THE CREATIVE FUNCTIONING OF BIBLICAL IMAGERY IN A COMPLEX POETIC TEXT—
DIE JERUSALEMGANGERS (JERUSALEMGANGERS 1985) BY ANTJIE KROG

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ABSTRACT
An investigation into poets' creative use of the Christian Bible reveals that receptions of the Bible as an imaginative text play an important role in what is achieved in such poems.

The article will deal with a coherent group of poems by Antjie Krog, Die Jerusalemgangers, in a volume titled Jerusalemgangers (1985). It consists of eight different poems grouped into three sections. Voices from mainstream and non-mainstream perspectives are heard, and the central theme developed through four main perspectives, namely: a male leader, a 'black consciousness' voice, a woman's voice, and all-embracing and composing perspectives of the poet as visionary who incorporates the perspectives of other South African literary voices. This central theme concerns the universal quest for a 'Jooda'. In these poems, with their religiously conscious speakers, Ubuntu is presented in the Biblical imagery of a 'New Jerusalem'. The creative process is activated as each voice, in pursuit of an imaginary ideal context, uses the same text as a guiding principle on its 'journey towards liberation'. The poet imposes ideological readings of the Christian Bible, directed by different experience of the South African context. The poet's vision clearly becomes a voice among others, and yet it functions as a composing factor. This leads to commenting secular texts entering into the discourse.

It is the poet's text structures and linguistic principles that lead to aesthetic insights into ostensibly unresonated elements. The reading of the poems presented in this article will be directed by such poetic conventions.

An analysis will be made to identify the signifying role of the poet's response to the Biblical imagery. The reader's response to these poems is likewise influenced by an acquaintance with the Bible.

1 TEXTUAL OUTLINE AND BACKGROUND

Die Jerusalemgangers from the volume Jerusalemgangers (1985), an interrelated group of coherent poems by the contemporary Afrikaans poet Antjie Krog, consists of eight different poems grouped into three sections.

The phenomenon of intertextuality, understood as the interaction between
different texts, is used creatively in these poems to juxtapose seemingly opposing perspectives from the same South African context and to integrate them into an inclusive poetic vision.

Biblical imagery plays an important role in these poems. The apparently distorted language in the poems represents the inspirational speech of visionaries and prophets. In order to find an inclusive perspective which takes differences into consideration without absolutising the differences, secular texts, mainly historical and literary in character, are introduced into the discourse. These interacting texts contribute to the identification of basic universal trends interacting with personal perspectives. Human behaviour, moving along the interacting but often conflicting dynamic forces of the seen and the unseen, is the main theme developed in these poems. The unseen in this context can be related to the numinous Biblically understood, as well as to other constructs of the imagination.

2 METHODOLOGY OF READING

The article focusses on meaning allocation in the poetic text in an attempt to come to conclusions about the 'referential dimension of the text' (Schwartz 1983:298). This approach is among others influenced by the following postulate for the theory of reception: 'The work of art manifests itself as a sign in its inner structure, in its relation to reality, and also in its relation to society, to its creator and its recipients' (Mukařovský and Vodička quoted by Fokkema & Kunne-Ibsch 1978:143). The theoretical issue at stake in such a multi-textual situation as I am dealing with in Krog's poems, is to determine the role and evolution of the meaning of the interacting texts in these poems. Although one text cannot be completely isolated in such a situation, I am concentrating on the role of Biblical text elements in this article. Following Van Peer (1987:20), I refer to intertextuality in the sense of removing a text element from the perceived boundaries of one text system and assimilating it into another text system. In order to identify semantic subtleties in such a situation, language is dealt with as a code system, using language signs to allocate meaning. A text is understood as a limited (Lotman quoted in Fokkema & Ibsch 1978:44), though not a closed space. A poem is treated as an utterance that has meaning with respect to a system of conventions (Culler 1975:116).

It was because of my dealing with text elements from the Bible in poetry that I found it necessary to acquaint myself with the functioning of the Biblical text system. This became an overwhelming experience. In spite of many similarities between these two fields, only restricted material could be used. Nevertheless I became convinced that there was much to be learned from the interaction between the two above mentioned fields of study. Hopefully this article, in spite of its limitations, will stimulate dialogue on interacting issues. I experienced the text situation of these poems as similar, although on a smaller scale, to those in the
Biblical texts, namely in the sense that many different and even opposing voices from many differing contexts interact to establish semantic patterns.

