

JOY PHILIP KAKKANATTU

God's Enduring Love in the Book of Hosea

*Forschungen
zum Alten Testament 2.Reihe*

14

Mohr Siebeck

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14



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God's Enduring Love in the Book of Hosea

A Synchronic and Diachronic Analysis of
Hosea 11,1–11

Mohr Siebeck

Joy Philip Kakkattu, born 1964; 1999 Licentiate in Sacred Scripture from Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome; 2005 Doctorate in Theology from Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome; presently teaching Old Testament at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (Pontifical Athenaeum of Philosophy, Theology and Canon Law), Bangalore.

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Joy Philip Kakkanattu, CMI

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Abbreviations

ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament (Wiesbaden)
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> (ed. D.N. Freedman) (New York, N.Y. 1992).
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ACEBT	<i>Amsterdamse Cahiers voor Exegese en bijbelse Theologie</i>
AJSL	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i>
AnBib	Analecta biblica
AnOr	Analecta orientalia
Anton	<i>Antonianum</i>
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ATA	Alttestamentliche Abhandlungen
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
BASOR	<i>Bulletin for American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BEATAJ	Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums
BeO	<i>Bibbia e Oriente</i>
Berit Olam	Berit Olam Studies in Hebrew Narratives & Poetry
BETL	<i>Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</i>
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i>
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BibIn	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BibOr	Biblica et Orientalia
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BK	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament
BL	Bibel und Liturgie
BN	Biblische Notizen
BR	<i>Biblical Research</i>
BSac	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BThSt	Biblisch-Theologische Studien
BVC	<i>Bible et vie chrétienne</i>

BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament.
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CEI	La bibbia, testo ufficiale della Conferenza Episcopale Italiana
ch(s).	chapter(s)
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series
Conn.	Connecticut
<i>Cont</i>	<i>Continuum</i>
CthM.BW	Calwer theologische Monographien. Reihe A, Bibelwissenschaft
<i>DCH</i>	<i>The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i> , so far 5 vols. (ed. D.J.A. Clines) (Sheffield 1993–2001)
Diss.	Dissertation
Dtn.	Deuteronomic
Dtr.	Deuteronomistic
EBib	Etudes Bibliques
ed./eds.	editor/editors
EIN	Einheitsübersetzung der Heiligen Schrift
<i>EncJud</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> , 17 vols. (Jerusalem 1971–1982)
ET	English Translation
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
EÜ	Der Bibel: Einheitsübersetzung
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FCB	Feminist Companion to the Bible
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FS	Festschrift
FZPhTh	Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie
GAT	Grundrisse zum Alten Testament
GKC	<i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> , ed. E. Kautzsch, tr. A. E. Cowley.
<i>Greg</i>	<i>Gregorianum</i>
<i>HAR</i>	<i>Hebrew Annual Review</i>
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
Hrsg.	Herausgeber
HThKAT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>

<i>ISBE</i>	<i>The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, a fully Revised, 4 vols.</i> (ed. G.W. Bromiley) (Grand Rapids, Mich. 1979–1988).
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBTh</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie</i>
<i>JNSL</i>	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
<i>JPS</i>	Jewish Publishing Society
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement series</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>KAT</i>	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>KHAT</i>	Kurzer Handkommentar zum AT
<i>KJV</i>	King James Version
<i>LeDiv</i>	Lectio divina (Paris)
<i>LumVie</i>	<i>Lumière et vie</i>
<i>LXX</i>	Septuagint
<i>MdB</i>	<i>Le Monde de la Bible</i>
<i>MGWJ</i>	<i>Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
<i>MT</i>	Massoretic Text
<i>NAB</i>	The New American Bible
<i>NAC</i>	New American Commentary
<i>NAWG</i>	<i>Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen</i>
<i>NCB</i>	New Century Bible Commentary
<i>NEchtB</i>	Neue Echter Bibel
<i>NIDOTTE</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> (ed. W.A. VanGemeren) (Grand Rapids, Mich. 1977).
<i>NIV</i>	New International Version
<i>NJB</i>	New Jerusalem Bible
<i>NJBC</i>	<i>New Jerome Bible Commentary</i> (eds. R.E. Brown et al.) (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1990, repr. Bangalore 1994).
<i>NKZ</i>	<i>Neue kirchliche Zeitung</i>
<i>NRSV</i>	New Revised Standard Version
<i>NSK-AT</i>	Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar- Altes Testament
<i>OBO</i>	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
<i>OBT</i>	Overtures of Biblical Theology
<i>OEANE</i>	<i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archeology in the Near East</i> (ed. E.M. Meyers) (New York, N.Y. 1997).
<i>OTE</i>	<i>Old Testament Essays</i>
<i>OTG</i>	Old Testament Guides
<i>OTL</i>	Old Testament Library
<i>OTS</i>	Old Testament Studies
<i>OtSt</i>	Oudtestamentliche Studiën

