

Chapter 1

Past and present in Matthean research: A review of the various interpretation models

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The period extending from the end of the second century AD to the beginning of the nineteenth century can be considered the 'prehistory' of modern scientific Matthean research. During this period the gospels were usually regarded as biographies of Jesus. From the first half of the nineteenth century, however, scholars have generally departed from this view. It has become the conviction of most scholars that the so-called 'First Gospel', which appeared first in the New Testament canon under the authorship of the apostle Matthew, was neither written by Matthew himself, nor the temporal precursor of the other canonical gospels. Referring to this development, Kraft (1981:321) shows that from the end of the second century the gospels were viewed by the whole church, even scholars, as a description of the life of Jesus. Slight changes regarding this view only started occurring during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Since then New Testament scholars have hesitantly admitted that this was not true, and started to put forward the obvious question of what function the gospels could otherwise have. This insight and speculation arose from the historical-critical approach to the gospels that had its origin more particularly in the work of F C Baur (1792-1860) (see De Jonge 1982:73-76).

In the process of research into the gospels, historical criticism separated into three distinguishable (but not divorced) methods of research – namely *Literarkritik*, *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte*, and *Redaktionsgeschichte*. Each of these methodological varieties of historical criticism led to the next, in the above sequence. As its frame of reference, our review will show the successive treatment of the three phases, as well as new developments in the field of research. Although the *formgeschichtliche* and *traditionsgeschichtliche* approaches are in fact two separate methods, for the purposes of this investigation, they will be treated as one.

1.1.1 The *literarkritische* approach

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, biblical scholarship was strongly influenced by the theories of the Old Testament scholar, Julius Wellhausen, regarding the identification of the sources of the Pentateuch (cf Rast 1972:3). This breakthrough had taken place in the eighteenth century. It was only in the first half of the nineteenth century that it began to deliver positive fruit with critical inquiry into the 'synoptic problem'. The search for the solution to the 'synoptic problem' – that is, 'source criticism' – was closely related to the *Leben-Jesu Forschung* movement (cf Wrede 1978:11 and others). The explicit aim of the study of the synoptic problem was to try to identify the earliest elements in the tradition, to test the historical reliability of the identified earliest traditions, and, with the help of these traditions, to reconstruct the life of Jesus (De Jonge 1982:77). Kingsbury (1977:2) also calls *literarkritische* gospel research the 'historical-biographical' approach.

The initial phase of this period was characterized by a coupling of the precritical biographical approach and historical-critical source criticism. Consequently, some scholars primarily regarded the Gospel of Mark (but others the Gospel of Matthew – it being the 'First Gospel') as an objective, factual account of the life and work of Jesus. The Gospel of Matthew, in other words, offers a relatively continuous account of the *bruta facta* and associated details.

H J Holtzmann (1832-1910) set Matthean research on a new course when he proposed his 'two-source theory' as a possible solution to the 'synoptic problem' (cf Kraft 1981:328). The 'two-source theory' was taken up by Lachmann (1835) and supported by the works of Weisse (1838) and Wilke (1838). Holtzmann (1863) carefully worked through this hypothesis and made it workable (cf Lange 1980:1). This 'solution' to the 'synoptic problem' demonstrated the unreliability of the Papias-tradition regarding the apostolic authorship of the Gospel of Matthew (Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνετάξατο... – Eusebius HE 111 3.16). It was realized that the gospels of Matthew and Luke were largely dependent on the framework and content of the Gospel of Mark, but also on the hypothetical *Logienquelle*, the so-called Q.

The Gospel of Mark was now regarded as the oldest and most historical account of the *Leben-Jesu* (the historical Jesus). In keeping with opinions current in the nineteenth century, such as those of Adolf von Harnack (cf Kümmel 1973:178ff; 309ff; 356ff) and Martin Kähler (cf Kümmel 1973:222ff), William Wrede (1901) announced that the Gospel of Mark was not intended to be a 'history of Jesus' or 'life of Jesus', but a 'theological reflection' (cf Kümmel 1973:445). According to Kraft (1936:116), these scholars thus came to the conclusion that also the Gospel of Mark,

as a fundamental source of the life of Jesus, aspired to be a witness of faith rather than a biography of the life of Jesus. As far as the Gospel of Matthew is concerned, Wrede (1978:116) himself was of the opinion that Matthew was no original writer, but depended on Mark.

P Wernle (see Lange 1980:2) has summarized the critical insights regarding Matthean research during this period. These insights are based on the assumption that the Matthean Gospel adopted the framework and material of the Marcan Gospel, and added *Sondergut* and material from Q. Analysis shows that a Semitic-like influence is to be seen in the Matthean Gospel and that it demonstrates a *Jewish particularistic* and a *pagan universalistic* paradox, as well as an ecclesiological character. The summary by Wernle (1872-1939) (to which we have cursorily referred) can serve as an indication of the sharp insights that historical-critical research brought about, following on nineteenth-century *Literarkritik*. This has given rise to a continuous stream of Matthean studies up to the present, such as the *Matthean Sondergut*, the so-called *Reflexionszitate* and the hypothetical source known as Proto-Matthew.

Streeter (1927) directed the study of the nature of *Sondergut* in a specific direction. He is noted for expanding the 'two-source theory' to a 'four-source theory'. Streeter maintained that Matthean *Sondergut* was dependent on a literary source, just as Lucan *Sondergut* was. Kilpatrick (1950) adopted Streeter's theory. According to him, these sources - Mark, Q and M - were repeatedly read in the liturgical services of the Matthean community. In this community an expository movement arose regarding the above three 'writings'. This fixed pattern of exegesis was modelled on the manner in which Hebrew texts in the synagogue were 'targumised' by the addition of 'midrashim'. The Matthean Gospel was the end-product of this process and appeared as a 'kind of revised gospel book, conveniently incorporating into one volume the three documents Mark, Q and M' (Kilpatrick 1950:70). Kilpatrick's view of the 'exegetic activity' in the Matthean community was taken further by Stendahl (1969; discussed below) and Schille (1957/1958; cf Lange 1980:29; Stanton 1992:25). Strecker (1966:13), among others, pointed out the improbability of the existence of a literary 'M-source'. He considers the variety and the non-coherence of the material an indication that the origin of Matthean *Sondergut* should be traced back to oral tradition and the activity of Matthew himself (see also Combrink 1980:38, 60).

Related to the investigation of the specific nature of Matthean *Sondergut* is the study of the so-called *Reflexionszitate* in the Gospel of Matthew. The *Reflexionszitate*, as part of Matthean *Sondergut*, distinguish themselves from other Old Testament citations in the Matthean Gospel through the motif of fulfillment which

appears in its introduction. These passages are scattered through the Gospel of Matthew. According to Strecker (1966:50), Pesch (1967:395-420) and Rothfuchs (1969:44, 50), this introductory formula could be part of the activity of the author of the Gospel of Matthew. It, however, begs the question regarding the origin of that particular portion to which the introductory formula refers. Gundry (1975:172), Pesch (1967:399) and Rothfuchs (1969:92f), among others, also hesitate to ascribe it to the activity of Matthew. The reason is that the wording of these citations, unlike the others he took from the Gospel of Mark, was adapted to the Septuagint vocabulary. Strecker (1966:82ff) considers that it was borrowed from an archetypal Christian *Zitatensammlung* as source. Stendahl (1969) sees, behind it, the influence of an 'exegetic school' (cf the above-mentioned view of Kilpatrick) from which Matthew came (cf also Hartman 1972). According to Hartman, the fulfillment citations have three functions in the Matthean Gospel: Matthew wanted to impart authority to his Gospel; he wanted to render his text more fluid, with greater impact; he wanted to create a cluster of associations for his readers. Gärtner (1954; see Rothfuchs 1969:13), proceeding from the 'peshet' technique in the Habakuk commentary by the Qumran community, is however of the opinion that the fulfillment citations arose quite normally within the missionary preaching tradition in the Matthean community (cf McConnel 1969). Gundry (1975:183ff) rejected Stendahl's thesis. He demonstrated that the fulfillment citations in Matthew, like the rest of the Old Testament quotations in the Synoptic gospels – except for those in the Marcan tradition which, as mentioned above, were strongly influenced by the Septuagint – showed a combination of Septuagint, Aramaic and Hebrew linguistic elements. According to him, this mixed language phenomenon is an indication of an archetypal Matthean Gospel in Aramaic or Hebrew, the so-called 'Proto-Matthew'. This hypothetical 'archetypal gospel' would have been written by an apostle who supplied the notes as an 'eye-witness notary' for the basis of the apostolic gospel tradition. Martin (1968/1969:135), however, criticizes this kind of view and points to the fact that an apostle (Matthew) thought it necessary to make use of material from a non-apostle (Mark).

Gundry's viewpoint is a revival of convictions that appeared early in the history of research and which, as a result of the Papias logion, clung to Matthean priority. The 'Matthean priority' viewpoint also found expression in various ways (see Lange 1980:4): Zahn (1922), Schlatter (1929) and Butler (1951) claimed that, in contrast with the 'two-source theory', Mark was dependent on and took his framework from Matthew. Parker (1953) and Vaganay (1954) – proceeding from the Papias logion – held the view that there was a Hebrew (= Aramaic) *Urevangelium* which was translated into three Greek gospels (Matthew, Mark and

Luke). Feine & Behm (1950), Wikenhauser (1953) and Schelkle (1963) identified Q with the *logia* of the Papias tradition, which would be the Gospel of Matthew. The latter view relies on Schleiermacher (1839), who conjectured that a collection of Jesus' *logia* had been adopted as the main constituent of the Matthean gospel. These *logia* could then be traced back to the apostle Matthew himself.

