities and/or differences in the relationship between the first "creation pair" of Genesis and that of the (re-)new(ed) creation pair of John. There is also further basis

---

[249] It may be noted that only a small section of her article is devoted to this. Here she is trying to develop the hypothesis as outlined above by her use of the John text as an instance of such etymological progression, not to draw theological implications vis-à-vis the ministry of Jesus, something that this paper will try to do, by exploiting the link De Troyer establishes

[250] De Troyer 2012, p. 51.

[251] De Troyer 2012, p. 51.

within both the Genesis and John texts for establishing this link, namely the imperative issued after the creation of the man and woman in Genesis 2 that "a man will leave his father and mother and *cling* to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" and Jesus' prohibition to Mary "do not *cling* to me for I have not yet ascended to the Father" which also serves as the precursor to Mary's apostolic commission, something she is privileged to receive before (and apart from?) the other male disciples.[252]

4.2.6.2 Suggit

Written somewhat earlier, an article by John Suggit nevertheless bears some parallels to the work of De Troyer in that it anticipates some of the themes developed by her while also exploring the theological implications of the *kêpos* imagery (and Jesus as *kêpouros*). Unlike De Troyer, Suggit does not trace the etymological links and trajectories with the associated terms *gan*, *pardes*, *paradeisos* and *kêpos* but rather seeks to establish the legitimacy of seeing as central to John motifs of (re-)creation and renewal on the basis of the atoning work of Christ and so, in the process, establishing possible parallels between John and Genesis 3.

Firstly Suggit deals with Jesus' redemptive role as the *Logos* by showing that within the Hebrew and LXX traditions the Word of God (*dabar*, *logos*) could refer to the creative word, the prophetic word, or the Torah and that "[A]lthough the primary reference in John seems to be to God's creative word, an illusion to the Torah is also very likely".[253] This nevertheless reaffirms the motif of new creation, according to Suggit, in so far as Jewish belief saw the world as being upheld and sustained by the Torah where a new Torah was indicative of a (re-)new(ed) creation.[254]

Suggit then moves on to arguably two of the most poignant parallels between the Genesis imagery and that contained in John and which thus support the (re-)creation motif in

---

[252] Though the Greek *proskollao*, used in the instance of Gen.2: 24 differs from *haptomai* used in John 20:17 the semantic field overlaps- both can mean "to join oneself to". The fact that the imperative is reversed in John 20 could allow for the interrogation/destabilisation of conventional gender relations.
[253] Suggit 1999, p. 2.
[254] Suggit 1999, p. 3.

John. He states, "the new creation intimated in [John]1:1" –"the opening words of the gospel (*en arche*), identical with the opening words of Genesis" – "finds its fulfilment at the passion and resurrection…[where t]he piercing of Jesus' side (*pleura*) … recalls the Genesis account of the creation of Eve from the side of Adam (*mian ton pleuron autou*)".[255] Suggit cites Chrysostom's insistence that the blood and water which issue from the side of Jesus are references to baptism and the Eucharist thus giving life to the new Church.[256] Likewise the receiving of the Holy Spirit in John 20: 22 also recalls imagery of creation and the offering of new life where the *enephusesen* of John 20:22 parallels directly with Ez. 37:9 and the *pneuma* of John echoes the *pnoe zoes* of Gen. 1:7 LXX.[257]

Suggit then goes on to deal explicitly with the imagery of the garden, and Jesus as "gardener" in John 19: 20. Like De Troyer, Suggit makes reference to the use of *kêpos* in LXX and states that both *paradeisos* and *kêpos* were used interchangeably for "garden" – "In the Genesis narrative the Hebrew *gan* is rendered in the Septuagint by *paradeisos* (Gn 2:8), but elsewhere in the Old Testament *gan* is translated by *kêpos*. In Ezekiel 36:35 *gan-'êden* is rendered as *kêpos truphês*, and … note that Aquila and Theodotian rendered *gan* by *kêpos* in Genesis".[258]

---

[255] Suggit 1999, p. 3.

[256] Suggit 1999, p. 3. See also the detailed treatment of John 19:34 in Deborah Sawyer's paper. Sawyer, D. 2003. "John 19.34: From Crucifixion to Birth, or Creation?" in *A Feminist Companion to John, Vol.II.* Levine, A. (Ed.) Sheffield Academic Press: London. "From the early Patristic period, John 19.34 has been understood to symbolize the moment of birth for the sacramental life of the church, with water and blood pouring from Christ's side as the types for eucharistic and baptismal elements. This interpretation is then presented vividly in the medieval period as an image of birth, where Christ, the New Adam, water and blood pouring from the wound inflicted by the Roman soldier, gives birth to the church from his side in the same way, it is presumed, that the first Adam 'gave birth' to Eve." (Sawyer 2003, p. 130) While Suggit takes a similar line, i.e. parallel between Christ and Adam, Sawyer problemetises what she sees as the potentially exclusive male imagery in this birthing motif.

[257] Suggit 1999, p.3. Interestingly, Suggit recounts the patristic theology espoused by Athanasius – "God created human beings differently from other animals (*aloga zoa*) by giving them a share in his own *Logos*, so that they become *logikoi* (3:3). Though naturally mortal, since they were created out of non-existence (*ex ouk onton*), they could have remained immortal if they had retained their likeness to the one who has true being (*pros ton onta*) (4:6). Once they had lost their share in the *Logos* through sin, the divine image could only be renewed only by the *Logos* himself (13:7-9)" (Suggit 1999, p. 4) See also Mukuna, J. 2011. *Language and Theology: a case study of the breathing metaphor in John 20:22.* (Master's Thesis) Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal. who has recently proposed the metaphor of breathing as re-creative activity in John.

[258] Suggit 1999, p.6.

Furthermore, maintains Suggit, despite "*paradeisos* in the New Testament" signifying "the future state in the presence of God (Lk 23:43; 2 Cor 12:4; Rv 2:7)…[and thus being] an unsatisfactory word to use to refer to an earthly garden…[the] garden [nevertheless] is to become the scene of transformation and renewal."[259] Suggit goes on then to point out the importance of the "new tomb", within the garden in which Jesus was laid thus ironically signifying new life and then deals with the scene in John 20 in which Jesus appears to Mary and is mistaken as the *kêpouros*.[260] Here Suggit establishes a direct parallel with the Genesis narrative and thus between Adam and Jesus. He says of Jesus,

> Indeed he was [the gardener]! Adam was put in the garden of Eden to maintain and care for it (Gn 2:15). He failed to do so, but Jesus is the second Adam, the true human being, as John 19:5 (*idou ho anthrôpos*) ought to be understood. In contrast to the synoptic accounts, Jesus was there depicted as still wearing the purple robe with which the soldiers had clothed him (19:2). According to a Targum Adam was originally clothed in a glorious robe which he lost through sin (Bowker 1969:121; Suggit 1983). John therefore shows Jesus as the new human being, clothed in the robe of his original creation. As the gardener he opened the way to the tree of life (Rv 2:7; 22:14,19). The gospel anticipates the symbolism of Revelation. Mary does not deny her first impression, but comes to recognize her risen Lord, and goes to tell the disciples "I have seen the Lord (*kurios*)" (20:18). "Come and you will see" said Jesus to the first disciples (1:39). Mary came and she saw.[261]

Thus like De Troyer, Suggit picks up on the distinctive imagery of the garden scene and sees it as a parallel to the Genesis narrative. De Troyer's hypothesis seems to indicate more ambiguity however around the notion and use of gardens by the time of the New Testament, viz. that people regarded them as loci of eschatological activity (and thus buried their dead there). The precise role and function of gardens within ancient soteriologies would thus not be settled without a more detailed investigation into their socio-historical function.[262] Suggit is inclined to maintain a distinction between the

---

[259] Suggit 1999, p.6.
[260] Suggit 1999, p.6.
[261] Suggit 1999, pp. 6-7.
[262] One complication which immediately springs to mind is the issue around time and the role this played within ancient soteriolgies. If the ancients conceived of the consummation of salvation, if it may be spoken of in such terms, as occurring at a fixed end-time, then gardens (i.e. earthly gardens) would perhaps not have been revered as much. Yet if there somewhat different conception of time allowed for an

paradeisos of Rev. 2:7 and the *kêpos* of John 19 where, for him, the book of Revelation embodies the ultimate realisation of God's salvation, the consummation of God's kingdom. Revelation therefore represents a realised eschatology, though having not yet taken place, and so must for now, still be conceived in future terms. Hence, for Suggit this can validly be called a *paradeisos* while John's garden remains a *kêpos*. Nonetheless, associations of creative renewal, and by inference, eschatological activity, still adhere.