<i>OTWSA</i>	<i>Ou testamentiese werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika</i>
<i>QD</i>	<i>Questiones Disputatae</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
<i>RivB</i>	<i>Rivista biblica</i>
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
<i>RSV</i>	The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version
<i>s.l.</i>	<i>sine loco</i>
<i>SBL</i>	Society of Biblical Literature
<i>SBLDS</i>	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
<i>SBLSP</i>	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
<i>SBLSymS</i>	Journal of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
<i>SBS</i>	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
<i>SEÅ</i>	<i>Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok</i>
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
<i>SSN</i>	<i>Studia Semitica Neerlandica</i>
<i>SubBi</i>	<i>Subsidia Biblica</i>
<i>SwJT</i>	<i>Southwestern Journal of Theology</i>
<i>TBei</i>	Theologische Beiträge
<i>TANAKH</i>	The New JPS Translation according to the traditional Hebrew Text.
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , 10 vols. (eds. G. Kittel – G. Friedrich) (Grand Rapids, Mich. 1964–1976).
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> , so far 14 vols. (eds. G.J. Botterweck – H. Ringgren – H.-J. Fabry) (Grand Rapids, Mich. 1974–2004).
<i>THAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i> , 2 vols (eds. E. Jenni – C. Westermann) (Münich 1971, 1976).
<i>TICP</i>	Travaux de l’Institut Catholique de Paris
<i>TLOT</i>	<i>Theological Lexicon of Old Testament</i> , 3 vols. (eds. E. Jenni – C. Westermann) (Peabody, Mass. 1997).
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>TOB</i>	Traduction œcuménique de la Bible
<i>TP</i>	<i>Theologie und Philosophie</i>
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>TRE</i>	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i> (eds. G. Krause – G. Müller) (Berlin 1977–).
<i>TRu</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
<i>TTKi</i>	<i>Tidsskrift for Teologi og Kirke</i>

<i>TWAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament,</i> (eds. G.J. Botterweck – H. Ringgren) (Stuttgart Band 1–8, 1973–1995; Band 10, 2000).
<i>TWNT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> (eds. G. Kittel – G. Friedrich) (Stuttgart 1932–1979).
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
<i>VF</i>	<i>Verkündigung und Forschung</i>
<i>VTSup</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum Supplements</i>
<i>Vulg.</i>	<i>Vulgate</i>
<i>WBC</i>	<i>Word Biblical Commentary</i>
<i>ZABR</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

Introduction

The principal aim of this study is to offer a thorough analysis of Hos 11,1–11 by means of a synchronic and diachronic reading of the text with reference to its context in the book of Hosea and in the book of the Twelve Prophets.

Hos 11,1–11 has long been noted for its unique theological insight and has even been extolled as “the hymn of divine love”¹ or “the ballade of unrecognised love”². If the basic theme of the book of Hosea is Yahweh’s love for Israel, Hos 11,1–11 brings the theme to a high point of its expression. This is a rare text in the Old Testament, one which describes the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel as a love-relationship between parent and child. That the theological content of Hos 11, and especially of vs.8–9, is unparalleled in the whole Bible has prompted interpreters to regard it as the epitome of Old Testament theology³. There are not many texts in the Old Testament which locate the reason for Israel’s survival in the holy nature of Yahweh and his indwelling presence in the midst of the people. Weiser’s opinion on Hos 11,1–11 is representative:

Nicht nur innerhalb des Hosea-buches, sondern in der gesamten Prophetie überhaupt gehört dieses Kapitel zum Größten und Feinsten, was im Alten Testament über die göttliche Liebe gefaßt ist. Von keinen anderen der alttestamentlichen Zeugen ist die zarte Innigkeit und zugleich die sieghafte Kraft der Liebe Gottes in solcher Tiefe erfasst und dargestellt wie von Hosea⁴.