The 'Matthean priority' viewpoints have almost no support today (cf Kümmel 1973:91f). The most important reasons for this are the awakening to the problem of historicity, the untenability of the Papias tradition (cf Lange 1980:4f) and the evolution of the *formgeschichtliche* approach.

1.1.2 The *traditionsgeschichtliche* and *formgeschichtliche* approach

The *traditions-* and *formgeschichtliche* approach arose as a result of the bias of the *literarkritische* method, as practiced by the Julius Wellhausen school in particular. This method was unable to offer an answer to questions regarding the pre-literary history of the identified 'sources' and the standards in the 'sources'. Hermann Gunkel opened new perspectives with his investigation into the influence of oral transmission on the written concretization of Old Testament texts. These insights were later applied to evangelical research in particular. According to Gunkel, it was the primary task of the literary critic to identify the various *Gattungen* (literary genres) in the Old Testament and describe the formal characteristics of each; to outline the literary genre's style and articulate the manner of composition and the rhetoric, and then to trace the literary genre's history back to its pre-literary stage (see Rast 1972:2-5). It was at this stage that convention within the living context resulted in a specific *Gattung*. In other words, Gunkel indicated that convention largely determined the appearance and wording of the various literary *Formen* (= *Gattungen*).

During the early stage of *traditions-* and *formgeschichtliche* work in the field of the New Testament, contributions were made by such people as J G Herder (1796), F Overbeck (1882), J Weiss (1908), P Wendland (1912) and E Norden (1913) (cf Zimmermann 1974:129ff). The first real *formgeschichtliche* inquiries into the gospels were piloted after the end of the First World War. The architects in this connection were K L Schmidt ([1918] 1969), M Dibelius ([1919] 1971) and R Bultmann ([1921] 1970). Subsequent *formgeschichtliche* work remained, until very recently, limited to commentary on and variations of the classifications by these three scholars.

Where the *literarkritische* approaches were interested in the literary sources of the gospels, *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte* began to question the legalities in the generation of traditions in their pre-literary history and the course of tradition in oral transmission by the early church. As far as the Synoptic gospels were concerned, the point of departure was that the traditions regarding Jesus had been transmitted orally before being written down. During the oral stage these traditions took certain forms, according to the nature of the functions that they had to fulfill in the early Christian community. Three *Sitze im Leben* are identified in the Gospel material (Travis 1977:154f). The first *Sitz im Leben* refers to the activities of the 'historical Jesus' (the *Sitz im Leben Jesu*); the second to that of the early church before the gospels were put into writing (the *Sitz im Leben der alten Kirche*) and the third to that in which the evangelists contextualized the transmitted traditions (the *Sitz im Leben Ecclesiae*). By the term *Sitz im Leben Ecclesiae* we mean the specific community for whom the evangelist, as 'writer', wrote his gospel. This 'community', in other words, comprised his 'readers'.

One of the presuppositions of *Formgeschichte* (see Vorster 1982a:96) was that the gospels were not regarded as creations of individual writers, but as 'folk literature', the collective products of an 'evolutionary' process (cf also Vorster 1981:10-13). Traditional *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte* therefore concentrated chiefly on the *Sitz im Leben der alten Kirche*. The particular 'situations' within this 'layer of tradition' are generally categorized as 'kerygma', 'liturgy' and 'catechetics' (cf Zimmermann 1974:173). Bultmann (1970:5ff), in the Synoptic gospels, distinguished the following *Formen*, which were necessitated and generated by the above-mentioned three particular 'situations': Apophthegm, miracle- and historical narration and legends, and *Herrenworte*. Dibelius (1971:34ff, 66ff, 234ff, 265ff) used the term 'paradigm' rather than 'apophthegm'; by 'novel' he meant the same as 'miracle narration' and he referred to the category 'historical narration and legend' as 'myth', and to the category 'I-logia and parables' (= *Herrenworte*) as 'parenthesis' (cf also Travis 1977:155ff).

Among the noteworthy results that *traditions-* and *formgeschichtliche* investigations have yielded regarding the Gospel of Matthew, are those of Kümmel into the so-called catechetic *Redestoffe*, Held's investigation of the *miracle narratives* and Barth's of the *apophthegmata*.

According to Kümmel (1967:60ff), Jesus' 'direct speeches' (*Redestoffe*) in the Gospel of Matthew – which, in contrast with the 'narrative material', were derived from Q and the *Sondergut* – are marshalled along objective (= *sachliche*) and catechetic lines. The so-called 'six antitheses' in Matthew 5:21-48, the three passages about proper cultic relations in Matthew 6:1-18, and the parousia parables in Mat-

thew 24:37-25:46 are examples of this. The systematic presentation and polish of this material reflect, according to Kümmel, a later stage in the development of tradition. In his opinion they probably had their specific 'formation' within the Judaic-Christian milieu.

Held (1961:155-287) claimed that the miracle narratives in the Gospel of Matthew centered around a 'theological nucleus'. According to him, the concept of 'faith' is squarely at the center of passages such as Matthew 8:13, 9:28f and particularly 8:26, 14:31 and 17:20. He points out that, on the one hand, 'outside people seeking help' approached Jesus in faith; on the other, the *little faith* of the 'inner circle of the disciples' is striking. Although the miracle narratives in the Gospel of Matthew have generally been taken from the Gospel of Mark, the 'Matthew-trend' to which Held is drawing attention is easy to perceive.

Barth (1961:73f, 75-78, 88f, 147f) has also referred to the presence of the 'Matthew-trend' in the apophthegmata. In two passages in particular, namely Matthew 8:5-13 (esp verses 10 and 13) and Matthew 15:21-28 (esp verse 28), it is clear that the concept of 'faith' functions prominently. In both cases it concerns the Gentiles' willingness to believe, while the Jews did not believe (cf Lange 1980:9; cf note 40).

Researchers outside the *formgeschichtlicher* circle have posed the question of whether the 'systematic' work mentioned and the 'Matthew-trend' should rather be ascribed to Matthew's own redactional activity. Lange (1980:9), for example, in regard to the 'faith-little faith' tendency among the disciples, is of the opinion that Matthew himself thematized the 'faith-little faith' tendency in the Gospel. The studies by Kümmel, Held and Barth, which have been referred to, and those of others in this connection therefore belong to the following phase. *Traditions-* and *formgeschichtliche* interest did not, during the classical period of this investigative approach, lead to the identification of 'theological trends' in the Gospel of Matthew. For example, when one looks at Bultmann's (1970:376-384) *formgeschichtliche* work with specific reference to the Gospel of Matthew, it would appear that he was not really interested in either the Gospel as a whole or in the redactional activity of the evangelist. This is confirmed by his remark in the chapter of his book *Die Erforschung der synoptischen Evangelien* (Bultmann 1966:44-48), entitled *Die Evangelie als ganze*, that Mark was inexperienced in the *redaktionsgeschichtliche* technique (Bultmann 1966:18). In addition, it is striking that the third section of Bultmann's *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Bultmann 1970:347), entitled *Die Redaktion des Traditionsstoffes*, was by far the shortest and least successful.

Although the traditional form critics certainly had a sense of the hermeneutic importance of the 'gospel as a whole', they did not exploit it. For the *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte* it was a peripheral matter. Ashton (1972:22f) is correct in his typification:

The form critics paid little attention to the broad sweep of the gospels and the powerful impact each of them makes when read as a united whole; and for this reason one is left wondering just how important their contribution to the field of gospel research has been...They cut and carve rather than stick and sew, and tend to regard the evangelist as little more than...a picker-up of unconsidered pericopes.

(Ashton 1972:22f)

According to N Perrin, at this stage of the history of research it began to seem that the *Wredestrasse* became the *Hauptstrasse*. He refers to the comment of T W Manson who, in contrast to *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte*, 'held the view that the gospels are a chronicle of the life of Jesus: 'The farther we travel along the *Wredestrasse*, the clearer it becomes that it is the road to nowhere' (Manson, quoted by Perrin 1966:297). Perrin himself was an important American exponent of the *redaktionsgeschichtliche* approach. This approach was the result of the direction that Gospel research, as already mentioned, took with William Wrede. It was a direction which, at that stage of research history, ushered in an exciting period.

With the rise of *Redaktionsgeschichte*, the picture of an evangelist as being more than a mere collector of transmitted tradition took root. Iber (1957:335) made the following remarks in regard to this new direction: The question as to the unity of the gospels raised the question whether the evangelists were not more than mere collectors, namely authors who were guided by a specific goal, wishing to express certain theological reflections. In his review of Matthean research in particular, S P Kealy referred to the transition from *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte* to *Redaktionsgeschichte* as follows:

Today there is concern with the interpretation of biblical books as a literary unit as a whole – any individual part should be seen in terms of the whole...Too often in the past preoccupation with sources, with the transmission of the text or with the transmission of previous material tended to divert attention from what is basic in gospel study namely the interpretation of the text as it stands for today...Too often it seemed to be as if the genuine gospel lay somewhere behind the present gospels. These in turn were considered of secondary importance and the insights and contributions of their authors either a distortion of the original or irrelevant at best.

(Kealy 1979:167)

Scholars thus began to believe that *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte* could do no more than contribute to the recognition of the historical evolution of Synoptic texts (cf Vorster 1977a:10).