Suggit also maintains that Mary's identification of Jesus as the "garden-keeper" (*kêpouros*) was not in fact a mistake given what, in light of Suggit's treatment, is the parallel between Jesus and Adam, Adam, by implication, being the first *kêpouros*. But perhaps the ambiguity is intentional, *dokousa* (John 20: 15) indicative of another instance of Johannine irony. Mary supposes Jesus to be the garden-keeper (as she might with any man present there, i.e. even Adam) and yet Jesus is the garden himself (cf. vine references in John). The *kêpos* in John is a site of eschatological activity precisely because Jesus himself represents and embodies the new garden, i.e. *paradeisos*.[263]

4.2.7 Jesus' encounter with Mary – between mythological necessity and historical compulsion

In continuing with John 20 as a focal point we turn again to the work of Jane Schaberg. Although Schaberg is not concerned necessarily with the motif of re-creation she does posit the occasion of the empty tomb and Jesus' appearance to Mary as one of eschatological activity, hence the viability also for viewing this episode as evidence of re-creative activity. Schaberg's work is also significant in that it posits a central role for

---

incorporated, or partially realised eschatology, then burial gardens would already be conceived as cites of (present) eschatological activity.

[263] In establishing such a link, one is possibly supported by the Pauline reference (Gal.3: 13) to the tradition in Deuteronomy 21: 23, namely that anyone executed on a tree is cursed. Here Paul also has ideas of atonement in mind where Christ becomes a curse for the people by being hung on a tree which, one would expect, Paul sees as being the cross. The fact that Jesus died on the day of preparation, before the Passover and Sabbath, while containing as at may, various other symbolisms, seems uncanny enough to be merely incidental given that his removal on the same day is prescribed by Deuteronomy.

Mary Magdalene in the revelation of the risen Jesus and thus the confession of the early Church. In what follows then we will review the general outline of her argument.[264]

4.2.7.1 The necessary historicity of the empty tomb tradition

Schaberg's approach methodologically is an eclectic one. She begins by surveying the debate of the empty tomb from an historical perspective and, though historical concerns are not always at the forefront of her approach, she is concerned to establish the historicity of the empty tomb on the basis of its importance for Jesus' encounter with Mary. While Schaberg acknowledges the debate around the presence of a resuscitated Jesus at the tomb, and even of his actual burial, she maintains the necessity of the empty tomb as a catalyst for a resurrection experience by Mary Magdalene.[265] In this sense Schaberg's analysis is historical as she tries to provide grounds for the reliability of this tradition. Yet Schaberg also draws upon tenets of apocalyptic Jewish mysticism in her theoretical framework, and through her use of various Hebrew texts which draw on this tradition, creates a platform for viewing the encounter between Jesus and Mary in John 20 in a different light, one in which she asks the reader and would-be interpreter to make use of what she terms an exegetical imagination.[266]

---

[264] This is delineated with reference to a seminar paper by Schaberg titled "The Empty Tomb and the Appearance to Mary Magdalene" finally published in Schaberg, J. 2004 *The Resurrection of Mary Magdalene*. New York/London: Continuum. In this later publication the earlier work of Schaberg is spread across a number of chapters, hence the earlier work is used for ease of reference.

[265] Schaberg begins the article by stating that the "narrative of the empty tomb is the occasion of and vehicle for the primitive form of the confession" that is, the confession of the early church of Jesus' resurrection. Yet Schaberg also intimates the tentativeness of the account historically – "if there was no burial that was witnessed, or no burial at all, or burial in a common pit where bodies were indistinguishable, there could have been no discovery of an empty tomb." Schaberg, p.1 In her footnotes Schaberg cites various authors from Bultmann, to Crossan, to Lindars in support of the hypothesis of the empty tomb pericope as coming from a late tradition designed to theologically justify the notion of the resurrection (Schaberg, pp. 1-2) and cites what Theissen and Merz term "the objective or chronological priority of the tomb or the appearance tradition" as enduring into contemporary biblical scholarship (Schaberg, p. 8). The debate or controversy is understandable in terms of the more easily explicable phenomenon of resurrection as subjective/existential experience. Schaberg appears to by-pass this by not ruling out such a possibility but nevertheless maintaining the historicity of the empty tomb as a catalyst for such experience. Schaberg's concern, and by extension that of feminist scholarship on Mary Magdalene, is therefore to maintain the historicity of the empty tomb tradition without which the appeal to a primary appearance of the risen Jesus to Mary (and other women disciples?) loses credibility. Schaberg does not therefore maintain the necessity of the presence of a resuscitated corpse but only of an experience outside an empty tomb.

[266] This a term borrowed from M. Fishbane, and seems to apply to the reader's own interpretative practice as well as a methodological tool for analysing the context from which the biblical text emerged. Cf. Schaberg, p. 68 as well as footnotes on p. 22. In support of the view that Schaberg's approach is not

After having surveyed some of the traditional and contemporary positions pertaining to the empty tomb (and the appearance to Mary/female disciples) and concluding that there is enough evidence to regard the tradition as historically reliable, Schaberg goes on to assert that it is not enough to leave it at this. In other words, that the tradition may be posited as historically reliable is insufficient from a feminist perspective, or as far as Mary Magdalene is concerned, and has proven so traditionally, given the tendency within biblical scholarship since as early as the patristic period to overlook her significance as a primary apostle. Instead, and here Schaberg begins to draw on tenets of Jewish mysticism and its associated texts, the encounter with Mary must be re-evaluated and possibly reinterpreted if its significance is not to be diminished.

4.2.7.2 The Danielic Son of Man and its possible meaning for John's community

In drawing on the Danielic traditions built around notions of the 'Human One' as well as viewing Mark as a "mini apocalypse" and advocating that literature around the empty tomb and appearances to women disciples be viewed in the same light, we are enabled, Schaberg says, to see these texts as something more than mere historical accounts of Jesus' resurrection, but rather as instances of divine revelation and inspiration.