3 THE TITLE OF THE POEMS

The title of these poems springs from the same title used by J.P. Claasen in his historical research into the motives of a group of white Afrikaans-speaking South African trekkers during the nineteenth century. Their leader, Adam Enslin, was deemed a prophet because of his visionary dreams. He became known as ‘a famous fanatic’. In the poetic context his name ‘Adam’ becomes symbolic in more than one way. By implication the poet relates this historical figure to the Southern African creation myth of Adamastor. Krog’s Jerusalemgangers (1985:7) opens with a poem using this myth as an intertext. It appears in the first known written report by European seafarers of their encounter with an adverse Cape of Storms. This history was recorded in an epic poem, Os Lusiadas (1572), by the Portuguese poet, De Camoens. The so-called Jerusalem trekkers experienced their situation in Adamastor’s domain as antagonising as did the early Portuguese. The Trekkers considered their antagonists to be the British government and the people indigenous to the country. Claasen (1981:2-4) found ample evidence that the Trekkers were deeply religious people. Their specific religious orientation was mainly informed by two documents, the Dutch Authorised Version of the Bible and a publication Redelijke Godsdienst (Reasonable Faith), by the Dutch theologian, Wà Brakel. These documents painted a glorious picture of the Palestine Jerusalem associating it with the apocalyptic city of golden streets in the book of Revelations. Another prominent member of the Jerusalem trekkers was a woman visionary by the name of Mietje Gous. She discovered a remedy against the dangerous tsetse fly of the regions into which their journey took them. She lost her husband during a confrontation with Zulus in 1838 in Natal. Her prophesying abilities were also Biblically understood. Her role was deemed similar to that of the prophetess Miriam who assisted the political and religious leaders of her people during their exodus.

These Trekkers, according to the sources available to them, identified certain geographical landmarks as those described in the Bible in connection with Jerusalem in Palestine. They not only read their own context as Biblical geography, but they also identified their intolerable situation as that of God’s people at a certain point in history. With this in mind and experiencing their own context as similar to that described in Ps 120:5, Enslin named his farm in the Northern Transvaal Meeseek (Claasen 1981: 53). From there they intended to start their journey to Jerusalem in Palestine. They were inspired towards their goal by their belief that they had discovered indications of Egyptian geography such as the Nile river,

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1 This suggestion was already made by J.P. Claasen in Die Jerusalemgangers (1981:1).
which assured them that they were on the right track. They thought they could reach Jerusalem overland through Africa by their only means of transport, namely the ox-wagon. In Jerusalem, the 'promised land', they believed there would be everlasting peace. Early maps of Africa indicated the source of the Nile in Southern Africa.

However, before these people could start on their journey, fever caused by the tsetse flies in the area, broke out. Enslin and 36 of his family members died. Obviously none of his followers reached his/her utopic vision of Jerusalem. Thus the achievement of their goal was thwarted by death.

This is in short the history of Die Jerusalemgangers as it is recorded by Claasen—the underlying data of the poetic reconstruction from which the reader should start to arrive at an understanding of the poems.

4 THE FUNCTION OF THE MOTTOS

The group of poems is preceded by two mottos which function as important clues to the main issues. The first motto is derived from the historical drama by Shakespeare *Julius Caesar* (Act V, Sc.111). Messala's words comment on Cassius' suicide by the same dagger with which he murdered Caesar. It is important to note that this tragedy about the overthrow of Roman political power c 44 BC, is based on Plutarch's historical text. This implies that another historical and geographical context enters into the discourse. It deals with a political vision which led to tragedy because of the misinterpretation of a political reality. Natural disasters, poets and soothsayers play a role in what was foretold but not believed and foreseen.

The second motto is taken from Claasen's above-mentioned historical research on the South African Jerusalemgangers. This motto deals with a religious vision which also led to tragedy for two reasons: the lack of understanding of the role of imagination, and the inability to separate, yet relate the seen and the unseen. In both situations the disastrous factor was the inability to discern between fact and fiction.