At the same time, Hos 11,1–11 is also marked by its difficult Hebrew and the problem of its relationship to other texts in the book, such as Hos 13,14–14,1 and 14,2–9.

Nonetheless, although Hos 11,1–11 has long been noted both for its textual difficulties and for its profound and unique theological insight, few monographic

¹ H. GROSS, “Das Hohelied des Liebe Gottes. Zur Theologie von Hosea 11”, in *Mysterium der Gnade* (FS Johann Auer [Hrsg. H. Rossmann – J. Ratzinger] Regensburg 1975) 83.

² H. BUSSCHE, “La ballade de l’amour méconnu. Commentaire d’Osée 11:1–10”, *BVC* 41 (1961) 18.

³ Cf. e.g. J. KRAŠOVEC, *Reward, Punishment, and Forgiveness: The Thinking and Beliefs of Ancient Israel in the Light of Greek and Modern Views* (VTSup 78; Leiden 1999) 419: “Verses [Hos] 11:8–11 are justifiably considered the theological pinnacle of the book of Hosea, one of the most important texts in the Old Testament, and a point of contact between the Old and the New”.

⁴ A. WEISER, *Das Buch des zwölf kleinen Propheten* (ATD 24; Göttingen ⁷1979) 85.

studies of this text have been undertaken which takes into consideration both the synchronic and diachronic dimensions⁵. Hence the relevance of this study.

0.1 Overview of Research on the Book of Hosea

The theological importance of the book of Hosea and its influence on other written prophets were noted by W. Nowack⁶ and A. Scholz⁷ long ago. However, if one browses through the literature on the book of Hosea, one can see a notable difference of approach before and after 1960. Before 1960, except for a handful of articles and studies of certain themes the study of the book of Hosea was limited to commentaries, which often treated the book in a general way together with other minor prophets.

The monographic study of J. Ziegler⁸ on the love of God in the prophets dedicated some space to the concept of divine love in Hosea. But Ziegler chose to focus more on the husband-wife metaphor in Hos 1–3 than the parent-child metaphor in Hos 11. H.S. Nyberg attempted to explicate the textual critical problems of the MT of Hosea through “positive philologische und religionsgeschichtliche Arbeit”⁹. The work of Nyberg proved influential in later research on Hosea.

The doctoral thesis of F. Buck¹⁰ was probably the first monographic study to deal specifically with the theme of divine love in the book of Hosea. In this work, the author investigated the depiction of God’s love for Israel through the metaphors of marital love (Hos 1–3) and parental love (Hos 11) and its theological meaning for the Old Testament concept of God: “der Gott des Alten Testamente

⁵ M. NISSINEN’s monographic study – *Prophetie, Redaktion und Fortschreibung in Hoseabuch. Studien zum Werdegang eines Prophetenbuches im Lichte vom Hos 4 und 11* (AOAT 231; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1991) – concentrates on the genesis and developmental stages of Hos 11,1–11 and hence deals mainly with the diachronic perspective.

⁶ W. NOWACK, *Der Prophet Hosea* (Berlin 1880) xxxiii–xxix: Against the opinion of Duhm that Hosea through his prophetic utterances pioneered to provide a firm boundary between Yahweh religion and Nature religion, Nowack held that Hosea was not the pioneer of Yahweh religion, rather he was a “Bussprediger” who tried to stimulate his contemporaries to return to Yahweh acknowledging their sins. In his view, the theological importance of Hosea consisted mainly in that Hosea through the images of parent-child and husband-wife portrayed the relationship between Yahweh and Israel as a relationship of love.

⁷ A. SCHOLZ, *Commentar zum Buche des Propheten Hoseas* (Würzburg 1882) xiii, indicated the bearing of Hosea on the other written prophets and also the importance of the book as the only witness to know something of the inner dynamics of the northern kingdom.

⁸ J. ZIEGLER, *Die Liebe Gottes bei den Propheten. Ein Beitrag zur alttestamentlichen Theologie* (ATA 11.3; Münster 1930).

⁹ H.S. NYBERG, *Studien zu Hoseabuche: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Klärung des Problems der alttestamentlichen Textkritik* (Uppsala 1935) iii.

¹⁰ F. BUCK, “Die Liebe Gottes beim Propheten Osée” (unpublished doctoral dissertation at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome 1953).

ist kein launenhafter Gott, der Furcht einflösst, sondern vor allem ein Gott der Liebe”¹¹. Unfortunately Buck’s study has had little currency among scholars, owing to its only partial publication.