In connection with the Danielic Son of Man tradition Schaberg states that "[T]he figure of the Son of Man (or better, the Human One) was…central to the imagination and ideals

---

exclusively, or even predominantly, historical the following quote with reference to Morton Smith may be helpful- "Morton Smith has shown that a knowledge of Jewish mystical traditions can enable a scholar to view as coherent and even sometimes historical what other scholars view as late, complex, and confusing fiction, primarily the product of theological and sociological conflicts, [and] clashes. What Smith has shown can be considered apart from the question of whether a scholar believes or disbelieves like Smith in the "reality" which is being claimed or presented as true, as experienced, and whether or not the scholar has an ear for the mytho-poetry of a text." (Schaberg p. 12). Schaberg uses tenets of Jewish mysticism as contributing to her hermeneutical framework with which she will interpret the Magdalene appearance episode in John 20 and proposes "a reconstruction of the pre-gospel empty tomb tradition as an apocalypse drawing on Daniel 7 and 12 and 2 Kings 2, as these texts may have been used as mystical texts by members, communally and individually, in the Kingdom of God (or Jesus) movement" and whereby "mystical texts…mean…texts prompting and inspiring the effort to come into direct contact with or to live in and for that "kingdom" believed to be where there is victory over injustice and death." (Schaberg, pp. 13-14) Schaberg envisages a community or group of people striving towards egalitarian values with an ethical and political stance informed by their shared eschatological hope (Schaberg, pp. 14-17). Thus, the principles and values internal to the community, vis-à-vis the rest of society and its leaders, are formed on the basis of the community being an apocalyptic community, presumably, with a keen awareness of the proximity of God's kingdom.

of…[the] *basileia* movement even before the death of Jesus and central to the earliest understandings of his fate and that of the righteous."[267] Schaberg goes on to suggest that the conception of the Son of Man Jesus envisaged comprised both his own "vindication" as well as that of a collective, inclusive community:

> A corporate understanding of the figure, rooted in Daniel's link between it and the holy ones/people of the holy ones of the Most High, seems to…lie behind the strange flexibility of reference that is so confusing, and has led to awkward classifications and historical stagings and layerings of Christian Testament Human One sayings. Already in Daniel, this link may indicate that an either/or approach is not the best one. The Danielic figure is not exhausted or closed by identifying it as angelic, as Michael, any more than it is exhausted or closed by seeing it as representative of the *maskilim* and the righteous. The Human One in Daniel can represent, incorporate and be somehow more than the people suffering under Antiochus Epiphanes IV; it can represent, incorporate and be more than the *maskilim* who resist, make others righteous, and who will be vindicated and transformed in the resurrection (12:1-3). In this interpretive tradition, the Human One of the Christian Testament can (at least at pre-Gospel level) represent, incorporate and be more than, Jesus; represent, incorporate and be more than the suffering righteous…He and they are and are not "identified with" the figure, because "identity" or selfhood is not conceived as individualistic. It is also not conceived as human in total and in permanent distinction from the angelic; since the earthly and heavenly dimensions are to some extent permeable.[268]

In the formulation of such a concept within the Jesus/Johannine community and with reference to Fishbane's notion of "exegetical imagination" Schaberg states that "[this] was not limited to a scribal class or even to the literate (if any) of the companions of Jesus, and not limited to men."[269] Schaberg further states her "hypothesis is that the movement's integration of study and work and perhaps mystical practice was preparation for the earliest attempts to make sense of the death of Jesus…[where] the general predictions of suffering and resurrection of the Human One could have been produced before the death of Jesus."[270] Thus the notion of the "Human One" features not only as an eschatological figure (however it may be defined, e.g. collectively) but also as a means

---

[267] Schaberg, pp. 18-19.
[268] Schaberg, pp.19-21.
[269] Schaberg, p.22.
[270] Schaberg, p.22.

by which the (then present) community of Jesus and his followers, or even the Johannine community, conceive of themselves as a community of righteous suffering and in solidarity with those who suffer.

In this capacity, the concept also functions as a mechanism whereby those in mourning or in suffering – in this case disciples mourning the death of Jesus – are able to transcend their present experience of suffering by being incorporated, or taken up, into a reality that supersedes and surpasses their present one, both spatio-temporally in as much as it includes all believers, and transcendentally in that it includes Jesus and the *basilea tou theou*. Thus the imagery of the Human One was employed to invoke a particular ethic (e.g. that of righteous suffering) which was to be a feature of the community and that, post-resurrection, engendered a heightened yet still collective ethic connected with the *basilea* movement.[271]

4.2.7.3 The appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene read as succession

Having suggested the possible context in which a 'Human One' figure could be appropriated Schaberg seeks then to read the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene against the backdrop of succession. She does this by suggesting the possibility of reading texts like 2 Kings 2 as well as T. Job 45-53 as possible sub-texts to the empty tomb tradition and the account contained in John 20. Read with these in mind, the narrative of John 20 takes on a new significance as does the figure of Mary Magdalene.

Since the accounts Schaberg draws from in the Hebrew literature pertain primarily to ascension/succession which, according to Schaberg, necessarily entail an imparting of God's spirit to those who succeed, Schaberg's intention is to try to mitigate the suppression of an appearance to Mary Magdalene by appeal to an authorising account of teacher-disciple succession. Mary is not only commissioned as the first disciple but, Schaberg maintains, like in the accounts she holds parallel to John (2 Kings 2 and T. Job

---

[271] Schaberg here proposes that "the mystical experiences and practices of this group focused on an incorporation into the Human One that expanded "identity" beyond the individual and that this involved a struggle against injustice and a belief in vindication." Schaberg, p.23.

45-53), receives a measure of her teacher's Spirit, the mark, according to such tradition, of succession of the one from whom the spirit imparts.

Schaberg's dissatisfaction with merely accepting the empty tomb tradition as historical was earlier noted. Her contention is that it is typical within biblical scholarship to see the empty tomb experience, and appearance by Jesus to women disciples, as being validated by the subsequent experience and appearance of Jesus to male disciples, not only validating the (otherwise suspect) testimony of the women disciples but transferring the apostolic commission and command to male disciples. Thus although Schaberg is ambiguous about the essential features of an appearance by Jesus to the female disciples, she regards as historical the empty tomb which she sees as the catalyst for revelation in which the resurrection of Jesus is made apparent (first) to the female disciples.

Schaberg's contention is that by re-conceptualising the account of Jesus' appearance to Mary in terms of a revelatory experience, the account itself and furthermore Mary, are validated and authorised. In light of this reformulation Schaberg states that "[N]ot finding the body is [therefore] the catalyst for a radical modification of the Danielic tradition, with resurrection understood as translation, and vice versa. In John 20: 7-8, 17 resurrection and ascent (translation) language appear together…[Schaberg furthermore] see[s] the emptiness of the tomb as the trigger, not the expression (necessary or unnecessary) of resurrection faith. The emptiness is not demanded by or created by resurrection faith, nor is it a response to resurrection faith. It is, rather, an inspiration of it."[272]

With regard to the resurrection/translation debate, Schaberg continues as to the ambiguity about the empty tomb, the necessity, or not, for this and the problematic of the presence of a raised corpse for modern culture saying that

   [c]ontemporary Jewish apocalyptic thought…did not consistently or clearly make either/or
   distinctions between spiritual survival, immortality, ascent, and bodily resurrection. Often
   variations of these ideas appear in the same text, side by side. Speculations about the body and

---

[272] Schaberg, pp.29-30.

the mechanics of resurrection miss the point…The point of resurrection language, in the context of Jewish apocalypticism, is that the whole person will live in some manner by the power of God, the whole person will be vindicated, the suffering and oppression he or she experienced – from civil and religious authorities – as a result of his or her dedication to justice and as a result of God's dedication, will be overturned. The claim that Jesus had been resurrected is about more than – but not less than – an individual's passage through death. As the resurrection of the Human One, it is a corporate resurrection.[273]

Having dealt with the 'what' and 'how' of the resurrection appearance to Mary Magdalene, Schaberg then considers what it might have meant in the context of apostolic leadership. She states that "[t]he claim to have received a resurrection appearance functioned in the early church to authenticate a person's claim to apostleship" and cites Paul's self-validation in 1 Cor.9:1 in support of this.[274] Schaberg also points to the apparent apostolic rivalry between Peter and Mary where "the claim to have received the first appearance (protophony) may have served as a manifestation of the primacy of apostolic witness. Peter and Mary Magdalene appear as rivals here."[275] This tension however is more evident in John's gospel were John 21, generally thought to be an addendum, serves to supersede any 'primacy' offered to Mary by Jesus' appearance to her (cf. also Peter's consternation regarding the role of the beloved disciple in John 21 which may be reflective of leadership disputes). Yet the tendency has been to interpret such tension as reflecting disputes of leadership between the beloved (male) disciple and