These mottos stress two important lines along which the main theme develops—a political perspective and a religious perspective, both of which deal with the same image of an ideal place on earth where hostility will cease. These two perspectives also represent the seen and the unseen. The poems deal with dramatic turns in the life journeys of individuals which can be related to optical illusions. The results are also reflected in long-term historical consequences. Krog makes use of the concept 'haplography' in other poems in the same volume. In the group of poems 'haplografie van (ge)dro(o)gte' (1985:50) she refers to South Africa as 'the far south spot of haplography'.
that should be repeated (thus a scriptural error). By implication this can be the result of an optical error. This understanding of ‘haplography’ can also be read into the histories involved in the poems under discussion. Not only in these poems, but also in the volume in general, optical errors which lead to misconceptions can be discerned as an important theme.

The functioning of the Shakespearian text in the motto and also regularly in the discourses of the main role-players involves this secular text, with its removed historical and geographical context, in the development of the basic theme. From the outset the reader knows the outcome of the Julius Caesar tragedy. The revolutionaries not only overthrew Caesar, but in the long run they themselves were destroyed through their outrageous action. At the same time there are similarities between the Roman situation and the perspectives of the South African role-players. Part of the historic ironies in the text is that Rome was historically an aggressor against Jerusalem in Palestine, the ‘city of peace’ towards which Adam Enslin and his people were heading. It comments by implication on the perception of the Palestinian Jerusalem as a ‘city of peace’.

5 SUGGESTED READING OF THE POEMS

By means of interaction with many other literary texts and historical contexts, these poems develop the theme of human impulse towards liberation which, instead of reaching the idealised state, results in tragedy and which is thwarted in the end by death.

The South African version of this human struggle is intensified because of the interplay of opposing perspectives from different cultural orientations, namely ‘European’ and ‘African’. By taking the poetic conventions of thematic unity and metaphorical coherence (Culler 1975:115) into consideration, the reader is placed on track to discover parallels in the ostensibly opposing perspectives worked out in the poems.

In the first section of the group of poems, two opposing perspectives can be identified. The first perspective is Adam Enslin’s. Indications of a different social and cultural context can be derived from a reference to ‘lokasie’ (township) in the poem titled Natrek (follow-up journey) in the first section of poems. This leads the reader to identify a second voice coming from a contemporary ‘black’ South African context where the experience of township life is extremely humiliating. Not only historical differences between the perspectives of the two voices, but also cultural differences become apparent. Both voices use religious language taken from the Christian Bible. Many similarities occur which can be recognised as a resultant common context. The grouping of these voices in one section al-

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3 The poem Nightfall in Soweto in: M O Mtshali, Sounds of a cowhide drum (1982:58) gives additional insight into this situation.
ready establishes a relationship. The title of the poem means a ‘follow-up journey’, while, according to the last verse, Enslin stated, that nobody, meaning no enemy, would be able to follow him into his new ‘promised resort’. It becomes clear that these two contexts interact with and respond to each other.

In short, the orientation of each and every voice towards an historical, social and cultural context influences the choice of religious language which is used to describe its individual experience.

The orientation in the monologue of the first voice, presented as a political address, can be summarised as follows: a male individualistic leader, who reacts aggressively towards animosity, is claiming his human right of freedom. Injustice is experienced as a violation of personal space. In a materialistic sense he is privileged. In the first poem it is mentioned that the ox-wagons, his people's transport, are heavily loaded with possessions. He is also deeply religious, which accounts for his overwhelming sense of the interaction between the seen and the unseen in his socio-political situation.

In line with his own personality the aspect of God with which he identifies is the avenging God of the Old Testament. This mighty God is known through his impressive dealings with the enemies of his people. He is not directly mentioned, but clearly implied by the male leader's incorporation of prayer as part of his rhetoric.