1.1.3 The *redaktionsgeschichtliche* approach

The opening of the door from the parts of a gospel to the importance of the text as a whole gave rise to the question of whether *Redaktionsgeschichte*, the historical-critical method which, for the first time, seriously began to deal explicitly with the gospel as a unit, represented continuity or discontinuity with *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte*. In this regard Güttgemanns (1971:69) stated that there is reason to doubt whether the development of *Redaktionsgeschichte* is in any way a continuation of *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte*. He is thus of the opinion that there is a discontinuity between the two approaches, since they differ in regard to text-theoretical premises. The tradition-historical and form-critical method would then be diachronic in nature, and the investigation of the evangelist's redactional activity synchronic. On the other hand, Marxsen (1959), Rohde (1966), Stein (1969) and Perrin (1970), among others, regard *Redaktionsgeschichte* as a subsequent facet in the historical-critical model of exegesis.

The fact that *Redaktionsgeschichte* takes account of the theological profile of the redactor as an individual (*schriftstellerische Einzelpersönlichkeit* – Rohde 1966:7-43) and *Formgeschichte* does not, does not mean that the former adopts a text-theoretical premise that differs from that of the latter. Both explanations maintain that the kerygma of the early Christian community is the carrier and the subject of, on the one hand, the oral transmission of traditions and, on the other, the redactional editing of these traditions within the framework of a particular gospel as a whole. Both assume a historical positivism by seeking the generative energy of the text in the extratextual, historical *Sitz im Leben*. According to Bornkamm (1961:11), therefore, the accepted results of Synoptic research is that the first three evangelists are first and foremost collectors and redactors of received traditions. Nevertheless, the first three gospels are also documents written from specific, in each case different, theological perspective, which gives each of them a distinct theme. They also reflect, in terms of their background, different ecclesiastical locations, each with its specific problems and views. The latter accounts for the tension that is often found between tradition and theology, to which the former is often made subservient.

W S Vorster claims that *Redaktionsgeschichte* does not regard the evangelists as true 'writers' – the evangelist is a 'redactor' (note: not a 'collector') of traditions – since the evangelist is always an exponent of his environment (Vorster 1982a:107). For that reason the literary viewpoint of *Redaktionsgeschichte*, like that of *Formgeschichte*, is genetically causative. This viewpoint is confirmed by the following statement by Kesich (1972:41):

The evangelists cannot be considered authors of the Gospels in the modern sense. A modern writer is fully responsible for the form and context of his work. The evangelists did not create their own pattern, but derived it...they were members of the Christian community and each of them expressed the faith of the church.

(Kesich 1972:41)

According to the 'genetic method of explanation' the rediscovery of the *origin* and *development* of phenomena simultaneously comprises their explanation (Lategan 1982:58). This is a positivistic literary view, since the gospels are regarded as historical documents which (like any other ancient text) need to be explained on the grounds of necessity and causality. In such an interpretation the formation of a text and the influence of the writer on its content are the object of the inquiry (Vorster 1982a:94). The 'genetic interpretation' can thus justifiably be seen as the point of departure and cohesive element between the historical-critical methods, such as *Literargeschichte*, *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte* and *Redaktionsgeschichte* (Lategan 1982:58).

Seen as such, Güttgemanns is not entirely correct in considering that there is a discontinuity between *Formgeschichte* and *Redaktionsgeschichte*. The latter is unthinkable without the input of other methodological aspects of historical criticism. This is corroborated by the results of *Gattungsforschung* and especially those of the source critic and *Traditionsgeschichte*. In this sense, in the historical development of gospel research there is a continuity between *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte*, and *Redaktionsgeschichte*.

Theoretically, *Redaktionsgeschichte* is a very simple approach (see also Vorster 1975:36ff). The gospel as the end-product, as a unit, is investigated with a view to the separation between tradition and redaction. This redaction-plus or redaction-minus indicates the intention of the redactor/gospel writer. From the redactional arrangement, additions, omissions, stylistic processing of sources and so forth, the evangelist's own interpretation of the sources can be assessed. In this manner the evangelist is made to speak for himself and his theological intention can be determined by the researcher.

It would be no exaggeration to claim that the most noteworthy Matthean studies published during the seventies were *redaktionsgeschichtliche* inquiries (cf Harrington 1975, Hickling 1976:103f; Kingsbury 1977:12; Stanton 1992:23-53). In these investigations the theological profile of Matthew was extrapolated from the redaction-plus-Mark/Q and the redaction-minus Mark/Q, in line with source criticism by starting from the 'two-source theory', and in line with *Traditions-* and *Formgeschichte*, by concentrating on the *Sitz im Leben Ecclesiae*. The Gospel of Mark is regarded as particularly important because the author of Matthew performs his redactional task within the Marcan framework. It is as Crossan puts it, in the form of question and answer:

What happened to [the] Markan form/content...? What happened, for me, was Matthew and Luke and John....For what Mark did, genetically to Matthew and Luke and how I do not know to John, was to trap them within his form with a content they could not accept, to seduce them within his structure with a substance they could not share.

(Crossan 1978:49)

The theology of the Matthean Gospel has been defined – with the aid of *Redaktionsgeschichte* – as a the revised edition of the Marcan Gospel, designed to portray the community as the 'true Israel' which is replacing the 'false Israel' of Judaism (Trilling 1964:96f); as a historical reflection in the service of the ministry which answers doubts as to whether God is still faithful to his promises (in the Old Testament) by showing that God has indeed remained faithful through history and that his promises have been fulfilled in Jesus and in the church (Frankemölle 1974:118f, 142, 219f, 257-261, 319-321, 358, 384-400); as a 'legal document' to encourage the community and call them to faithfulness with regard to Jesus' normative interpretation of God's will, in contrast with Pharisaic Judaism and Hellenistic antinomianism (Hummel 1966:66-75, 162-173); as a redactional treatment of the Gospel of Mark with an apologetic function 'outward' and an instructive function 'inward' – 'outward' to help the Matthean community in its debate with Judaism that Jesus was the Messiah, and 'inward' as instruction to the Matthean community regarding the Jewish origins of their faith and regarding the ethical implications of being a Christian (Nickle 1981:112f); as a *Leben-Jesu* composition with eschatological relevance which is presented as the 'way to righteousness' in continuing *Heilsgeschichte* against the background of the delayed parousia (Strecker 1966:45-49, 184-188); as a theological reflection that is intended

to draw a correlation between the disciples in the Gospel of Matthew and the Christians in the community who showed the same tendency – a development of Strecker's idea that a 'historizing' and 'idealizing' tendency can be shown in the Gospel of Matthew (Luz 1971); as a theological reflection (against the background of Gentile evangelization and the persecution of Christians) in which the *Leben-Jesu* and the 'actions of the disciples' flowed together, with the purpose of depicting a 'salvation history' that shows the stages of the 'pre-history of the Messiah', the 'history and calling of Israel' and the 'calling of the Gentiles' (Walker 1967:114f); as a composition determined by the internal division within the community and the external opposition from the heathen (Thompson 1970:244, 252-254, 262); as a document that emphasizes the lasting validity of the law against the antinomianism of the Gentile Christians in the community and which at the same time emphasizes the universal implications of the Jesus-events against the imminent re-Judaizing of the Pharisaic Christians in the community (Barth 1961:54-154; cf Combrink 1980:72); as a document which (like the Gospel of Luke) has integrally absorbed Q and the Gospel of Mark, to arrive at a balance between the so-called gnostic influence on a 'spiritualized' gospel (Q) and the 'historization' of the Gospel of Mark (Grech 1972:272); as support for those in the community confused by a false alternative between a strong legalistic view in Pharisaic Christianity and a strongly charismatic Hellenistic Christianity (Schweizer 1974); as a document for a Hellenistic community with a view exclusively to the evangelization of the Gentiles, although this did not imply that the historical Jesus did not either begin or anticipate the evangelization of the Gentiles (Green 1975:21f); as a document intended to be read against the background of the 'consolidation of orthodox Judaism', at the end of the first century AD (Davies 1966); as a theological reflection against the background of the rift that had already developed between the Matthean community and Judaism (Filson 1960; Rohde 1966; Blair 1967; Hare 1967) or against the background of the conflict taking place *intra muros* (Bornkamm, Barth & Held 1961 – a view initiated by suggestions by Von Dobschütz in 1928, followed by Bacon in 1930); as a reflection of the theological circumstances in the *Sitz im Leben Ecclesiae*.

Kingsbury (1969) – on the basis of a study of the parable discourse in Matthew 13 – reconstructed the following problems in Matthew's community: Materialism, secularism, spiritual laziness, apostasy and lawlessness. According to Kingsbury, the community was being undermined, from within, by such agents as miracle-performing false prophets and, from without, by Gentile, and more especially Judaic, persecution. From the application of the *βασιλεία* concept in the Gospel of Matthew, Kretzer (1971) infers the circumstances in the historical

readers' circle – namely the liturgical influence, missionary activity and catechetical paraenesis. In a article published in 1980 Kretzer has localized the writer of the Gospel of Matthew as a Hellenistic Jewish Christian in Syria (most probably Antioch) who attempted to clarify the many questions and tensions within the work by looking at the historical milieu and the socio-cultural background (Kretzer 1980:131). According to Künzel (1978:163f, 178, 258), the Matthean community was in a *Vierfrontenkrieg* (Frankemölle 1982:131). On the one side there was the *doppelte Frontstellung* between the extra-community rift between 'church' and 'synagogue'. On the other there was the intra-community *doppelte Frontstellung* between 'nomistic learnedness' and 'charismatic antinomianism'.