---

[273] With reference to the work of A. Y. Collins Schaberg notes that the Son of Man is "a powerful political symbol…of a specific way of being, living, and hoping *embodied by* [emphasis Schaberg's] Jesus and his followers. The Son of Man is an alternative to other symbols of authority, such as the Roman emperor and his agents, the heirs of Herod the Great, and the messianic pretenders who attempted to overthrow Roman rule by force." [A.Y. Collins, "Origin of the Designation," 158] It is a symbol used consistently by the author of Daniel, the Qumran community, the author of Revelation and other writers, teachers and prophets as well as Jesus, none of whom advocate[d] violence. "Yet none was content with accommodation to the status quo. All called for resistance to the current unjust order by creating an alternative symbolic universe which sustained an alternative way of life." [Ibid.] The empty tomb traditions…draw on this symbolism to express this political faith in the resurrection and vindication of the executed Jesus and of all others who live this alternative way of life." Schaberg, pp. 31-32.
[274] Schaberg, pp. 9-10.
[275] Schaberg, p. 10.

Peter thus precluding the possible primacy offered to an historically authoritative appearance to Mary.[276]

Following Schaberg's treatment of what she regards as the 'mini apocalypse' of Mark 16:1-8, the apocalyptic discourse of Daniel 7: 12, Schaberg treats 2 Kings 2, the succession of Elijah by Elisha, as another potential source through which to read the implications of the resurrection encounter in John 20.[277] In light of these traditions Schaberg makes the following suggestions:

the original tradition [i.e. that contained within John 20] was of an appearance to Mary Magdalene (whether she was alone or with others; cf. accounts of Paul's Damascus experience) at or near the tomb, and that this appearance further explicated and is intimately connected to the empty tomb. Traces of an early telling are found in John, and show an imaginative reuse of 2 Kings 2:1-18, Elisha's witnessing of Elijah's ascent. What leads [Schaberg] to turn to this text as subtext is the risen Jesus' statement that he has not yet ascended (that is, he is in the process of ascending) and that Mary Magdalene is to tell his "brothers" that she saw him and he said to her, "I am ascending."…The claim to have witnessed an ascent is powerful…biblically…particularly…in the mystical tradition as represented by the Testament of Job. The witnessing of Elijah's ascent is the condition upon which, or assurance, or sign that what Elisha has asked his "master" – to inherit a double share of his spirit, the oldest son's share – will be granted him by God…*Mary Magdalene's claim to have seen the risen Jesus ascending* [therefore] *carries with it the implicit claim to have inherited a double portion of the spirit that was in him* [emphasis Schaberg's].[278]

---

[276] In an attempt to ascertain the significance of the appearance to Mary in the context of apostleship Schaberg explores the implications of her response to Jesus' revelation, compared to those typically associated with succession narratives. Specifically here, the silence of the women, as for example in Mark's Gospel as well as in the unresolved conclusion of Mary's revelation in John 20, has been of concern. Schaberg states that "there are important differences with regard to [the] motif of silence in Daniel and Mark…[where] Daniel reacts in terror, and silence (7:28: "As for me, Daniel, my thought greatly terrified me, and my face turned pale; but I kept the matter in my mind"), signifying that he is overwhelmed and must ponder (cf. 8:27; 10:15). The women in Mark 16:7 are told to tell, but in v 8 do not tell anyone anything (the Greek double negative is emphatic). Daniel has no such immediate commission, but rather in 12:4, 9 he is told to "keep the words secret and the book sealed until the time of the end…for the words are to remain secret and sealed until the time of the end." The Revelation to him involves an implicit, eschatological commission." Schaberg, p. 32.

[277] Schaberg, p. 29ff.

[278] Schaberg, pp. 40-42. "It might be immediately objected that the taking of Elijah, unlike the story of the empty tomb and appearance, is not about death or resurrection, but about escaping death. Yet even in the Hebrew Bible and LXX, Elijah's translation may be understood as a death: Elisha tears his clothing in two pieces (2 Kings 2:12), a sign of mourning. The persecuted prophet is now removed beyond his enemies'

Schaberg addresses the Testament of Job 45-53 as an instance of the type of authorising account against which she wishes to view Jesus' appearance to Mary. Here, the account contained within T. Job "shows not only that chariot imagery was used in or before the Christian Testament period to portray a death, but also shows women witnessing an ascent – women, that is, engaging in mystical practice, capable of connection with the divine realm and inheriting spiritual power."[279] Schaberg then cites T. Job in reference to the daughters receiving the multicoloured cord, apparently possessive of magical powers – "[t]he cords enable the daughters "to see those who are coming for [their father's] soul".[280]

In further support of the basis for Mary's revelatory/authorising experience Schaberg goes on to suggest that the "female visionary tradition" was linked to the town of Migdal where "in rabbinic tradition, the daughters of Job are said to have died".[281] Citing Van der Horst, Schaberg goes on to say that he "compares the inheritance of the daughters of Job to Joshua's reception of Moses' "garments of wisdom" and "belt of knowledge" as God appoints him the prophetic successor of Moses after his death, in Ps-Philo's account (LAB 20:2-3). "And when he clothed himself with it [the belt of understanding], his mind was afire and his spirit was moved, and he said to the people…" Van der Horst thinks this

---

reach. His translation provides him with a new kind of bodily life, beyond time and decay, available for return, recognizable…The association of Elijah with resurrection (probably made because of the revival of the widow's son in 1 Kings 17:22) is found in Pirke de R. Eliezer, ch 33 (Warsaw 1912) Pesahim 68a; Tanhuma Emor., sec 13 (ed. Buber); Midrash Canticles Zuta, ch 7, pp 38-9 (ed. Buber). His association with an eschatological resurrection may be found earlier, in Ben Sira 48:11: "Blessed is he who sees you before he dies, f[or] you give l[if]e and he will live." This [is] Puech's restoration of the Hebrew text from the Cairo Geneza; he interprets it as meaning that the righteous who die after the return of Elijah will be resurrected. See also 4Q512, which speaks of an anointed one probably through whose hand God will "give life to the dead." J.J. Collins thinks this is an eschatological prophet, either Elijah or a prophet like Elijah." Schaberg, pp. 42-43. Schaberg goes on to cite the references to Elijah in Mark and the associations of Elijah as an eschatological figure, at least one who is perceived by the cultural milieu of this gospel to have been associated with eschatological activity (see Mark 9:11ff and also later the reference to the interpretation by onlookers of Jesus' summoning of Elijah – Mark 15:36, Matt. 27:49).
[279] Schaberg, p. 45.
[280] Schaberg, pp. 46-47.
[281] "The Testament of Job, "a primitive form of Merkabah mysticism," is dated by Spittler to the first century BCE or CE. He thinks it was written in Greek , possibly among the Therapeutae, and may have been reworked in the second century by Montanists, who created chapters 46-53 and possibly inserted chapter 33, to give precedence to ecstatic female prophecy. But P.W. van der Horst counters that chapters 46-53 are dependant on a source from an otherwise unknown Jewish ecstatic-mystical group "in which women played a leading role by their greater ecstatic gifts and their superior spiritual insight into heavenly reality."" Schaberg, pp. 47-48.

is a case of a "non-interdependent" use of the motif of "the reception of a girdle from or of a person who had been endowed with God's Spirit and the ensuing inner change."" In light of this Schaberg goes on to remark that "[p]erhaps by the first century CE it [i.e. the girdle motif] had become a standard way of depicting prophetic succession."[282]