The ego chooses those parts of the text which can be read as political rhetoric. The name Mesek (Krog's spelling) which he chose for his farm and which serves as title of the first poem, comes from Ps 120:5. According to this psalm, the authority of God corresponds with his own (cf Ps 120:3,4). His case is God's case, hence his choice of imagery from the specific Israelite king's reign over Jerusalem. The physical city of peace is God's religious and political homeland for his victimised people. The time of crisis which he recognised for his followers, is naturally shaped by God. Biblical sources available to him, led him to the conclusion that he and his followers found themselves in the vicinity of Jerusalem and that they would be enabled by Providence to reach the ideal city safely. Because the Almighty God was their Protector, no enemy would be able to trace or victimise them again. The apocalyptic language used comes from the Old Testament apocalypse as seen and interpreted by prophets such as Joel and Jeremiah.

In the second poem, titled Toespraak van Adam Enslin voor die trek ('Address by Adam Enslin before the journey') reference is made to 'people tall and smooth-skinned...a people dreaded near and far', phraseology taken from Is 18:2 which deals with the inhabitants of Cush. The enemies of the 'leader tongue', as he is called in the first poem, are God's enemies called to justice through the appearance of the apocalypse. He describes 'their' apocalypse in the language of Joel 2:30, referring to blood and fire, the sun turned into darkness and the moon into ashes.
While the monologue ends with a phrase both signifying: 'nobody will ever again be able to follow me' and 'nobody will again be able to victimise me', the next poem, titled Natrek (follow-up ‘trek’), comes as a startling irony. It becomes clear that this signifies the historical sequel of Adam Enslin's history, which is also taken up and concluded in the last section of the poems.

Enslin's rhetoric in the poem can be recognised as echoes from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, Act 2 scene 1. Brutus, in planning Caesar's murder, said:: 'Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully; / Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods, / Not hew him as a carcase fit for hounds....' Similar phraseology is put into Enslin's mouth when he raged against the 'people, tall and smooth-skinned'. (Vriende, ons vermoor sonder wraak / ons rafel niemand tot karkas vir honde / deur vryword kerf ons so delikaat / 'n dis vir gode.) This interaction already plays an important role as commentary and can thus be recognised as the editing and creative role of the poet as narrator of this history. The reader knows the outcome of the rhetoric in the Julius Caesar drama. Putting this rhetoric into Enslin's mouth suggests a similar outcome. Since the reader can identify a prophetic element in this interaction with the Julius Caesar text, the prophetic abilities of the narrator-poet must also be identified, even at this stage. The interacting texts can be incorporated significantly by taking the poetic conventions of fictionality and ambiguity into consideration. Waugh (1980:72) comments on this as follows: 'A poem is to a certain degree decontextualised: it is a system which is more self-contained than referential discourse. One could say that the poem provides its own "universe of discourse". This allows the reader to read more into the poems than the history of the South African 'Jerusalemtrekkers' which functions as the prominent source text.

The context of the second voice reads as follows: it is clearly the context of apartheid South Africa with its separate residential areas for black people. The voice acting in this follow-up poem speaks not only from a historically but also a culturally different perspective. His sense of collectivity is prominent in contrast with the foregrounding of the ego of the previous voice. His experience of mobility is one of being moved and not one of personal choice. The injustice experienced is a violation of human dignity because of the fact that his economic power is exploited instead of his situation as a person being recognised. By these powers he and his people are transported from a context of poverty to one of affluence, without becoming part of the context where they exercise their life force. The imbalance of powers created threatens him. The tone used by this voice is not one of power but of entreaty. It is also the voice of a person who recognises the power and the authority of the numinous. Obviously the God whom the previous voice addressed, is unacceptable in this context because of his experienced unfairness. When their underprivileged position is taken into consideration, He is recognised as a (white) tribal God, without effect to those whom He clearly does not recog-
nise as his offspring.

The moment a claim can be made to a God who functions as ‘ForeFather’. The tone changes. The political rhetoric which comes into action in this poem when dealing with a socio-economic situation, contains echoes of Christian ethos in that it stresses the aspect of redemptive suffering. The aspect of the Christian God with whom this voice can identify is, by implication, the old Testament suffering servant who ‘was exalted to the heights’ (Is 52:13) and who was able to take up the cause of his suffering and underprivileged children. However, this suffering servant does not relate to the whimsical white tribal God. He is the Liberator of ‘all’ the earth’s people, here acting in the service of the African ‘ForeFather’ who takes care of his off-spring as a prolonging of himself. Now justice can also be demanded. Once again it is recognised as a time of crisis for those who committed wrongs against human dignity.