D J Harrington (1975) has made a summarized overview of the first decade of *redaktionsgeschichtliche* Matthean studies. His summary of the results (see Harrington 1975:388) is, in our opinion, representative of the entire *redaktionsgeschichtliche* period in Matthean research. This summary (see bold wording below) serves as the point of departure for the discussion of certain facets of modern Matthean research which follows.

- **Scholars realize to an ever increasing extent that Matthew had to deal with serious problems in his community.**

This matter is linked to the concept of 'contextuality' as a historical problem, which deals with the nature of the historical background against which Matthew wrote his gospel. There is a growing consensus that the gospel was written after the separation between church and synagogue. Many Matthean scholars such as Walker (1967:114f), Hare (1967:157; 1975:359-369), Trilling (1964:95f), Green (1975:21f), Clark (1980:1) and Luz (1982b:iv) consider that Matthew perceived a break between the time of the evangelization of the Jews on the pre-paschal temporal level (the so-called 'Jewish-particularistic' trend – cf Mt 10:5f) and that of the evangelization of the Gentiles (the so-called 'Gentile-universalistic trend' – cf Mt 28:19). Other scholars, such as Grundmann (1968:577f), Schmid (1965:269-273), Schniewind (1968:250-254), Frankemölle (1974:121f), Wilckens (1975:363-372, 82f), Meier (1977:94-102) and Weren (1979:106-112), however, indicate that the expression πάντα τὰ ἔθνη in Matthew 28:19 does not refer to Gentiles only. On the contrary, it refers to Jews as well as non-Jews.

- A sensitivity can be perceived among scholars regarding the literary and theological use of various groups and individuals by the evangelist – such as the Jewish leaders, the disciples, the Jewish crowds and John the Baptist.

As far as the Jewish leaders are concerned, various scholars (cf e g Walker 1967:11-29; Van Tilborg 1972:1; Garland 1979:41ff) have pointed out that, despite the various names and combinations of names by which they are known in the Gos-pel of Matthew, the groups function as a 'single' character with a specific role. According to Van Tilborg, the Jewish leaders are characterized by three main 'names': *πονηροί*, *φονεῖς* and *ὑποκριταί*. Using the terms *πονηροί*, *οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ* (Mt 13:38), *γενεὰ πονηρά* (Mt 12:39; 16:4) and *υἱοὶ γεέννης* (Mt 23:15), Matthew takes up the theme of the Jewish leaders as 'Satan's henchmen' (see Van Tilborg 1972:167). The allusion to the theme of the 'killing of the prophets' is again present in the term *φονεῖς* (see Mt 5:12b; 23:29-32). The term *ὑποκριταί* (see Mt 23:3b; 15:7ff; 23:27f) expresses four aspects of the character of the Jewish leaders: (1) the *ὑποκριταί* are the 'godless' who do not obey the law and the prophets; (2) they are the 'double-hearted', whose inner disposition and attitudes are not in keeping with their outward formal actions; (3) they are the 'hypocrites' who act with an eye to fame and reward, and (4) they are the 'two-faced' who pretend to be what they are not (see Van Tilborg 1972:166). The latter trait is also reflected in the sarcastic use of a phrase such as 'sons of the kingdom' (Mt 8:12). Haenchen (1951:59) shows that this irony can also be found in names such as 'generation of vipers' (Mt 12:34) and 'blind leaders' (Mt 15:14; 23:16-22). This sanctimoniousness is, according to Garland (1979:99), the 'essence of hypocrisy'.

As far as the disciples are concerned, Garland points out that, according to Matthew, the very same ironic character trait found in the Jewish leaders was a potential danger to them: 'The disciples as leaders are susceptible to the same cataracts that blinded the scribes and Pharisees' (Garland 1979:38). This tendency in Matthew's picture of a disciple has, since the appearance of the two epoch-making Matthean studies by Günther Bornkamm (1961) – the first scholar to apply *Redaktionsgeschichte* to exegesis of the Gospel of Matthew – often been referred to by Matthean scholars. Unlike in Mark (see i a Best 1977:387f; Klauck 1982:2, 10f, 13, 26), the disciples in the Gospel of Matthew fulfill both a positive and a negative role (cf e g Minear 1974a, 1974b). Bornkamm's first study in this connection appeared in 1948. By comparing Matthew 8:23-27 with its source, Mark 4:35-41 – which deals with the episode in which Jesus calms the storm – Bornkamm shows how Matthew gave expression to his own theological intent. He points out that Matthew dealt with Mark in an interpretative manner. Matthew changed the

sequence of events in the narrative, so that in the Matthean Gospel we first have the dictum on the disciples' 'little faith', and then the relating of the stilling of the storm. Bornkamm considers that Matthew thus portrays a specific situation in the *Sitz im Leben Ecclesiae* which was typical of discipleship in general. Disciples are, in other words, *people of little faith* (see also Perrin 1970:4). The second important study was published in 1954. This article by Bornkamm was the first thorough *redaktionsgeschichtliche* investigation into the theological detail and central theme of the Gospel of Matthew. In it, Bornkamm concentrated on those parts of the discourse in which Jesus' teaching was prominent. He points out that in Matthew there was a merging (*Verklammerung*) of ecclesiology and eschatology (see also Rohde 1966:44). He considers that these discourse sections attest to Matthew's theological view of the relationship between ecclesiology and eschatology. He points out that Matthew 13, with its seven parables about the kingdom of heaven, introduces the idea that Matthew's community is not only a collection of the chosen and the righteous, but a *corpus mixtum* going to meet final judgment. At the parousia the 'wheat' will be separated from the 'chaff'.

After the two articles by Bornkamm, widely divergent opinions arose among *redaktionsgeschichtliche* exegetes regarding those whom the twelve disciples represented in the *Sitz im Leben Ecclesiae* of the Gospel of Matthew. The various opinions can be broadly categorized into two schools of thought. There is first the opinion that the disciples, as 'proto-apostles', were an analogy for the carriers of the apostolic tradition in the Matthean community, in other words the *church leadership* (cf e.g. Bornkamm 1961, Hummel 1966, Kähler 1976). Some proponents of this viewpoint also consider that the post-paschal commission of the disciples should be regarded as the continuation of the pre-paschal commission of Jesus (cf e.g. Minear 1974a:31; Senior 1976, Aguirre 1981). Frankemölle (1974:82), for example, is of the opinion that the way of Jesus should be seen as also the way of the disciples, and Senior (1976:670) put it this way: 'Perhaps no evangelist performed this ministry of continuity with more skill than Matthew. To study his Gospel under the rubric of continuity is to discover the core of his message.' Secondly, there is the opinion that the disciples are held out by Matthew as *examples* of the typical individual member of the Matthean community (cf e.g. Strecker 1966; Walker 1967; Luz 1971; Kingsbury 1979a). Both views proceed from the hypothesis that Matthew's gospel is a 'transparency' of the Matthean community. The disciples (as well as other figures – cf Frankemölle 1974:193, 218 in reference to the 'Jewish crowd') refer primarily to the 'historical' disciples but at the same time to people in the Matthean community. Brown (1980:90) formulates this as follows: '...Jesus instructs the Matthean community through the *transparency* of the twelve missionary disciples' (my italics).

Two people in the circle of disciples, Judas Iscariot and more especially Peter, have drawn particular attention in Matthean research. The study of Matthew's image of Peter has mostly focused on the problems of interpretation in respect of Peter's confession (Mt 16:13-20). Until 1962 this portion was mainly interpreted along confessional lines, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic (cf Kingsbury 1979a:67). After 1962 greater attention was given to the functional role that Peter fulfills in the Gospel. Two aspects of this role-fulfillment in particular have been pointed out: (1) Peter is the *foundation* and the *guarantor* of the apostolic tradition for the Matthean community (cf i a Kähler 1976:37). Jesus builds the community on Peter by handing him the 'keys of the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 16:18f; cf Mt 18:18). Fuller (1967:312) points out that this logia 'refers not to the familiar picture of Peter as the doorkeeper of heaven, but to Peter's activity on earth as...the preacher...which becomes presently operative not after Caesarea Philippi, but precisely after Easter, when Peter and the Twelve launch the kerygma' (see also inter alia Jeremias 1938:749ff; Heil 1981:107; Beare 1981:355f). The interpretation of the 'keys' as referring to Peter's mission and teaching commission is, according to J P Meier, confirmed by the imagery in Matthew 16:19 regarding the 'binding' and the making 'loose' of people in the kingdom of heaven: 'These are the technical rabbinic terms. Applied to 16:19, they seem to refer to a rabbi's power to declare particular acts permissible or forbidden' (Meier 1979:113). (2) Peter fulfills the role of the *type* of disciples and does so in the sense of *primus inter pares* (the first among equals) (cf inter alia Strecker 1966:198-206; Luz 1971:152; Brown et al 1973:75-107; Frankemölle 1974:155-158; Kingsbury 1979a:71f). Kingsbury indicates that Matthew refers throughout to Peter as Πέτρος. Even where he uses the name Σίμων, he links it – as can be seen from the context – with the name Πέτρος (Mt 4:18; 10:2; 16:16-18; 17:24-35). Matthew gives the figure of Peter greater prominence than Mark does, in both the negative and the positive sense. Peter is sketched as the 'first' (πρώτος) among the disciples (Mt 10:2). This observation is, in Kingsbury's view, very important in the light of Matthew's presentation of the concept of 'salvation history'. In the Matthean Gospel Peter has a 'salvation-historical primacy' which is evidenced in two ways. Firstly, Peter acts throughout as the *mouthpiece* of the disciples. Secondly, Matthew makes Peter *typical* or *representative* of the disciples. In line with Kähler (1976), who makes more of Peter's role as the authoritative 'guarantor' of the 'apostolic tradition' in Matthew's community, Schenk (1983:70) goes even further when he claims that Peter is neither just an example of a typical Christian, nor just an example of a typical congregational leader, but rather, as the authoritative guarantor (= *Buchgarant*) of the Jesus-story (= the Matthean Gospel), he is of fundamental ecclesiological significance.