In light of seeing the 2 Kings 2 passage as subtext, Schaberg points to the apparent parallels in the John 20 text. These are the following: the low Christology implied by Mary's use of the term "*Rabbouni*", indicative of a teacher-disciple relationship; the aversion to separation from their teacher figures displayed by both Elisha and Mary- Mary seeks to touch/cling to Jesus; the motif of seeking for the 'missing' prophet – fifty of the sons of the prophets seek for Elijah, Mary is seeking Jesus in the garden/at the tomb; the situation of others there who do not see and; finally the succession and implied assumption of Elijah's role by Elisha, Mary's sending to the "brothers" becoming "Jesus' agent and voice".[283]

Though Schaberg admits that "objections to this intertextual connection could be made…[where] Mary Magdalene has no mantle of Jesus; she performs no feat of parting the waters of the Jordan to demonstrate the empowerment…[that w]e have no account of Jesus being told to anoint her, as Elijah was told to anoint Elisha in 1 Kings 19:16, or of Jesus calling her and throwing his mantle over her as Elijah does to Elijah in 19:19-21" nevertheless both texts "are about grief and loss and about empowering, the transformation and sending of the visionary."[284]

Despite the parallels Schaberg assert between the associated texts of Jewish apocalyptic mysticism she maintains possible suppression of this tradition within the cultural milieu that produced the gospels – "In the case of Elisha, the empowering is explicit and acknowledged; in the case of Mary Magdalene it is not. There is no response to her report, and the spirit of Jesus is said in the subsequent scene to have been breathed by

---

[282] Schaberg, p. 49.
[283] Schaberg, p. 51.
[284] Schaberg, p. 52.

him not her, but on the disciples (20:22-23)."[285] Read using Schaberg's methodology, John 20 may be seen to then contain "large shards or shreds of a prophetic succession narrative. Its presence [however] is virtually erased in Matthew 28 and the Markan Appendix…[yet] the remnants survive in John incorporated like other aspects of an identification of Jesus with Elijah into a christology of the descending/ascending Human One. They bear witness to a community that valued the participation and leadership of women. But because they are only remnants, what is lost is recognition of the empowering of Mary Magdalene as successor of Jesus."[286]

In summarising the findings of Schaberg's approach she states that we see in John 20 the "appearance or vision tradition as following on and explicating the revelation/insight about resurrection, itself triggered by the emptiness of the tomb interpreted or understood in memory of the passion/resurrection predictions [where] resurrection and ascent, are logically and imaginatively distinct, since the former and not the latter necessarily involves death…[Nevertheless] the combination of resurrection/ascent found here seems to [Schaberg] original to the tradition, and perhaps not unprecedented in connection with Elijah. Catalyst, insight, and vision are part of one process. The empty tomb tradition and the visionary tradition are not separate sources of belief."[287]

Despite the potential validity of an authorising appearance to Mary Magdalene associated with traditions of female prophetic witness in Jewish mysticism, Schaberg points out the common tendency within traditional biblical scholarship to segment this tradition and thus defuse the creative potency it allows. She summarises this tendency as follows:

Our understandings of the tradition, as we have seen, separate these segments, and then attempt to show a development from more to less primitive notions of resurrection, or the opposite, from less to more primitive. The fragmentation of this material in contemporary scholarship is

---

[285] Schaberg, p. 52.
[286] Schaberg, pp. 52-53.
[287] Schaberg, p.57 Schaberg lays out the essential features which such a tradition might contain – "The threads of DNA of this proposed unit, would be (1) not finding the body (as Elijah's body was not found) as the context for (2) the insight about the resurrection *having occurred*, as the context for (3) a vision of the resurrected one ascending (as Elijah ascended). In the Fourth Gospel the join is tighter in the presentation of death/resurrection *as* ascent; in Luke/Acts they are split apart and ascent is used to end the chain of authorizing appearances." Schaberg, pp. 57-58.

of special interest to feminist scholars. We are accustomed to having to argue that women were present (at Sinai, in prophetic movements, in early Christian communities, in leadership roles). But here in the crucifixion, burial and empty tomb narratives, where women actually are present and central to the story, many scholars remove them from history and minimize or overlook whatever contribution is associated with their presence in the narrative. It should not be surprising, perhaps, that the argument for women's inclusion and agency is most difficult when the role is crucial, and male guilt and shame are involved. In the canonical texts, the women's role can be seen as deformed by the attempt to hide (Luke, maybe John) or redistribute (Mark) male guilt and even more by the attempt to overcome it by the emphasis on forgiveness (Luke, John) and empowerment (Matthew, Luke, John, Markan Appendix) of the male disciples.[288]

4.2.7.4 Preliminary conclusions

Schaberg's proposal of the empty tomb as a catalyst for resurrection belief is intriguing. If the belief in the resurrection is to be taken on faith, that is, in accordance with traditional Christian theology, and if, again according to traditional (albeit perhaps Reformed) Christian theology, the criteria for entering into a relationship with God is faith, namely faith that God raised Jesus from the dead, then any historical or temporal evidence that could provide concrete basis for such belief incontrovertibly, seems to defeat the object of that enterprise. Thus it makes sense that belief in the resurrection should be precipitated by an event or incident like the empty tomb, i.e. a situation of utter despair as a catalyst of subsequent hope and revelatory experience rather than providing incontrovertible grounds for belief in the resurrection which would actually seem to negate the possibility of revelation. Despair becomes the prerequisite for hope, and death for life.

But perhaps the merit of Schaberg's approach is best illustrated in her attempt to handle the tension between need for historical precedence and transcending the strictures imposed by this which have also so long been at the service of patriarchally-dominated authorial design. Through the recognition and explication of alternative historical

---

[288] Schaberg, pp. 59-60.

traditions, in some cases well-documented but nevertheless downgraded by what gained ascendancy as orthodoxy in Western theology and praxis, Schaberg is able to posit alternative theological resources that serve to catalyse the exegetical imagination of the modern reader. The crux of the matter furthermore, is not, or should not be, simply whether we find arguments such as Schaberg's convincing in their appeal to historical objectivity (which is perhaps, after all, the means through which true revelation is stifled) but rather should centre on a question of ethical imperative and will in the presentation of alternative theological discourse.

What Schaberg sets out to achieve is, I believe, not very different from what was shown to be achieved through the work of Feminist scholars in both anthropological and biblical fields in the first case study, namely a shift or change in Feminist consciousness through the enlisting of mythological discourse. The difference is that Schaberg's work centres on the area of ecclesial praxis, striving towards a view of greater parity between sexes within church tradition. Thus the loci of the shift in consciousness is, in the case of the first and second case studies, arguably different. While the first may be seen as having taken place largely within secular society, or at least within secular academic disciplines thus relating more broadly to mythological conceptions which society as a whole is subject to, the latter is arguably more internal to church structures.

The inclusion and even favourable appraisal of Schaberg's position is not intended to settle theological disputations therefore around gender equality or the motivations for gendered practice within church bodies. Rather, in light of what may be seen as beneficial affects of the assimilation of Feminist consciousness within various strands of academia evinced in the first case study, it is to suggest that, in order to arrive at more fully authentic self-understandings shifts in consciousness towards inclusivity, particularly within the church, need to be proposed.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

One stated aim of this study was a coherent theory of text production set in the context (or at least in dialogue with) the Tri-Polar framework for exegesis. Beside the model or framework itself receiving attention and comment at the beginning of the study, the general structure of the Tri-Polar framework, with its three stages of *distantiation*, *contextualisation*, and *appropriation*, was maintained for the structure of the thesis. This was to serve not merely a functional purpose but aimed to show how the model might be re-appropriated or appropriated alternatively in the light of the theory which was to be covered through the course of the study.