G. Östborn’s work¹², which investigated the prophetic description of Yahwism in the book of Hosea and its similarities and contrasts with the Canaanite phenomenon of baalism, is important for the history of research on Hosea from the perspective of the role of Hosea in the religious history of 8th century B.C. Israelite society.

The articles of E. Baumann¹³, W. Reiss¹⁴, H.W. Wolff¹⁵, and J.L. McKenzie¹⁶, contributed considerably to the understanding of the concept “knowledge of God”, which is very significant for the theology of the book of Hosea. The debate between Wolff and Baumann in particular helped to bring out the nuances of the root **שְׁדִיר** in relation to Yahweh in Hosea and has remained important since then.

The commentary by H.W. Wolff¹⁷ published in 1965 was a watershed in the study of Hosea. Wolff interpreted the book by means of a systematic application of the form-critical method¹⁸. Since then, Hosea has begun to appear as a separate volume in many multi-volume commentary series, and various monographs and a number of exegetical and theological treatises have been written on the book. Among the various commentaries to have appeared since Wolff’s work, the first one to be mentioned is that of W. Rudolph¹⁹. J. Jeremias followed basically the same line of interpretation of Wolff. However he modified Wolff’s concept of “kerygmatic units” and suggested a modified theory of composition of the book. The commentaries of F.I. Andersen – D.N. Freedman²⁰ and M.A. Sweeney²¹ stand out from others as they devote much attention to a synchronic reading of

¹¹ F. BUCK, *Die Liebe Gottes beim Propheten Osee* (Extract of the unpublished doctoral dissertation presented to the Pontifical Biblical Institute and defended under the same title; Rome 1953) iii.

¹² G. ÖSTBORN, *Yahweh and Baal: Studies in the Book of Hosea and Related Documents* (Lund 1956).

¹³ E. BAUMANN, “שְׁדִיר und seine Derivative”, *ZAW* 28 (1908) 22–41, 110–143; IDEM, “Wissen um Gott’ bei Hosea als Urform von Theologie”, *EVT* 15 (1955) 416–425.

¹⁴ W. REISS, “‘Gott nicht Kennen’ im Alten Testament”, *ZAW* 58 (1940/41) 70–98.

¹⁵ H.W. WOLFF, “Wissen um Gott bei Hosea als Urform von Theologie”, *EVT* 12 (1953) 533–553; IDEM, “Erkenntnis Gottes im Alten Testament”, *EVT* 15 (1955) 426–431.

¹⁶ J.L. MCKENZIE, “Knowledge of God in Hosea”, *JBL* 74 (1955) 22–27.

¹⁷ H.W. WOLFF, *Hosea* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, Pa. 1974); ET of *Dodeka-propheton, 1: Hosea* (BKAT 14.1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1965).

¹⁸ A notable feature of the commentary is his theory of composition and transmission of the book: He suggested that the book is composed of three large complexes of tradition Hos 1–3; 4–11; 12–14. If Hos 1–3 is a kind of *memorabile*, Hos 4–14 is formed of various “kerygmatic units”, cf. WOLFF, *Hosea*, xxix–xxxii.

¹⁹ W. RUDOLPH, *Hosea* (KAT 13.1; Gütersloh 1966).

²⁰ F.I. ANDERSEN – D.N. FREEDMAN, *Hosea* (AB 24; Garden City, N.Y. 1980).

²¹ M.A. SWEENEY, *The Twelve Prophets, vol. 1: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah* (Berit Olam; Collegeville, Minn. 2000).

the book. Andersen – Freedman focused on the literary and stylistic features of the MT of Hosea and attempted to recognise a degree of cohesion in the collection of sayings on the basis of internal literary (rhetorical) organisation²². Sweeney approaches the book of Hosea as part of a “synchronic literary analysis of the book of the Twelve Prophets”, which as he himself claims, “necessarily includes synchronic and diachronic considerations”²³.