Van Unnik (1974) reviews another figure in the circle of disciples, namely Judas Iscariot, and makes a study of the narrative regarding Judas' suicide (Mt 27:3-10). He rejects the view of Schniewind (1968:265) that Matthew contrasts Peter with Judas Iscariot: 'And he [Peter] went outside [ἔξελθὼν ἔξω] and wept bitterly' (Mt 26:75) and 'Judas...went away [ἀπελθὼν] and hanged himself' (Mt 27:5). Van Unnik (1974:47f) points out that the participle μεταμεληθεῖς (redaction material) in Matthew 27:3 – which functions as a portrayal of the circumstances surrounding the theme of Judas' suicide – is not used as a synonym for the word μετανοέω. According to him, μετανοέω 'means' a 'total about-face', while μεταμέλομαι reflects the idea of 'being in two minds': '...first one did a thing, later one decided to do something else, which of course for some reason or another one thought was the better course. And in that way it [μεταμέλομαι] may imply the notion of 'regret' ' (Van Unnik 1974:48; see also Meier 1980b:338). Van Unnik indicates that this use of the term μεταμέλομαι is also implied by the contexts of the other two places in Matthew (Mt 21:29, 32) where the term occurs (also redaction material). Unlike Gärtner (1971:37), who considers that Judas's suicide is an anticipation of the fate that will meet the godless at the parousia of the Son of man, Van Unnik considers that Judas accepted the gospel at the end. His death, from a Jewish religious perspective, neutralized his transgression.

Bornkamm (1961:38) pointed out another interesting aspect of the character of Judas Iscariot. Judas, unlike the rest of the disciples, refers to Jesus by the name 'Ραββί (Mt 26:25, 49). The other disciples call Jesus Κύριος (cf in particular Mt 26:22 with 26:25). It is noteworthy that it was only the Jewish leaders that also called Jesus Διδάσκαλος or 'Ραββί (see inter alia Mt 9:11; 17:24). In the Marcan and Lucan gospels no such parallelism occurs with regard to these names. In both Mark (see Mk 4:38; 9:5, 38; 10:35; 13:1) and Luke (see Lk 21:7) the vocative form Διδάσκαλε or 'Ραββί is used by the disciples to refer to Jesus. Matthew, on the other hand, changed the term used by the disciples to Κύριε (cf Mt 8:25 with Mk 4:28; Mt 17:4 with Mk 9:5; Mt 20:33 with Mk 10:51). The name 'Ραββί in Mark 11:21 was omitted by Matthew.

As far as the role of John the Baptist in Matthew is concerned, scholars all agree that Matthew took this role, 'unchanged', from Mark (see Trilling 1959:271-289; Wink 1968:27-41; Sand 1974:127-137; Meier 1980a:393-405). In essence, John the Baptist fulfills the role of a 'parallel figure of suffering', foreshadowing and anticipating the suffering and death of Jesus. There is, however, no consensus among scholars regarding Matthew's emphasis in his portrayal of John the Baptist, compared with that of Mark. Wink (1968:41), for example, following on Trilling (1959:289), is of the opinion that Matthew wanted to increase 'Israel's' guilt by

stressing that 'Israel' was responsible for the deaths of both Jesus and John the Baptist. According to Trilling and Wink, John the Baptist's suffering and death in parallel with that of Jesus gave Matthew further reason to see the 'church' as 'Israel's' replacement in salvation history. This motif of 'parallelism', according to Hill (1964/1965:296-302), comes clearly to the fore in the use of the name *προφήτης* for both Jesus and John the Baptist (cf in particular Mt 21:26 with 21:46). Although there is an eschatological motive in the use of the name *προφήτης* for John the Baptist in the Gospel of Mark, in the sense of a 'prophet, heralding the end of the age' (cf e.g. the *Elia redivivus* theme in Mt 17:10-13 – see Cullmann 1966:22-28), this motive has a subsidiary role in the Gospel of Matthew. Sand (1974:125f) points out that the motive of so-called *Prophetenschicksal*, which was well known in contemporary Judaism, was the dominant one in this Gospel.

- According to the review by Harrington (1975) mentioned above, there is a feeling in Matthean research that a comprehensive description of Matthew's christology from a *redaktionsgeschichtliche* perspective is needed.

J D Kingsbury attempted to fill this gap by publishing his book *Matthew: Structure, christology, kingdom* in 1975. On the dust cover of this work Norman Perrin claims that it is not only the most important book to date (1975) regarding the method of interpretation of the Matthean Gospel, but also a new beginning for scholars of future Matthean studies.

Kingsbury has since drawn both a qualified following (see inter alia Nolan 1979 and Meier 1979) and sharp criticism (see inter alia Barr 1976:351; Borsch 1977; Keck 1980, Hill 1980a, Tatum 1981). He considers that Matthew summarized the scopus of his theology in a single Christological title ('Son of God'), which – like a magnifying glass – converges all the rays of light onto one focal point. He is however not the first researcher to consider that Matthew regarded a certain title or titles as being dominant. In fact, there have been – both before and after Kingsbury – various divergent views in this regard.

Today, more and more warnings are given by Matthean scholars against an overemphasis of christological titles and especially against a search for the 'central' title in the evangelist's theology. The following remarks by Keck (in criticism of Kingsbury and of Meier's elliptical concept) and Hill (in criticism of Kingsbury and Nolan) are therefore important:

[C]oncentrating on christological titles actually misses much of what the New Testament, and the early Christians as well, wanted to say about Jesus....The same is true for the Gospel according to Matthew. This Gospel includes a great many titles, like Emmanuel, Son of David, Son of God, Son of Man, Christ. Yet Matthew is not as concerned to show how these titles are related to each other as are modern scholars.

(Keck 1980:9)

But like most of these who pursue, with enthusiasm and single mindedness, the search for one overarching christological theme...he [B M Nolan – A G v A] underrates other motifs and has to press some material to fit his predetermined mould.

(Hill 1980a:68)

- Scholars regard the Old Testament 'fulfillment citations' as part of Matthew's redactional (theological) activity, while they recognize that the use of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Matthew is not simple in nature.

Combrink (1979:56) points out that the idea of the *fulfillment of the Old Testament* plays a much more prominent role in the gospels of Matthew and Luke than in Mark. Researchers have related this phenomenon to the so-called *Heilsgeschichte* which is encountered in the first two gospels. Marxsen (1959), in his *redaktions-geschichtliche* study of the Gospel of Mark, piloted this investigation. Marxsen (1959:64) expressed the opinion that Matthew wrote his Gospel from three points in time, namely the 'time of the evangelist and his community'. He indicated that, just as a correlation existed for Matthew between the 'time of the earthly Jesus' and the 'time of the evangelist and his community', a correlation also existed between the 'time of the earthly Jesus' and the 'time of the Old Testament'. The latter correlation is expressed through the *fulfillment citations* in particular. Understood as such, the conclusion of the time of Jesus also corresponds to a beginning, before which another time becomes apparent - that of the Old Testament. Because of this, according to Marxsen (1959:64), it is understandable how the evangelist can connect these two epochs through his typical fulfillment citations. His opinion basically agrees with the finding of Conzelmann (1977) with regard to the corpus of Luke-Acts. According to this view the 'time of Jesus' is the mid-point between the 'time of the Old Testament' and the 'time of the church'.

Strecker (1966:86-93) and Walker (1967) were greatly influenced by Conzelmann. Although they differ from each other in respect of certain fine details, Strecker and Walker agree that three periods can be distinguished in the Gospel of Matthew. Walker (1967:116) refers to these three as the 'prehistory of the Messiah', beginning with Abraham, the 'history of the calling of Israel' (the 'particularistic' trend) consisting of the service of John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Messiah and that of Jesus Himself as the *Mitte der Mitte*, and finally the history of the mission to the Gentiles (the 'universalistic' trend) which began with Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection and extended to the day of judgment and thus partly coinciding with the time of the evangelist. Strecker (1966:184-188) refers to the three periods as the 'time of the fathers and the prophets', the 'time of Jesus', and the 'time of the *Heidenkirche*'. Like Walker (1967:115), Strecker (1966:187) regards John the Baptist as part of the 'time of Jesus'. With Jesus' death and resurrection this 'time' crosses over into the 'eschatological' time. Trilling (1969a, 1969b), in two separate articles about the crucifixion and resurrection respectively, indicates that the *Wende der Zeit* took place at this point in the Gospel of Matthew.