In so doing the study also hoped to inform or say something about our hermeneutical orientations as exegetes, that is, in as far as it sought to formulate a theory of text production. As such it was suggested that the three stages typically constituting the Tri-Polar approach not be thought of in their conventional terms (which were discussed at the stage of *distantiation*) but that they be seen as stages marking the critical assessment of the exegetical process. Hence the suggestion, for example, that *distantiation* be seen as a willed criticality distancing the exegete from his/her hermeneutical orientations.

Subsequently, it was suggested that the relationship between the poles of *distantiation*, *contextualisation* and *appropriation* be re-conceived against the backdrop of an Hegelian-Marxist conception of reality which, at its base, is materialist. It was suggested in chapter two that this conception informed and undergirded the exegetical enterprise such that a dynamic and mutually-formative relationship was posited existing between the poles of text (*distantiation*), contemporary context (*contextualisation*) and exegete (*appropriation*).

Evidence of a more cursory nature was offered in support of this through such literary fields as Cultural Materialism and New Historicism as well as through fields such as

Orality Studies which, though perhaps of a more superficial nature, nevertheless supported the position of seeing a materialist conception of reality as underlying a theory of text production or as seeing the relationship of text-society-interpreter as one which is dynamic and mutually formative.

In an attempt to further assess the epistemological underpinnings of such a position we subsequently strove to venture deeper, albeit through mainly secondary sources, into the philosophy of Hegel whose position was suggested as fundamental to the conception of reality just mentioned. In this vein, the materially-constituted/ing nature of Hegel's metaphysics as well as its subject, the Absolute, which may be taken in as analogous to, but not ultimately equal to, Reason or *Geist*, was demonstrated by reference to key components within Hegel's philosophy. These included such notions as the Concept (*der Begriff*) and the double-dictum or *Doppelsatz*. Furthermore it was tentatively suggested that such an orientation had its roots in the Aristotelian notion of *ousia*.

The implications of this, as far the exegetical enterprise is concerned, were suggested as being two-fold and the significance of these was demonstrated in chapter three which aimed to mete out some of the insights contained in Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Here the socially and materially constituted/ing nature of Reason suggests that the technical means by which society produces itself is inseparable from the forms of reason assumed within society. This is to acknowledge the onto-epistemic foundations of a society that is both materially and culturally constituted.

In light of their negative assessment of contemporary society which they believe evinces Reason's degeneration, materially constituted forms of communication are compelled to critically assess their relationship to the status quo lest they unwittingly reinforce this. Furthermore, because of the totalising tendencies of the technological paradigm, lest forms of opposition employ terms common to the former and thus become co-opted, they are further pressed to critically assess what modes of expressive opposition they enlist.

Through the appraisal of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* we were also made aware of the dialectical relationship existing between myth and enlightenment (or emerging modes of subjectivity) where neither was apparently able to escape the other. Given then that the totalising discourse of the modern scientific/technological paradigm is also mythological, recourse to sources of mythical modes of apprehension alternative to that of the dominant or prevailing modes was proposed.

In the third stage of the thesis, *appropriation*, attempt was made to show how this has in fact already been achieved and tentatively suggested how it could further be achieved through the course of two case studies. In the first of these it was suggested that secular appropriation of the matriarchal myth, a piece of mythical discourse which gained momentum through Feminist spirituality movements initially enlisted in opposition to androcentric mythical discourse found in texts like Genesis 3, facilitated a shift in social consciousness which, within mainstream academia gender, assumed a legitimate position as a category of analysis, a development which then in turn translated this shift in consciousness to other (popular) spheres of society.

The second case study, that pertaining to Feminist scholarship in the area of the Gospel of John, was more suggestive in terms of how such shifts might be appropriated or facilitated in light of the relevant work within this area. Here not only the work and insights of various authors, but engagement with Johannine material itself was enlisted in order to try to inform the direction and orientation such a shift might assume.

In particular, and here the work of Kitzberger featured, an intertextual approach was proposed in order to assess compositely the role of female characters within the Gospel of John. Focus and attention were given especially to the figures of Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene where the components of intertextual theory, con- and interfigurality, allowed the viewing of Mary Magdalene, by the time of John 20, as representative of the interests not just of Mary of Bethany, but women generally in John. In light of this, her response and interaction to Jesus in the post-resurrection garden scene becomes crucial.

At this point we turned to the work of Jane Schaberg who proposed an original way of reconceiving the Magdalene figure by way of reviewing her popular appropriation through tradition and legend but also, and more especially, through understanding her encounter with the risen Jesus exegetically as an occurrence of eschatological import via the leitmotif of succession. Supporting literature was offered in this vein in the form of De Troyer's and Suggit's papers which strengthened the case for seeing the garden in John as a site of eschatological activity. Hence links or parallels were inferable between the Genesis 3 narrative, which contained the garden in which the opening the drama of patriarchy's entrance initially unfolded, and John 20, which sees the closing act represented by God's continued and renewing activity in the form of the person of Jesus.

5.2 Extent to which research questions were answered

Something must be said at this point on the extent to which the research questions posited at the outset of the paper have been addressed. The reader will recall that these had initially been formulated in the context of an exegetical approach to the texts of Genesis 3 and John 20 in seeing their relationship as characterised in terms of a proposed patriarchal ascension, embodied in Genesis 3, and the potentially mitagatory affects of Jesus' ministry as depicted in John 20 on the former. Through the course of the thesis however the emphasis and orientation of the project changed in two fundamental ways.

In the first instance the theoretical orientations considered at the stage of *distantiation* (chapter two) resulted in a reconceived conception of the relationship between text and society such that this was seen as mutually formative or constitutive. Secondly, the theological impulse motivating the philosophical underpinnings of such a conception, namely the object of Hegel's metaphysics, the Absolute (alternatively understood through corresponding notions of *Geist* and Reason) was itself shown to have been materially embodied or materially manifesting. This then had implications for the stage of contextualisation (chapter three) in which a critical appraisal of contemporary society, Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, sees the wholly negative assessment arrived at here indicative not so much of the authors' personal valuations as

of their determination of Reason's actual abdication from socially constituted structures and hence also their judgement of society as epistemologically/ontologically bankrupt.

From this perspective then it makes little sense to conceive of the relationship of patriarchy to liberation within social apparatuses as presently defined, little more to try to determine the nature of this relationship through its supposed constitution by two texts. Instead, what was attempted through the inclusion of the case studies was a demonstration of how firstly, a reconfiguration of our hermeneutical orientations enables us to see the appropriation of Scripture as a process of social constitution where this entails a necessary shift or change in awareness and perception and secondly, and pertaining to this shift, that in the case of Genesis 3 and its relation to the propagation of matriarchal myth, such a shift has actually occurred, viz. in the form of the inclusion of gender as a legitimate category of analysis in fields such as anthropology.

The shift apparently was facilitated by an increased awareness of the need for a countervailing mythology formulated in opposition to that of the hegemonic patriarchalism represented by texts like Genesis 3. Yet it was also apparent that the search for and formulation of such counter mythology was as much for existential validation (i.e. of Feminist movements) as it was an attempt to counter-act or negate claims of dominant/patriarchal mythologies at a cognitive, and sometimes empirical, level. This suggests, then, that if we shift our focus to the second case study, though they should not be over-emphasised, historical precedents in the formulation of counter-mythologies are not easily dispensed with and, indeed, are sometimes necessary as was shown to be the case in Schaberg's analysis.