A major field of investigation has been the allusions to traditions of Israel’s early history in the book of Hosea²⁴. Much attention has focused on the role of the references to Israel’s early historical traditions in the book. For H. Donner and J. Vollmer, Hosea employs the historical retrospection in 11,1–4 (and elsewhere) to justify the accusation of Yahweh against Israel²⁵. Vollmer is of the conviction that Hosea employs the historical traditions of Israel to manifest discontinuity of the past with the present²⁶. H.-D. Neef, in his monograph on the historical traditions of Israel (*Heilstraditionen Israels*) in Hosea rejects the discontinuity theory and concludes that Hosea employs these traditions to show the continuity and constancy of Yahweh’s love manifested in these traditions and thus inspire the people towards conversion²⁷. D.R. Daniels²⁸ tries to demonstrate that the historical traditions form an integral component of Hosea’s proclamation by making a synthesis of the various references to the traditions into a coherent whole. E.K. Holt²⁹ investigates the traditions about Israel’s past in the book of Hosea and attempts to show that Hosea employs these traditions to proclaim the exclusivity of Yahweh. Similarly, E. Jacob³⁰ and M. Köckert³¹ advocate that Hosea makes use of the traditions of early Israel in order to elucidate the present situation of the Israelite society, to serve as an impetus for expecting a new beginning and thus to highlight the continuity of the history of salvation.

In recent years there has been growing interest in the study of the metaphoric language of Hosea. The doctoral thesis of L.J. Braaten³² investigates the parent-

²² Cf. ANDERSEN – FREEDMAN, *Hosea*, 70.

²³ Cf. SWEENEY, *The Twelve Prophets I*, xxxix.

²⁴ A good survey of previous research on the historical traditions in Hosea is given in D.R. DANIELS, *Hosea and Salvation History: The Early Traditions of Israel in the Prophecy of Hosea* (BZAW 191; Berlin 1990) 12–16.

²⁵ H. DONNER, *Israel unter den Völkern: die Stellung der klassischen Propheten des 8. Jahrhunderts V. Chr. zur Außenpolitik der Könige von Israel und Juda* (VTSup 11; Leiden 1964) 90–91; J. VOLLMER, *Geschichtliche Rückblicke und Motive in der Prophetie des Amos, Hosea und Jesaja* (BZAW 119; Berlin 1970) 65.

²⁶ VOLLMER, *Geschichtliche Rückblicke*, 124.

²⁷ H.-D. NEEF, *Die Heilstraditionen Israels in der Verkündigung des Propheten Hosea* (BZAW 169; Berlin 1987) 252–256.

²⁸ DANIELS, *Hosea and Salvation History* (For details footnote no. 24 above).

²⁹ E. K. HOLT, *Prophesying the Past: The Use of Israel’s History in the Book of Hosea* (JSOTSup 194; Sheffield 1995).

³⁰ E. JACOB, “Der Prophet Hosea und die Geschichte”, *EVT* 24 (1964) 281–290.

³¹ M. KÖCKERT, “Prophetie und Geschichte im Hoseabuch”, *ZTK* 85 (1988) 3–30.

³² L.J. BRAATEN, “Parent-Child Imagery in Hosea” (PhD. Diss.; Boston University 1987).

child imagery in Hosea – in its various manifestations – against the background of its familial, legal and religious settings. Braaten argues that Hosea uses two father-child metaphors to depict the relationship between Yahweh and Israel. One is the image of the Israelites as the offspring of the land, created by their father-god Yahweh (Hos 1–2). The other is the image of adoption, in which Israel is depicted as adopted in Egypt, as an act of fatherly love (Hos 11). He holds that the metaphor of Hos 11 can be illustrated by ancient Near Eastern adoption texts³³.

G. Eidevall³⁴ applies the metaphor theory in linguistics to Hos 4–14 and attempts to develop a new exegetical approach, namely, metaphorical criticism. He seeks to evolve various models, patterns, and themes from the various metaphors in Hos 4–14³⁵. In Hos 11 he deciphers various models which form a cluster of metaphors – the parental, the monarchical, the agricultural and possibly others as well, which give rise to the themes of “calling”, “coming and going”, “eating/devouring” and “(re)turning”³⁶.

B. Seifert³⁷ studies how the metaphors in Hosea function within the text and at the service of the prophetic proclamation. Seifert differentiates a theory of theological metaphor from a general linguistic theory of metaphor and includes textual and philological study of the Hebrew text in her analysis of the metaphors in Hosea. She identifies parental care as the dominant metaphor of Hos 11, and one which communicates Yahweh’s deeds of salvation³⁸.

E.O. Nwaoru³⁹ approaches the metaphors in Hosea as essentially literary devices and, therefore, indispensable to the overall understanding of Hosea’s message⁴⁰. He undertakes also an investigation of the ancient Near Eastern influence on Hosea’s metaphors and similes.