The political rhetoric of these lines recalls phraseology utilised by theologians from the black liberation movement. Now it is not a ‘Boere’ prophet addressing his people, but a black prophetic preacher acting on behalf of his people. Against this background, it is revealing to look at related texts. An often quoted theologian claiming his blackness (Boesak 1975) is recognised as a new Johannes of Patmos (Boesak 1987:11). He does not claim Jerusalem in Palestine for his people, like the white Trekkers. That, historically speaking, is located outside Africa and useless. What is demanded is the complete destruction of the evil Babylon of the apocalypse of the book of Revelation, identified as Pretoria. In its place the wonder of the resurrection in the time of the magnificent city with golden streets according to the book of Revelations is expected to replace the enemy’s disastrous structure.

The judgement passed in this context, is by the responsible African ‘ForeFather’. One of the many ironies in these poems, is that the people perceived as those ‘terrible from their beginning’ (Is 18:2) in the previous context, are now those voicing their pleas in a humble manner. The same Bible which was selected by the previous opposing voice as assurance and as weapon against aggression, now serves as motivation for the call for freedom and justice by the offspring of the previously outraged against their aggressors, by implication the offspring of Enslin and his people.

Cassius’ speech in his attempt to influence Brutus to murder Caesar in the second scene Act 1 of the Shakespearian play is used in the motivation for the unfair black and white inequalities of the South African context in the first

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4 Harry Sawyer’s: God: Ancestor or Creator provides a valuable background to the poet’s use of this concept.
5 In a conversation Krog mentioned that she took the politic phraseology in her poems from quotations in the media coming from liberation theologians.
Natrek-poem. Cassius asked: '“Brutus” and “Caesar”’. What should be in that “Caesar”? / Why should that name be sounded more than yours?...Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed, / That he is grown so great?’. The fact that echoes from the Julius Caesar text also resound in the voice from a black South African context, stresses the similarities in the claims made. Neither voice experiences its own actions for justice as aggression against the other. Through the continuous interaction with the Julius Caesar text the universal tendencies become clear in the personal but oppositional experiences.

In a context of underprivileged status it is also a logical choice to experience the Biblical new Jerusalem’s shining jewels as its most desirable characteristic. Hints of this can perhaps be traced in this poem in the pleas for justice by the black consciousness voice.

It is significant that each speaker’s choice of Biblical material is related to his/her egocentrism. In the first section it also becomes clear that the interaction between the imaginary context and reality leads to misreadings (haplography) which influence historical development.

In the second grouping of poems the woman visionary, Mietje Gous, Enslin’s female counterpart (the mater familias), is identified in the middle poem of three. On both sides of the poem containing her vision, the voice of the poet-visionary has individual opportunities to sound her personal perspective in separate poems, besides her editing and creative function in all the poems.

Mietje Gous’s choice of Biblical material once more reveals that, although she shares the historical context, cultural and social background of the first voice and also has an ideal of a place without animosity and aggression, she chooses slightly different Biblical imagery and motivation. For Mietje Gous the dawn of the apocalypse is not accompanied by turbulences and violence. This has already been left behind on the road of suffering. In contrast with her masculine counterpart, she chooses the New Testament apocalypse, but clearly without the judgement scenes. The reader is placed in the midst of her vision as exhilarating experience.

She only senses the dawn of the period of everlasting peace, while she identifies with the heavenly Bridegroom, who does not condemn, but saves. He is a human among other human beings and thus easily recognised. Likewise she reads the new Jerusalem context as one corresponding to her own earthly South African pastoral home, within her reach.

Contrary to both masculine perspectives in the previous section, there are no signs of aggression against different people belonging to her own context. There is no hostility. All South African people will be able to live happily and peacefully together. Political solutions are not important, only a change of perspective to recognise the apocalypse as real.

The beauty of the transformed sce... is foregrounded by the bridal imagery of
the apocalyptic new Jerusalem in the book of Revelations.