As far as her approach is concerned, if we are to speak of this in terms of myth and counter-myth, Schaberg is opposed to the tradition or myth of exclusively male apostolic succession, and her response then is to posit the formulation of the basis of a counter-myth in the form of Mary Magdalene's anointing by Jesus in the post-resurrection scene of John 20. Accession of such myth, whatever the historical precedents enlisted in its support, means ultimately greater agency for women within ecclesial circles for the

present, which must be seen as one of Schaberg's aims. Yet in order for this to be achieved a concomitant or even preceding shift in awareness is required within these circles in order to appreciate the significance of the question from the outset.

Interestingly, undergirding the present mythology and mitigating the possibility of such a shift is the fundamental issue of disparate valuations of women and men theologically. The justifications or philosophical underpinnings of this were not taken into account within this paper and perhaps should be if the question of gender parity, or a translation of this within ecclesial praxis, is to adequately be addressed. Seemingly, what then needs to be worked out within such contexts is the value of holding onto this disparity, though it may well possess theological justification, over a more inclusive view where this also has implications for secular society at large.

In returning to the extent to which the research questions were answered, the possibility for seeing John 20 as a liberatory text counteractive to the affects of the Fall in Genesis 3 where this may be seen as corresponding to the insertion of patriarchal structures within society in one sense falls by the way side given the radically reconceived relationship of text to society. Yet in at least one other sense, the question is addressed, albeit perhaps in a different way, in that the case study of Genesis 3 provides an answer to its own problem. The patriarchalism inherent to and propagated by Genesis 3 is dealt with not in terms of a plan of action formulated external to and independent of the situation and the subjects most adversely affected by what may be taken as the patriarchy represented by Genesis 3; rather, precisely because the subjects concerned (i.e. at the most general level, women) are adversely affected and are moved necessarily to respond, greater self-awareness is facilitated and the subjectivity of *Women* is catalysed which, as we saw, was a necessary prerequisite for the mobilisation of the mythical discourse which ultimately facilitated a more general shift in perception/awareness at academic and popular levels.

5.3 Limitations of research/areas for further study

Given the nature and scope which this study came to assume it was perhaps to be expected that certain areas or aspects were to be left unsatisfactorily explored. Though not the intention at the outset, the inclusion of the wide-ranging scope of authors and theory employed resulted in breadth sometimes taking precedence over depth. While this allowed for an eclectic, and in my view, nuanced approach to some of the problems posed, perhaps the full implications of certain parts of the theory can be more adequately explored where they are given more exclusive attention.

In relation to the specific question of ecclesial praxis where this involves gender parity, empirical research, or at least practical insight into the concrete experience of this by women clergy or women exercising ministerial functions, would be welcome. Connected to this, the area or aspect of what informs the theological and philosophical assumptions undergirding the traditions which support gendered ministerial roles could be explored. Undoubtedly, this would also shed light on the inner workings and logic supporting the larger mythology by which gender imparity within the Church is promulgated.

Finally, given the Church's apostolic commission, a comparison between ecclesial and secular conceptions of gender parity could benefit the Church's missiological function in so far as addressing the concerns raised by Adorno and Horkheimer's critique of contemporary society is concerned where the Church, according to the findings of the paper, is called to offer or inject critical voices into public discourse where so allowed. It is the contention of this paper that in order to achieve this, more inclusive subjectivities are to be sought internally, by way, for example of addressing the issue of gender parity, in order that the wholly impoverished conceptions of human subjectivity, constituted by rationally deficient social structures, be addressed or countered. Studies aimed at, or located within, such areas of discourse undoubtedly would only contribute to the constructive formulation of such subjectivities in modes hopefully apposite to the task of alternative forms of mythological appropriation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hermeneutics:

Allan, G. 1997. *Intertextuality*. London: Routledge

Brannigan, J. 1998. *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press.

Black, F. C., Boer, R. and Runions, E. (Eds.) 1999. *The Labour of Reading: Desire, alienation, and biblical interpretation*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

Draper, J. 1996. "Confessional Western Text-Centred Biblical Interpretation and an Oral or Residual-Oral Context". *Semeia*. Vol. 73, pp.61-80

Draper, J. A. 2001. "Old Scores and New Notes: Where and what is Contextual Exegesis in the New South Africa?" in *Towards an Agenda for Contextual Theology: Essays in honour of Albert Nolan*. Speckman, MT and Kaufmann LT (Eds.) Pietermaritzburg: Cluster.

Draper, J. 2002. "The bible as poison onion, icon and oracle: reception of the printed sacred text in oral and residual-oral South Africa". *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. Vol.112, pp. 39-56

Flew, A. 1979. *Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*. London: Pan Books.

Flew, A. and Priest, S. (Eds.) 2002. *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. Oxford: Pan Books.

Grenholm, C. and Patte, D. 2000. "Receptions, Critical Interpretations, and Scriptural Criticism" in *Reading Israel in Romans: Legitimacy and Plausibility of Divergent Interpretations*. Grenholm, C. and Patte, D. (Eds.) Harrisburg: Trinity Press International.

Meyer Greene, T. (Ed.) 1929. *Kant: Selections*. The Modern Student's Library. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. pp. xliv-xlv

Ryan, K. 1999. *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism : A reader*. London: Arnold.

Schaberg, J., Bach, A., and Fuchs, E. (Eds.) 2004. *On the Cutting Edge: The study of women in biblical worlds: essays in honor of Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza*. New York: Continuum.

Schussler Fiorenza, E. 1992. *But She Said: Feminist practices of biblical interpretation*, Boston, Beacon.

Schussler Fiorenza, E. 1994. *In Memory of Her: a feminist theological reconstruction of Christian origins*. New York: Crossroad.

Still, J and Worton, M. (Eds.) 1991. *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Williams, R. 1977. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

West, G. 2008. "Interpreting 'The Exile' in African Biblical Scholarship: an ideotheological dilemma in postcolonial South Africa" in *Exile and Suffering: a selection of papers read at the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the OTWSA*. Becking, B. and Human, D. (Eds.) Leiden: Brill.

West, G. 2007. "(Ac)claiming the (Extra)ordinary "Reader" of the Bible" in *Reading Other-wise: socially engaged biblical scholars reading with their local communities*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

Genesis and matriarchal myth:

Aschkenasy, N. 1986. *Eve's journey: feminine images in Hebraic literary tradition*. Philedelphia: University of Phildelphia Press.

Brenner, A. (Ed.) 1993. *A Feminist Companion to Genesis*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

Cornell, D. 2002. "Feminine Writing, Metaphor, and Myth" in Glowacka, D. and Boos, S. (Eds.) *Between Ethics and Aesthetics: Crossing the Boundaries*, State University of New York: Albany.

Dobres, M. 2006. "Gender in the Formation of the Earliest Human Societies" in *A Companion to Gender History*. Meade, T. A. and Weisner-Hanks, M. E. (Eds.) Blackwell Companions to History Series. Oxford: Blackwell.

Eisler, R. 1987. *The Chalice and the Blade: Our history, our future*. New York: Harper San Francisco.

Eller, C. 2000. *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory : why an invented past won't give women a future*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Fuchs, E. 2000. *Sexual Politics in the Biblical Narrative: Reading the Hebrew Bible as a woman*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

Fuchs, E. 2008. "Reclaiming the Hebrew Bible for Women: The Neoliberal turn in contemporary Feminist scholarship". *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*. Vol.24**,** pp.45-65.

Gardner, A. 1990. "Genesis 2: 4b-3: A mythological paradigm of sexual equality or of the religious history of pre-exilic Israel?" *Scottish Journal of Theology*. Vol.43**,** pp.1-18.

Hendon, J. 1996. "Archeological Approaches to the Organization of Domestic Labour: Household Practice and Domestic Relations" in *Annual Review of Anthropology*. Vol. 25: 45-61. October 1996.