The book of Hosea is noted for its polemical approach against Canaanite religious practices and, hence, its importance for the *Religionsgeschichte* of Israel has been of scholarly interest. D. Kinet⁴¹, following the line of Östborn⁴² investigates the influence of the Ugaritic concept of Baal on Hosea’s description of Yahweh and the theological implications of Baal references in Hosea.

³³ BRAATEN, “Parent-Child Imagery”, 11, 326–327.

³⁴ G. EIDEVALL, *Grapes in the Desert: Metaphors, Models, and Themes in Hosea 4–14* (ConBOT 43; Stockholm 1996).

³⁵ Cf. EIDEVALL, *Grapes in the Desert*, 1.

³⁶ Cf. EIDEVALL, *Grapes in the Desert*, 166–185.

³⁷ B. SEIFERT, *Metaphorisch Reden von Gott im Hoseabuch* (FRLANT 166; Göttingen 1996).

³⁸ Cf. SEIFERT, *Metaphorisch Reden*, 215.

³⁹ E.O. NWAORU, *Imagery in the Prophecy of Hosea* (ÄAT 41; Wiesbaden 1999).

⁴⁰ Cf. NWAORU, *Imagery*, xiii.

⁴¹ D. KINET, *Ba’al und Jahwe: Ein Beitrag zur Theologie des Hoseabuches* (Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe 23, Band 87; Frankfurt 1977).

⁴² ÖSTBORN, *Yahweh and Baal* (for details, footnote 12 above).

J. Jeremias⁴³ argues that Baal in Hosea has a special connotation, i.e., it is a cipher for Israel's perverted cult. J.A. Dearman⁴⁴ analyses the meaning of the religious polemics in the book of Hosea in the light of recent archaeological findings and proposes that Hosea was pointing the finger mainly at the polytheistic practices in the 8th century B.C. Israelite cult.

The book of Hosea has been well studied from the perspective of its redaction history. The works of G.I. Emmerson⁴⁵, G.A. Yee⁴⁶, Th. Naumann⁴⁷, M. Nissinen⁴⁸ and some articles of J. Jeremias⁴⁹ deal specifically with this aspect. A review of the history of research into the composition of the book will be taken up in the section on the redaction history of Hosea 11 in the context of the book of Hosea.

Coming more specifically to our own area of investigation, apart from the study of M. Nissinen mentioned above (which deals more with the redaction) no monographic study has been undertaken to our knowledge. However, various articles dealing specifically with Hos 11,1–11 have been published. H. Bussche⁵⁰ provides a good exposition of Hosea 11. H. Groß⁵¹ deals more with the theological implications of Hos 11, giving valuable insights into the parent-child metaphor in Hos 11,1–4 and into the holiness of God in v.9. J.G. Janzen's article⁵² together with J.L. Mays' response to it⁵³ proves to be of particular importance for the interpretation of Hos 11,8–9. Janzen employs the categories of process philosophy to explain the existential nature of the question in Hos 11,8.

⁴³ J. JEREMIAS, "Der Begriff Baal im Hoseabuch und seine Wirkungsgeschichte", in *Hosea und Amos: Studien zu den Anfängen des Dodekapropheton* (J. JEREMIAS) (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 86–103; originally published in *Ein Gott allein? JWH-Verehrung und biblischen Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte* (eds. D. Walter – M.A. Klopfenstein) (OBO 139; Göttingen 1994) 441–462.

⁴⁴ J.A. DEARMAN, "Interpreting the religious polemics against Baal and the Baalism in the book of Hosea", *OTE* 14 (2001) 9–25.

⁴⁵ G.I. EMMERSON, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective* (JSOTSup 28; Sheffield 1984).

⁴⁶ G.A. YEE, *Composition and Tradition in the Book of Hosea: A Redaction Critical Investigation* (SBLDS 102; Atlanta, Ga. 1987).

⁴⁷ TH. NAUMANN, *Hoseas Erben: Strukturen der Nachinterpretation im Buch Hosea* (BWANT 131; Stuttgart 1991).

⁴⁸ NISSINEN, *Prophetie* (for full reference, footnote 5 above).