**6 POET-VISIONARY’S CODE IN JERUSALEMGANGERS (1985)**

Since the poet-visionary acts as an independent voice in the poems, her context can be reconstructed by using several clues in the volume. She is a white woman caring for and protecting her own children implied by the poem ‘beware of the dog’ (1985:37). This role suggests affinities with Mietje Gous. She experiences herself as an inhabitant of ‘two worlds’ (1985:44)—firstly, a visionary and imaginary world where she finds peace and happiness. She therefore also identifies herself as Jerusalemganger (a traveller) (1985:45), someone on the way to this imaginary ideal space where all discrepancies will be removed. On the other hand she finds herself confronted by a conflicting real, visible world (1985:45).

As a contemporary South African, one of the threats of this real world is an unbearable political situation (1985:52-53). She clearly shares a common geographical context with each of the composing voices of the poems. While she differs in some aspects from each of them, through poetic devices she relates to aspects of each perspective. This ambiguity results in the creation of poetry revealing a fugal structure where different voices can be harmonised into one poetic vision. In order to achieve as holistic an approach as possible, she also ‘listens’ to voices from other contexts and other texts.

She senses similarities in opposing contexts. What is revealed as important in the South African context, are the similarities between the Bible-orientated perceptions and the African mythical framework. This she achieves by using interacting literary texts dealing with aspects of South African history. Besides De Camoens’s *Os Lusiadas*, fragments from the work of another Afrikaans poet, Eugène Marais, even more relevant because he was once an inhabitant of the same region from which the Enslins started their trek, are incorporated. Among other texts by Marais interacting in these poems, a lesser known and alternative anthem for the country, distinguished by its pessimistic viewpoints (in Rousseau 1986:155) also plays an important role. One of the most fascinating echoes from Marais’s oeuvre, are traces of the report of a shadow ‘trek’ of indigenous people for Enslin’s disastrous effort into Africa (1938:1,8) which can be detected in the imagery of the poem *Op pad* (‘on the way’). The circling of birds of prey as omens of destruction above the Enslin trekkers, is also mentioned in Marais’s report of the trek of indigenous people through the desert as well as in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*.

What the poet of *Die Jerusalemgangers* clearly perceives through imaginative artistic devices, are repetitive patterns of misinterpretation of the role of human imaginative structures in visible human realities. The absence of the correct balance between these two related but independent structures must be perceived, else it ends in tragedy. The visionary/imaginary world must be decontextualised to
become 'adequately' contextualised (recontextualised) (Ricoeur 1981:50). This implies that the imaginative structures which are able to afford an expanded framework, should be used as a perspective on the limitable visible context. This leads to a new orientation of the self and its positioning towards its context. This agenda is exposed as the domain of the visionary-poet, who appears in this volume of poetry in the metaphor of a dolphin balancing itself above a watery curve. This implies an all-embracing as well as an in-depth vision, something the poet aims at in her poetic dealing with her own confusing historical and political context.

The basic human orientation that develops as a pattern in these poems, is an experience of injustice activating the cry for freedom and the call for liberation. Thus the perception of something different—an ideal space develops in the mind of the victimised. This activates an irrepressible dynamism towards this idealised goal, perceived as a journey. Every effort, however, ends in death. Nevertheless the price paid for this enterprise is never an obstacle. In spite of the suffering, the movement is repeated endlessly. Few, like the poet-visionary, recognise the function and the real character of this dynamism. It can be discerned as the activity of the creative spirit and may be discovered to be related to the Creator God, suggested by the use of a capital letter for 'Spirit' in the significant end position of the poems. If the last possibility is realised, a new perspective opens upon the unseen in relation to the seen. The real point of arrival lies in the unknown and thus remains a creation of the imagination.

Although Enslin's tragic history is taken up in the last section, the poems' end is not a pessimistic one. Though it is not a triumphant reaching of goals, it has a creatively stimulating 'open end'. It becomes clear to the dying Enslin that the Creator Spirit cannot be captured in a single limited context. It continually explores new horizons.