Lerner, G. 1986. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Meyers, C. 1978. "The Roots of Restriction: Women in Early Israel" in *The Biblical Archaeologist*. Vol. 41, No. 3 (Sep., 1978), pp. 91-103.

Meyers, C.1988. *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Meyers, C. 1996. "Procreation, Production, and Protection: Male-female balance in Early Isreal" in *Community, Identity and Ideology: Social science approaches to the Hebrew Bible*. Carter, C. and Meyers, C. (Eds.) Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns

Milne, P. J. 1989. "The Patriarchal Stamp of Scripture: The Implications of Structuralist Analyses for Feminist Hermeneutics". *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*. Vol.5**,** pp.17-34.

Milne, P. J. 1993. "Beyond Genesis 3: the politics of maternal naming" in Brenner, A. (Ed.) *A Feminist Companion to Genesis*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

Moore, H. 1988. "Kinship, Labour and Household: Understanding Women's Work" in *Feminism and Anthropology*. Cambridge: Polity.

Stearns, P. N. 2008. *Gender in World History*. Routledge: Abingdon.

Stone, M. 1979. *The Paradise Papers: The Suppression of Women's Rites*. London: Virago.

Stratton, B. J. 1995. *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

Whitekettle, R. 2009. "Oxen Can Plow, But Women Can Ruminate: Animal
　　　Classification and the Helper in Genesis 2,18-24". *Scandinavian Journal of the
　　　Old Testament*. Vol.23**,** pp.243-256.

John and Magdalene Studies:

Aloisi, J. 2004. "The Paraclete's ministry of conviction: another look at John 16:8-11".
　　　Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society. Vol.47**,** pp.55-69.

Brock, A. G. 2003. *Mary Magdalene, the First Apostle: The struggle for authority*.
　　　Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Brodie, T. L. 1993. *The Gospel according to John : a literary and theological
　　　commentary*. New York: O.U.P.

Brown, R. E. 1979. *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*. London: Geoffrey Chapman.

De Boer, E. 2007. *The Mary Magdalene Cover-Up: Sources behind the myth*. New York:
　　　T&T Clark.

De Troyer, K. 2012. "The Garden: A Crucial Element or Later Addition to the
　　　Resurrection Stories?" in Van Oyen, G. and Shepherd, T. (Eds.) *Resurrection of
　　　the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum
　　　Theologicarum Lovaniensium). Leuven: Peeters.

Draper, J. A. 1992. "The Sociological Function of the Spirit/Paraclete in the Farewell
　　　Discourses of the Fourth Gospel". *Neotestimentica*. Vol. 26, pp. 13-29

Grayston, K. 1981. "The Meaning of PARAKLETOS". *Journal for the Study of the New
　　　Testament*. Vol. 13**,** pp. 67-82.

Hearon, H. 2004. *The Mary Magdalene Tradition: witness and counter-witness in early
　　　Christian communities*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.

Kitzberger, I. R. 1995. "Mary of Bethany and Mary of Magdala – Two female characters
　　　in the Johannine passion narrative: a feminist, narrative-critical reader response".
　　　New Testament Studies. Vol. 41**,** pp.564-586.

Kitzberger, I. R. (Ed.) 2000. *Transformative Encounters: Jesus and Women Re-viewed*.
　　　Leiden: Brill.

Kitzberger, I.R. 2002. "Transcending Gender Boundaries" in *A Feminist Companion to John*. (Vol.1). Levine, A. J. and Blickenstaff, M. (Eds.). London: Sheffield Academic Press.

Klauck, H. J. 2003. *Apocraphyl Gospels: An introduction*. London: T&T Clark.

Kruse, C. G. 2004. *The Gospel according to John : an introduction and commentary*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans.

Levine, A-J. (Ed.) 2006. *A Feminist Companion to the New Testament Apocrypha*. London: Sheffield Academic Press.

Levine, A. J. with Blickenstaff, M. (Eds.) 2003. *A Feminist Companion to John*. (Vol.1). London: Sheffiled Academic Press.

Levine, A-J. with Mayo Robbins, M. (Eds.) 2005. *A Feminist Companion to Mariology*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press.

Marjanen, A. 1996. *The Woman Jesus Loved: Mary Magdalene in the Nag Hammadi Library and Related Documents*. Leiden: Brill.

Mukuna, J. 2011. *Language and Theology: a case study of the breathing metaphor in John 20:22*. (Master's Thesis) Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Neyrey, J. 2007. *The Gospel of John*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ridderbos, H. N. 1997. *The Gospel according to John: a theological commentary*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans.

Schaberg, J. 2003. "Thinking Back through Mary Magdalene" in Levine, A. J. with Blickenstaff, M. (Eds.) 2003. *A Feminist Companion to John*. (Vol.1). London: Sheffiled Academic Press.

Schaberg, J. "The Empty Tomb and the Appearance to Mary Magdalene" (seminar paper) finally published in Schaberg, J. 2004. *The Resurrection of Mary Magdalene*. New York/London: Continuum.

Schneiders, S. M. 2003. *Written that You May Believe: Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*. New York: Crossroad.

Schneiders, S. M. 2011. "The Lamb of God and the Forgiveness of Sin(s) in the Fourth Gospel". *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*. Vol. 73**,** pp.1-29.

Western Marxism:

Adorno, T. 1975. "Culture Industry Reconsidered". *New German Critique*. Vol.6, pp. 12-
19. Rabinbach, A. G. (Transl.) (online text available at
http://www.icce.rug.nl/~soundscapes/DATABASES/SWA/Culture_industry_reco
nsidered.shtml)

Adorno, T. and Horkheimer, M. 1979. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Cumming, J. (transl.)
London: Verso

Adorno, T. and Horkheimer, M. 2002. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical
Fragments.* Jephcott, E. (transl.). Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Marcuse, H. 1964. *One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial
Society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Allman, P. 2007. *On Marx: An introduction to the revolutionary intellect of Karl Marx*.
Rotterdam: Sense.

Althusser, L. 1993. *Essays on Ideology*. London: Verso.

Althusser, L. 1986. *For Marx*. London: Verso.

Ameriks, K. 2000. *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*. Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press.

Beiser, F. 2005. *Hegel*. New York: Routledge.

Besier, F. (Ed.) 1998. *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*. Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press.

Forster, M. 1998. "Hegel's Dialectical Method" in Beiser, F. (Ed.) *The Cambridge
Companion to Hegel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Gibson, N. and Rubin, A. (Eds.) 2002. *Adorno: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hammer, E. 2011. *Philosophy and Temporality from Kant to Critical Theory*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hegel, G. F. W. 1976. *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Held, D. 1980. *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*. Berkeley:
University of California Press.

Honneth, A. 2004. "A Social Pathology of Reason: on the intellectual legacy of Critical
Theory" in Rush, F. (Ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Critical Theory*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Horkheimer, M. 1968. *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*. New York: Herder and Herder.

Houlgate, S. 1991. *Freedom, Truth and History: An Introduction to Hegel's Philosophy*. New York: Routledge.

Jay, M. 1973. *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Jay, M. 1984. *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas*. Cambridge: Polity.

Marcuse, H. 1964. *One-Dimensional Man*. Online text available at: www.marxists.org/reference/archive/marcuse/works/one-dimensional-man/index.htm

Pinkard, T. 2002. *German Philosophy 1760 – 1860: The Legacy of German Idealism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rabinbach, A. 2002. "Why Were the Jews Sacrificed?" The Place of Antisemitism in Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*" in Gibson, N. and Rubin, A. (Eds.) *Adorno: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Sherratt, Y. 1999. "The *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: A contemporary reading" in *History of the Human Sciences*. Vol.12, No.3, p.36

West, D. 2010. *Continental Philosophy: an Introduction* (second edition). Cambridge: Polity.