Unlike Strecker and Walker, Kingsbury (1973:471) does not distinguish three periods in the Gospel of Matthew, but two. He formulates his view as follows:

It has long been recognized that especially the formula quotations in the first Gospel reveal that Mt has theological affinity for the categories of 'prophecy' and 'fulfilment'. These terms aptly characterize Mt's view of the history of salvation. There is the 'time of Israel', which is preparatory to and prophetic of the coming of the Messiah; and there is the 'time of Jesus...', in which the time of Israel finds its fulfilment and which, from the vantage point of Matthew's day, extends from the beginning of the ministry of John and of Jesus (past) through post-Easter times (present) to the coming consummation of the age (future). In Mt's scheme of history, one does not, strictly speaking, find any such epoch as the 'time of the Church', for this 'time' is subsumed under the 'last days' inaugurated by John and Jesus.

(Kingsbury 1973:471)

Kingsbury does not therefore differ from Strecker and Walker as far as the *beginning* of the 'time of Jesus' is concerned, but with regard to the *end* of this time. He does not consider that there was a shift in 'time' with the death and resurrection of Jesus, but that the 'eschatological time' fully coincides with the 'time of Jesus',

This 'eschatological time' begins with the start of John the Baptist's service. The three scholars are all of the opinion that Matthew 3:1, as the beginning of John the Baptist's service, indicates the separation between the 'time of the Old Testament' and the 'time of Jesus'. According to this opinion the elements of *promise* (the time of the Old Testament) and *fulfilment* (the 'time of Jesus') separate the two periods. Kingsbury (1973:470; cf Strecker 1966:87) builds his argument mainly on the time formula, ἐν...ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις, which appears in Matthew 3:1 and Matthew 24:19, 22, and 29. He considers that this time formula has an exclusively eschatological connotation and that Matthew uses it to refer to 'the time of John the Baptist', the 'time of Jesus' and the 'time of the church'. It is on the basis of the application of this time formula that, according to Kingsbury, in the Gospel of Matthew there is no separation between the 'eschatological community' and the 'time of Jesus', but there is a separation between the 'time of the Old Testament' and the 'time of Jesus'.

Trilling (1969a, 1969b), as mentioned above, in two separate articles respectively concerning the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, has indicated that he differs from Kingsbury in connection with the *Wende der Zeit* in the Gospel of Matthew. Trilling, as well as Meier (1975:207; 1976:30-35), considers that the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus introduces the *Wende der Zeit*. Meier however goes further, claiming that there is a radical division between the 'old time' and the 'new time'. He equates the 'old time' with the 'time of the Old Testament' and thus with the demand for compliance with the Mosaic law and the period of Jewish particularism. He equates the 'new time' with the period of universalism which began with the death and resurrection of Jesus, and which had already been anticipated by texts such as Matthew 8:5-13 and 15:21-28. Meier builds his argument chiefly on the baptismal instruction to the disciples with regard to the πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Mt 28:19). In his view baptism replaces circumcision, which was symbolic of the 'old era'. Just as the particularistic trend passed on to the universalistic trend, according to Meier the call for obedience to the Mosaic law lapses with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Variations of this view are encountered in Trilling and Hamerton-Kelly, among others. The risen Christ, according to Hamerton-Kelly (1972), replaced the traditional 'halacha' with his 'halacha'. The abolition of the authority of the Mosaic law (the 'ceremonial law') thus opened the door to the mission to the Gentiles. In this regard Trilling (1964:211) has stated that only such a 'purified' understanding of the law in Matthew can be in harmony with the universalistic character of the Gospel.

An opposing viewpoint to the above is that of Barth (1961:138) who, in the early stages of the critical study of the Matthean Gospel said that it would be unthinkable for Matthew to abolish the law with the death of Jesus. Sand (1974:193) also emphasized that Matthew was primarily interested in the call to uphold the Mosaic law, and that one would be judged by one's loving attitude to one's neighbor and God. It is Matthew 5:17-20 (the 'hermeneutic key' to understanding the Sermon on the Mount as a whole – cf Betz 1979), especially, that points to the lasting validity of the Old Testament message: Jesus did not come to invalidate and replace the Old Testament, but to illustrate its true meaning in actions and attitudes, and thus 'fulfill' it. Nevertheless, scholars such as McConnel (1969:90), Kingsbury (1977:82ff) and Strecker (1978:69f) point out the paradox between Matthew 5:17-20 and Matthew 5:21-48 (the so-called 'antitheses'). It appears that Jesus' positive approach with regard to the Old Testament, as evidenced in Matthew 5:17-20, at least cannot be made applicable to the third 'antithesis' – the prohibition on divorce (Mt 5:31f; cf Mt 19:3-12; see Sigal 1979:33-37), or the fifth 'antithesis' – the nullification of the law of retribution (Mt 5:38-42). Boers (1980:229) and Luz (1982a) are of the opinion that the solution to the paradox should be sought in the way in which Matthew took over traditions. Luz formulates it as follows:

This interpretation of the Matthean attitude to the Law poses the question as to how far Matthew is coherent in his views. The result is, that Matthew is not entirely coherent in the way we would require it. At least [!] there are traditions in Mt which do not conform with Matthew's views entirely, but are, as words of Jesus, taken over by the Evangelist for the sake of one particular point only [e g 5,18; 23,2f; 18,15-17 etc].

(Luz 1982a:11)

This 'specific point' is in Luz's view, the single call to love. In another article Luz (1978:420) also said that to Matthew the authoritative explanation of the law by Jesus, in which the call to love should under all circumstances have precedence (and on which all other laws are dependent), is crucial.

- As far as the structure of the Gospel of Matthew is concerned, scholars increasingly consider the well-known fivefold division inadequate to explain the complexity of the structure of the Gospel; various structural principles need to be considered.

In the Matthean Gospel, the presence of five extensive Jesus-discourses that each conclude with the stereotyped phrase, *καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς...* (Mt 7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1) has, since the days of Bacon (1918), been regarded as a particular characteristic of the Gospel's formal construction. Bacon, however, saw this fivefold division as a Pentateuch motif, and from it derived a 'New Moses' christology. This fivefold analysis was at one stage in Matthean research the most popular view among scholars as regards the formal construction of the Gospel. Davies (1966:15, 23), for example, on the basis of Bacon's view, developed the theory that the writer of the Matthean Gospel was a converted rabbi, a Christian legalist who offered a systematic presentation of Jesus' 'commandments' in five collections, according to the pattern of the Mosaic Pentateuch, as an apology for antinomianism. One also finds a development of the Pentateuch analogy among Matthean scholars such as Stendahl (1969:24f) and Glasswell (1981:43f). Kline (1975) and Senior (1976:673), in their turn, interpreted the five Jesus-discourses in analogy with Moses' valedictory speeches in Deuteronomic theology, with the 'covenant' as their central theme.

This fivefold classification of the structure of the Matthean Gospel has, however, been criticized for its oversight of the 'discourses' in Matthew 11 and 23, for its failure to explain the infancy and passion narratives integrally with the total construction, and its inability to indicate any convincing similarities between the content and structure of the Pentateuch and Matthew (see e.g. Hill 1979:140). The intentional importance of the presence of these five Jesus discourses to the theology of the Gospel of Matthew cannot however be reasoned away (Via 1980:200; cf also Gundry 1982:11) as, for example, in the case of Schmid (1965), Lohmeyer (1967) and Gaechter (1966:60-65).

Taking into account Jesus' five speeches in Matthew, Kingsbury (1975d:9, 36ff, 161ff) divides the Gospel into three main parts, namely 'The person of Jesus the Messiah' (Mt 1:1-4:16), 'The proclamation of Jesus the Messiah' (Mt 4:17-16:20) and the 'suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah' (Mt 16:21-28:20). What Kingsbury is trying to argue by this analysis is that Matthew divides his gospel into three blocks, according to a christological motif against the background of the contemporary concept *βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*. This motif derives from the fact that Jesus the Messiah, who was *υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* 'then', 'now' has become the earthly

and cosmic υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, and that the purpose of the proclamation of the βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν is to make all nations υἱοὶ of God. This christological motif is based on a structure of the Matthean Gospel which witnesses to a progressively chronological salvation-history scheme, which centers around the temporal expressions ἀπὸ τότε ᾤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς (Mt 4:17; 16:21) and the fivefold καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς.... In his criticism and rejection of Kingsbury's analysis of the structure of the Gospel of Matthew, F H Borsch points out that Kingsbury, although working with a combination of a fivefold and a threefold classification, does not take into account all the structural principles of the Gospel. He formulates it as follows: 'It grows increasingly evident that we should regard the First Gospel as the most intricately woven of the gospels, its numerous patterns interthreaded, with even its seams having become part of the designing' (Borsch 1977:73).

Today more and more Matthean scholars are voicing the opinion that Bacon should be conceded at least one point, which is that the five Jesus discourses in the Gospel do not represent 'breaks' but that they should be seen in relation to the narrative discourses that follow and intersperse the Matthean Gospel (see i a Lohr 1961:427; Gaechter 1966; Schniewind 1968:8; Rolland 1972:156f; Ellis 1974; Barr 1976:354f; Aguirre 1981:152; Combrink 1982:16; Van Aarde 1982a:123-128). On the other hand, Marxsen had noticed early on that the narrative discourses were chiefly 'historizing' redaction of the Gospel of Mark and that the post-paschal situation of Matthew and his community in the Jesus discourses was being reflected. According to him, one should distinguish between the narrative discourses and the Jesus discourses. The historicization of the Marcan sketch finds its reflection in the narrative discourses. Into this narrative discourses *Redenkomplexen* (Jesus discourses) are taken up which reflects Matthew's time, but in a historicizing manner (Marxsen 1959:64). It is moreover noteworthy that both the disciples and the Jewish crowds were present at the start of each Jesus discourse (cf Keegan 1983:415-430). From this and other facts it can be inferred that, according to Matthew, Jesus' speeches were directed at the disciples, while they had particular relevance to the relationship between the disciples and the Jewish crowd (see Van Aarde 1982a:125f).