The vision of a spiritual goal becomes clearer as earthly life fades away. Spatial and temporal conceptions of God are recognised as misinterpretation. 'God' is identified as Spirit, implying that to be part of Him is to live spiritually creatively. This Spirit was identified in a poem from the poet's first volume of poetry (1986:9) as the Creator of poetic inspiration. The poetic strategy implies the development of a 'double vision' (Frye 1991). When the above-mentioned perspectives are recognised, a cosmic reading of the poems becomes possible, namely that of a wounded creation struggling towards an invisible goal sensed as a liberation from hostile forces. Translated into Biblical imagery, as it is activated in these poems, it deals with the Exodus-liberation-into-the-promised-land imagery.
CONCLUSION ABOUT THE POETIC RECEPTION OF BIBLICAL ELEMENTS

On reconsidering the poet's perspective on the new Jerusalem imagery, I came to the conclusion that in these poems she deals with imagination as a different code system to be interpreted distinctively, which means according to its own conventions. Support for this point of view was found in the work of several theorists. Amos Wilder calls the code system of the imagination dealing with issues of faith, mythopoetics. This seems to me to be applicable to what Krog has created in this poetic text. The important issues in Krog's poems are the interaction of religious imagery with socio-economics and politics. The role of the imagination is poetically developed in processes of contextualisation. A recognition of the poetic devices in dealing with the religious imagery enables the reader to come to existential conclusions which include a specific contemporary context but also exceeds such limitation.

Wilder (1976:74) comments on what can be recognised as a similar functioning of the imagination as follows: 'There seems to be a deep impulse in human nature to orient itself in the unknown by pictorial representations, by imaginative dramatizations and narratives....We should not forget that imagination has its own reality-sense and its own tests of coherence.'

Two additional illuminating articles on issues raised in this article can be mentioned. The one is by Paul Ricoeur (1981) under the title 'The Bible and the imagination.' He distinguishes a transition from a semiotic interpretation to an existential interpretation and comments (1981:72) on this strategy as follows: 'Here is where we pass from the work of imagination in the text to the work of imagination about the text.' The second article, 'Philosophical implications of cognitive semantics' (1992) by Mark Johnson, deals with the quite recently recognised field of cognitive semantics and insights arrived at in this field. Johnson's conclusion about the gains of insights into cognitive semantics, can also serve as an evaluation of the poet's contribution to our understanding of the historical and socio-political issues in these poems, as well as contribute to our understanding of the functioning of the Biblical imagery: '...it cannot guarantee to make us wiser, but it can make us vastly more knowledgeable about what it means to be a human being, about who we are in the process of becoming, and about some of the possibilities for growth that are open to us. If nothing else, it ought to make us more humble by revealing the imaginative nature of our concepts and reason. That, in itself, would be a monumental contribution.'

The conclusions reached in this article are subject to 'haplographic' readings. Thanks to Krog's insights, however, they may contribute to other understandings of these multi-textual poems.
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ADDENDUM

Schematic representation of New Jerusalem imagery in Die Jerusalemgangers (Jerusalemgangers 1985 Antjie Krog)

Figure 1: Basic pattern for the contextualisation of a vision in Krog's poems:

i. Imagination creates a vision.
ii. The vision urges towards concretisation or contextualisation.
iii. To force a context exactly to fit a vision results in a horror ('horrie', concept used by Antjie Krog in Otters in bronslaai 1981:19).

![Schema of New Jerusalem Imagery](image_url)

Figure 2 (next page): Pattern reconstructed from the experiences of the different perspectives in Krog's poems which leads to figure 1 in the centre:

i. An experience of injustice (bottom dark space) activates a vision of a New Jerusalem (top white space), differently conceptualised according to the voice's context.
ii. In order to achieve this (or to reach the idealised space), a boundary must be crossed (obstacles overcome), again differently conceptualised from different perspectives.
iii. This leads to either new insight (as in the case of the 'new' Adam or the poet) or to a new 'horror' as in the case of the 'old Adam' perspectives.
Figure 3: Realisation of the true function of the vision (construct of the imagination):

i. Vision and context cover different areas (different code systems).
ii. If this can be realised, the vision functions as enlightenment of a context.