⁴⁹ J. JEREMIAS, "Hosea 4–7: Beobachtungen zur Komposition des Buches Hosea", in *Hosea und Amos*, 55–66; originally published in *Textgemäß. Aufsätze und Beiträge zur Hermeneutik des Alten Testaments* (FS E. Würthwein [Hrsg. A.H.J. Gunneweg – O. Kaiser] Göttingen 1980) 47–58; IDEM, "Zur Eschatologie des Hoseabuches", in *Hosea und Amos*, 67–85; originally published in *Die Botschaft und die Boten* (FS H.W. Wolff [Hrsg. J. Jeremias – L. Perlitt] Neukirchen-Vluyn 1981) 217–234; IDEM, "Prophetenwort und Prophetenbuch", *JBTh* 14 (1999) 19–35.

⁵⁰ BUSSCHE, "La ballade", 18–34.

⁵¹ GROSS, "Das Hohelied", 83–91.

⁵² J.G. JANZEN, "Metaphor and Reality in Hosea 11", *Semeia* 24 (1982) 7–44.

⁵³ J.L. MAYS, "Response to Janzen: 'Metaphor and Reality in Hosea 11'", *Semeia* 24 (1982) 42–51.

H. Schüngel-Straumann⁵⁴ tries to read Hos 11,1–11 from a feminist perspective and argues that the imagery in Hosea 11 presents a female god. This article has triggered various reactions among scholars, as will be seen in our analysis.

The foregoing short history of research on the book of Hosea is intended to delineate the various important studies and interpretative approaches with regard to the book. In this study an attempt is made to interpret Hos 11,1–11 in its final form by analysing it both synchronically and diachronically.

0.2 Methodology

As stated at the outset, the methodology adopted in this study is that of approaching the text from synchronic and diachronic perspectives. Various scholars have been promoting this methodology over the last decade⁵⁵. C. Conroy, one of the early proponents of this methodology for Biblical studies, states its methodological presuppositions succinctly:

This paper [“Reflections on the Exegetical Task”] pleads for the adoption of a more comprehensive view of the exegetical task, which would be approached through two phases of modalities of work (each involving many possible methods on the operative level), the whole resting of course on the indispensable foundation of text-critical and philological analysis. Two phases are (1) description and interpretation of the text as it stands, and (2) a study of the process by which the material reached this final form. One starts with what is more accessible and examines that as thoroughly as possible; then one moves to what is less accessible⁵⁶.

Thus by ‘synchronic reading’ is meant: the consideration of the final-form of the text available to us in written form as meaningful and to interpret it accord-

⁵⁴ H. SCHÜNGEL-STRAUmann, “God as Mother in Hosea 11”, in *A Feminist Companion to The Latter Prophets* (ed. A. Brenner) (FCB 8; Sheffield 1995) 194–218; originally published as “Gott als Mutter in Hosea 11”, *TQ* 166 (1986) 119–134.

⁵⁵ Cf. e.g., C. CONROY, “Reflections on the Exegetical Task: Apropos of Recent Studies on 2 Kg 22–23”, in *Pentateuchal and Deuteronomistic Studies* (eds. C. Brekelman – J. Lust) (BETL 94; Leuven 1990) 255–268; P.M. JOYCE, “Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives on Ezekiel”, in *Synchronic or Diachronic?: A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis* (ed. J.C. De Moor) (OtSt 34; Leiden 1995) 115–128; H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, “Synchronic and Diachronic in Isaian Perspective”, in *Synchronic or Diachronic?*, 211–226; D.H. RYOU, *Zephaniah’s Oracles Against the Nations: A Synchronic and Diachronic Study of Zephaniah 2:1–3:8* (BIS 13; Leiden 1995); E. ZENGER et al., *Einleitung in das Altes Testament* (Stuttgart 1995, 2004); J.L.T. LIM, *The Sin of Moses and the Staff of God: A Narrative Approach* (SSN 35; Assen 1997); M. KONKEL, *Architektonik des Heiligen: Studien zur zweiten Tempelvision EzechIELS* (BBB 129; Berlin 2002); K. WALTON, *Thou Traveller Unknown: The Presence and Absence of God in the Jacob Narrative* (Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monograph; Cumbria 2003).

⁵⁶ CONROY, “Reflections on the Exegetical Task”, 258. Cf. also H. UTZSCHNEIDER, “Text – Leser – Autor: Bestandsaufnahme und Prolegomena zu einer Theorie der Exegese”, *BN* 43 (1999) 224–238; RYOU, *Zephaniah’s Oracles*, 4–7.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

0.3 A Brief Survey of the Study

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

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

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

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

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

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

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