- The 'two-source theory' is generally accepted, but some scholars are convinced that it should not be regarded as the only solution to the 'synoptic problem'.

The following remark by Carlston (1975:4) illustrates that the speculative nature of investigations that lend special weight to source hypothesis is recognized: 'Even the most probable solution to the Synoptic problem is not completely certain; we cannot

always know what the source was in any case (some of the material that is now peculiar to Matthew, e g, may have come from Q and been omitted by Luke); and even when we are quite sure of the source and the redaction we may be quite unsure of the reasons behind the redactor.' In Matthean studies, an example of where the Mark priority is still accepted, but with strong reservations, is the approach by F Neirynck (cf Stanton 1992:28-32). Neirynck has appreciation for Gaboury's source hypothesis. According to this, there is a 'structure-type' which is at the basis of the common 'order of pericopes' in the Synoptic gospels: 'The structure-type which lies at the origin of the common order is to be found in a primitive gospel source previous to Matthew, Mark and Luke' (Neirynck 1972:149). In the Gaboury hypothesis there is no place for either a Marcan priority or a Matthean priority. Nonetheless, Neirynck (1972:177f) considers that it is not, in fact, a better solution to the 'synoptic problem' than that of the Marcan priority viewpoint – even if the only important new argument in support of this solution, according to Neirynck, is the contribution made by *Redaktionsgeschichte* in the field of identifying the various gospels' theologies. In this connection he supportively quotes the remark made by J M Robinson (1971:101f): 'In a generation in which the Synoptic problem has been largely dormant, the success of *Redaktionsgeschichte* in clarifying the theologies of Matthew and Luke on the assumption of dependence upon Mark is perhaps the most important new argument for Marcan priority.'

On the other hand, 'theological' Matthean studies – in which weighty theologoumena have been derived simply on the grounds of a comparison between 'redaction' and 'tradition' – have drawn sharp criticism. Hill (1979:139) formulates this criticism as follows:

[T]he search for and discovery of what is distinctively Matthean in theological outlook does not depend on the two-source theory.... Matthew's theology (and, for that matter, the theology of any of the evangelists) 'as a totality' depends on his gospel as a whole and not solely on what is distinctive in his editorial arrangement, alterations and so forth. Redaction-criticism has justly been criticized for building massive theological hypotheses on very tiny pieces of editorial evidence.

(Hill 1979:139)

Some Matthean scholars (cf i a Thompson 1970; Carlston 1975; Harrington 1975:388; Cope 1976; Barr 1976; Kingsbury 1977; Humphrey 1977) would like to bridge the problem of the speculative nature of the investigation of Matthew's use of

sources by making, besides a source investigation (a diachronic study), a redaction-critical analysis of the intratextual details. Such an analysis would, for example, take note of the unique commencement and closing of discourses, changes in wording and the order of literary units. This emphasis on the internal literary characteristics of the gospels led, in America, to a redaction-critical approach, representing a shift as regards traditional *Redaktionsgeschichte* (cf i a Kelber 1979). Karris (1979:514) also considers that historical criticism will bear fruit only in the future, if it is to give greater attention to 'literary criticism'. This insight has given momentum to the investigation of the compositional characteristics (in particular) of the Gospel of Matthew. In this connection one can refer to such works as Sibinga (1972), Sabourin (1973), Gaechter (1966), Barr (1976), Riesner (1978), Kretzer (1980), Clark & De Waard (1982).

1.2 NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF MATTHEAN RESEARCH

During the latter part of the seventies various scholars have expressed their dissatisfaction with historical criticism, which has been reduced to the *redaktionsgeschichtliche* approach (cf i a Den Heyer 1979:45-69). The criticism of historical criticism had its origin mostly in the perception that the traditional historical approach lost sight of the 'ultimate importance' of the text (Léon-Dufour 1973:10). Ferdinand Hahn, an important exponent of historical criticism (cf Hahn 1974b), became convinced that historical criticism could only contribute to investigating the individual nature of texts in aspects of their language, form, tradition and historical religion (cf also Vorster 1977a:10f, 23). In other words, they are all aspects related to the *formation* of the text, but it is, on its own, not capable of doing justice to the intention of the text. A typical question put by the critics of historical-criticism in this connection is the following: Is the role of the exegete then to slip into the skin of the people in the past (cf Léon-Dufour 1973:10)? Léon-Dufour states that the exegete ought to be released from his *Ghettoexistenz* by learning from the sister sciences, namely the modern sciences of language and literature. Modern literary scientists (cf Frye 1971:212) have demonstrated to the exegete that a more-dimensional approach to texts than simple historical criticism is possible. James Barr, who in 1961, with his *The semantics of biblical language*, had already shown that the importance of modern language science to the lexicography of biblical languages was self evident, describes as follows the need for a shift in the exegetical approach based on the perceptions of modern literary science:

It may well be asked, however, whether the time is now coming when a more fully literary study of the Bible will begin to assert itself, a study which will really concern itself with the imagery and structure of the text as it stands, probably ruling out as irrelevant for this purpose the historical and intentional concerns which have dominated technical biblical scholarship...Since readers may ask themselves the question, I would say that procedures like form criticism and redaction criticism, in spite of some differences from documentary source criticism, belong for the most part together with it as historical in interest. They are pursued very largely with the purpose of getting at the movement of the tradition in the time before the present form of the text was reached, or of getting at the processes by which it was reached. In this respect they are historical and intentional; they ask what was the mental process which produced this text. What I call a fully literary approach would ask rather what is the meaning of this text as it is.

(Barr 1973:63f)

The realization has since dawned on exegetes that it is not the history of the text that is decisive for the exegete, but its immanent structure. Since the seventies this has led to the application of various 'structural' approaches in the exegesis of the gospels. These methods have shifted the emphasis from the study of the formative history of the text to the analysis of the linguistic 'superficial structure' and the structural patterns latent in the 'depth structure'.

French Structuralism, which has an important exponent in A J Greimas, and which is applied to New Testament texts by scholars such as D Patte (1976, 1978), does not so much take account of the linguistic surface structure, but analyses the so-called 'narrative niveau' of narrative texts. The 'linguistic niveau' from which Transformational-Generative Grammar departs, consists of two levels, namely the 'surface structure' and the 'in-depth structure'. The former is the level that we see, which is the current shape of language. Under the surface lie the interrelationships and interweaving of linguistic structures which, semantically, denote the true meaning of the text. This is the level known as the 'depth structure'. French Structuralism makes a distinction between the levels on which the depth structure is situated. Apart from the fact that below the current narrative there is a linguistic depth structure (see the South African semantic structural analysis below), below this linguistic depth structure there is also a 'narrative surface structure' and a 'narrative depth structure'. The plot of the narrative is generated in the 'narrative

depth structure', embodied in the 'narrative surface structure' and finally manifested in the 'linguistic surface structure' in current linguistic forms – such as words, combinations of words, sentences, combinations of sentences, pericopes and so forth. These linguistic signs serve as the language symbols of the various 'actants' encountered on the level of manifestation. An 'actant' is generally a character in the narrative, but it can also be an interest group, an object, an institution, a predicate, and so on.

Greimas's literary theory (see inter alia Galland 1976:1-26; McKnight 1978; Vorster 1982c:127-152; Pelsier 1982; Dormeyer 1989:188) is a development chiefly of the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss in respect of his 'mythological anthropology', Vladimir Propp in respect of his study of characters' functional activities and relationships in Russian fables, and L. Tesnière's syntactical theory with regard to the 'delimitation' of narrative *énoncés* (Greimas' so-called *lexie*) (see Howard 1979). Greimas stresses the paradigmatic structure of binary opposition in respect of the reciprocal relations between actants and the syntagmatic structure of sequentially related episodes ('syntagmata') in the 'plot' of the narrative. According to this theory there are only six types of roles that a character in a narrative can fulfill. An 'actant' is such a 'character in a role' – either by deed or in a qualified capacity through being endowed with a characteristic by means of an adjective. The relationships of actants are structured in fixed patterns (actant models) in a paradigmatic manner. The 'plot' of the narrative is linear, in successive sequences (episodes) which have a particular syntagmatic relationship to one another. Each sequence presupposes a certain actant model. As far as the application of 'structural exegesis' in Matthean studies is concerned, one can refer to studies such as those of Lai (1975) with regard to Matthew 27:57-28:20, and Calloud (1976:47-108) with regard to Matthew 4:1-11. Schider & Stenger (1981), after the pattern of Erhardt Güttgemanns's *generative Poetik* (see Güttgemanns 1973a:2-47; cf Dormeyer 1989:135-138), analyzed Matthew 18-25.

In 1973, when the structural exegetic approach had just started, Güttgemanns stated that structural exegesis in the field of the gospels is a promising new start, which is linked to laborious and detailed research (Güttgemanns 1973b:72). Daniel Patte (1978) considers that structural exegesis can make a contribution with regard to the New Hermeneutic approach, which harks back to the later Heidegger and his followers' emphasis of the *Dasein*, which expresses itself in language. Language has an 'ability' to influence the reader either to a new way of thinking (Patte speaks of 'religious transformation') or to a confirmation and strengthening of the old patterns of thought. Structural exegesis is, to him, the key to this 'ability' of the text. Using analytical steps he would like to arrive at the 'semantic universum' (the 'semiotic square') in the 'narrative depth structure' where, he considers, lies the 'ability' of the text. In short, the method comprises the following:

- * the investigation of the 'narrative manifestation level', which will lead to the 'narrative surface structure';
- * the 'symbolic level' is then analyzed from the foregoing; and
- * this analysis leads to the 'semantic universe'.

Ellingworth (1978:147), in a discussion of the work of Daniel Patte, judges structural exegesis as follows: '...if one's interest is in the specificities of a particular text, even a whole discourse, then it is best handled, not with tongs, but with the sensitive fingertips of normal exegesis.' Pelser (1982) holds a similar view in this connection. He points out that structural exegesis makes use of a conceptual apparatus that would be comparatively incomprehensible to the uninitiated exegete. Apart from the problems attached to the use of incomprehensible terms, Pelser (cf also Vorster 1982c:151) says that the positivistic approach of structural exegesis to the autonomy of a text is unacceptable. This form of positivism results in almost no attention being given to historical questions in the exegesis, and that such an exegesis is an analysis of the structures for the sake of structures (Vorster 1982c:151). Similarly, Deist (1983:39) points out the danger of 'phenomenology' which can arise from the so-called 'objectivity ideal' of the structural approach.

South African structural analysis (see inter alia Louw 1982:62-158) is one of the methods directed at the study of the linguistic surface structure. The New Testament Society of South Africa (NTSSA) has, at two annual congresses (1977 and 1982), given attention to the analysis of the Gospel of Matthew. The results have been published in *Neotestamentica* 11 (1977), which dealt with Matthew 1-13, and *Neotestamentica* 16 (1982), which dealt with Matthew 14-28. In an address to the Society of Biblical Literature at their annual congress, Lategan (1978) gave an analysis of Matthew 23 and Malan (1981), in a professorial inaugural address, an analysis of Matthew 5-9 and 19-22. Sometimes syntagmatic colon analysis is extended to a paradigmatic inquiry based on the technique that E A Nida and C R Taber (1974) developed with a view to a dynamic translation of the Bible (see Van Aarde (1980b) with regard to the analysis of Mt 5:3-10).

South African structural analysis is generally not based on a hermeneutic model, but it only has reference to textual patterns and unity (cf inter alia Vorster 1977a:14; Lategan 1977:115). Combrink (1982:5f) calls this textual unity the 'how' or the 'organization' of the text. At the same time he points out that there has already been a shift among South African scholars, from the 'how' to the hermeneutic function of the text (see Vorster 1977a:23; De Villiers 1982; Van Aarde 1982a):

The characteristic approach to texts in the discourse analysis of the NTSSA...concentrates to a very large degree on the textual means, the 'how' of the text. But in the sub-groups occupied with this task, the awareness has been growing that there are other aspects too that merit our attention...Although the author of this Gospel without any doubt made use of traditional material, the challenge before us is to come to terms with the way in which this message/narrative is composed and structured, without prejudging the question by taking Matthew's redaction of work as a point of departure.

(Combrink 1982:6)

This perceptible shift in emphasis in Matthean research has had the result that the hermeneutic importance of the structural principles that make a text a literary work, has been more and more discounted in exegesis of the Gospel. This direction in exegetical methodology links up in a certain sense with the literary-theoretical approaches known as 'Russian Formalism', and American 'Literary Criticism', called 'New Criticism'. As far as the latter is concerned, certain aspects of this approach developed so quickly that there is currently a distinction between the "old" New Criticism' and the "new" New Criticism' (cf Polzin 1980:100). The premise in this modern literary-theory approach in exegesis is that the 'poetics' (that is, 'rhetoric') of a text is the key to the particular methodological approach to exegesis of the text in question. The term 'poetics' implies the manner in which language is organized in a discourse; in other words, the way in which a text is 'made'. This means that the genre (type of literature) that a text represents has far-reaching implications for the manner in which that text should be subjected to exegesis.

The 'gospel' genre is *narrative*. The gospel form complies with the following description of a 'narrative': 'Narrative' is a discourse in which language is organized in terms of *characters* who move in a particular structure of *time* and *space*, and bring about a chronological sequence of episodes which have a causal relationship to one another (*plot*). In effect, a narrative has its own closed narrated world: A *message* ('ideological' narrator's perspective/s) that a writer communicates through a *narrator* to a *reader*. The message is communicated by the narrator supplying the (idealized/implied) reader with norms for the valuation. That is, the reader is 'manipulated' by means of the narrative techniques the narrator uses to constitute the plot – the means by which the narrator relates, in chronological causality, episodes in which characters within a particular structure of time and space move. Petersen (1980c:36ff) formulates this literary-theoretical approach in gospel research as follows:

The starting point of literary criticism...is 'to accept the form of the work...' [O]ur Gospels...have a narrative form...and an imaginative world into which one can enter. How? By participating in the form of the work...A literary reading of a narrative text...begins at the moment when we allow ourselves to be addressed by its textually immanent narrator. That is the first step. All others flow from it...the narrator lures the reader into...times and places by perspectively locating himself and the reader in the midst of the scenes and events he describes, enabling the reader to see, hear, and know things he would not have access to without the narrator's guiding voice. Through this device which literary critics call narrative point of view, the reader becomes a participant in the narrative form.

(Petersen 1980a:36ff)

In this connection, Petersen (1978a, 1978b), in the methodology of exegesis, introduced the literary theory of Boris Uspensky (1973) in particular. Kingsbury (1979b:101ff) and Doty (1983:302), among others, anticipate a promising future for this approach in gospel research and Vorster (1980a, 1980b, 1980c, 1980d, 1982a, 1982b, 1985b), Petersen (1978a, 1978b:49-80), Tannehill (1980), Boomershine (1981a, 1981b), Rhoads (1982) and Rhoads & Michie (1982) have already done important studies regarding the Gospel of Mark, while Resseguie (1982) applies this approach to the Gospel of Luke. As far as Matthew is concerned, studies on it have also been done (cf Stanton 1992:54-84). Up to 1982 the following studies have been published: Via (1980) has investigated the relevance of the narrative structure on christology and the ethics of the Gospel; Anderson (1981) has discussed certain aspects in the Gospel where the 'points of view' of the narrator coincide with those of the protagonist in the narration, namely Jesus; Combrink (1982) has studied the linear sequence of episodes in the plot of the Gospel; De Villiers (1982) has researched Matthew 19-22 with regard to character analysis and plot and I myself discussed Matthew's image of the disciple in a structural analysis of Matthew 13:53-17:27 (Van Aarde 1982b).

In my doctoral dissertation, I attempted to identify the underlying 'ideological' ('theological') perspective, using an analysis of the narrative techniques in the Gospel of Matthew (cf Van Aarde 1982b). From this study, particularly as viewed from the 'time' related in the Gospel, one can conclude that Matthew created an analogy between the pre-paschal mission of Jesus and the post-paschal mission of the disciples. These two 'missions' form two 'narrative lines', or 'lines of action' in the narrative. The analogy sometimes takes the form of parallelism and

sometimes the form of a symbolic-allegorical reflection – particularly in certain parables (see Van Aarde 1982c). Although the mission of the disciples only began at the conclusion of the mission of Jesus, the former alternates with the latter by means of analogic and symbolic-allegorical anticipation. Seen thus, the theme of *God-with-us* is the dominant 'ideological'/'theological' perspective from which the Matthean Gospel should be read. The implied reader is associated with the 'historical' disciples by the narrator. The theme of *God-with-us* functions as the base from which the narrator addresses the reader with authority. As a result the 'disciple-reader' (cf Via 1980:209f) considers himself addressed with such authority that s/he cannot help but be involved in Matthew's narrative.

Where French Structuralism represents a total discontinuity with historical criticism, by being totally achronic in nature, this new literary-theoretical approach recognizes certain structuralist insights, but it generally keeps account of the Synoptic Gospels as historical documents (see also Combrink 1983:10). Two gospel scholars, Petersen and Boomershine, have the following to say on the subject:

Despite their rebellion against historicism and historical method, literary critics have not been without respect for historical concerns...It is possible to do literary criticism in the historical study of biblical texts without being historicistic.

(Petersen 1978b:28, 32)

The categories of narrative analysis that have been developed by twentieth-century criticism of fiction are adapted...in order to expand the resources for form-critical study and to make possible a more precise analysis of...[the gospels' – A G v A] narrative techniques.

(Boomershine 1981:227)

Clearly, as far as gospel research is concerned, it is at an intermediate stage. A period of transition need not, however, presuppose a weakness in methodology. Montague (1979:5) says it is to be expected, since science is usually practiced according to a generally accepted old paradigm: 'Revolution in science occurs when scientists find the old paradigm increasingly inadequate to cope with anomalies and some become converted to a new paradigm, though theses under the old continue to proliferate.' During this transition phase in evangelical research the pendulum swings more and more towards a text-immanent approach. The results of narratological studies, in particular, are not free from the undisputed influence of the historical-critical period, which has naturally not been concluded. The following

statement by Harold Rosenberg, quoted by Doty (1972:413) is therefore an important pointer in exegetical methodology: 'The attempt to define is like a game in which you cannot possibly reach the goal from the starting point but can only close in on it by picking up each time from where the last play landed.'