

**PROPHETIC PATHOS IN ISAIAH: READING
AS A CHINESE-CANADIAN WOMAN**

By

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is a worked-out example of the interplay of 'culture-gender-context' and biblical interpretation. It is an interdisciplinary, empirical, and heuristic study. By pursuing a two-centred approach (text-centred and reader-oriented), I seek to look into an important aspect in the inner life of the Isaian persona -- his emotion through a synchronic-literary study of the selected 'I'-Passages (places where the character speaks in the first-person singular voice). Three 'entry points' are established as the foci of textual reading. They are: (1) monologue and self; (2) language of emotion and self; and (3) language of religious faith and emotion. A socio-psychological study of emotion provides the background for the three components of my reader-perspective: Chinese culture, woman's viewpoint, and Canadian situatedness. In accordance with the empirical emphasis of this thesis, a small scale reader-response survey and interview study were conducted, with the participation of 47 flesh-and-blood readers and two interviewees. Overall, this study is a heuristic attempt (in the sense that my methodology is tailor-made to serve my goals) toward a version of culture-gender-context 'specific' interpretation. It provides preliminary suggestions in hammering out the methodological tools applicable to any 'given' culture-gender-context 'specific' reading.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations for periodicals, reference works and serials are according to *Old Testament Abstract* (The Catholic Biblical Association of America, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C. 20064) with the following additions:

<i>AmJL</i>	<i>American Journal of Theology</i>
ATS	Association of Theological Schools
BDB	<i>The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon</i> , 1979 edn.
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CNWS	Centre for Non-Western Studies
CUV	The Chinese Union Version
<i>DCH</i>	<i>The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i>
<i>LT</i>	<i>Literature and Theology</i>
NCB	New Century Bible
NIB	New Interpreter's Bible
OTL	Old Testament Library
NICOT	New International Commentary of the Old Testament
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i>
WBC	Word Bible Commentary

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH AGENDA

Two factors play an important part in shaping the interpretative interest and focus of this study. The first is my discontent over the traditional approach to the identity of the prophets and its related issues: prophetic consciousness and the prophetic persona.¹ In spite of the vast amount of literature written on the subjects, little consensus has been reached thus far.² Consequently, scholarly efforts in the past

¹Specific to this thesis are some vital aspects of the prophetic persona, such as emotion and feeling, the prophetic 'self' and the distinctive elements of the prophetic behaviour as depicted in the text. Cf. Timothy Polk, *The Prophetic Persona: Jeremiah and the Language of the Self* (JSOTS 32; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), esp. Ch. 1 in which he has explicated the interrelatedness between the identity issue, the personhood (personal 'I') of the prophet and the development of prophetic consciousness through his treatment of the 'self' concept.

For a comprehensive discussion of the 'prophetic consciousness' issue, cf. T. R. Hobbs, "The Search for Prophetic Consciousness: Comments on Method," *BTB* 15 (1985) 136-39.

²This statement is well substantiated as one looks at the whole spectrum of scholarly debates. A. G. Auld and R. P. Carroll represent one extreme end of the spectrum, advocating the view that biblical prophets are not really 'prophets' but 'poets'. In an attempt to offer a complete rethinking of the identity issue, they have come to the conclusion that we can in fact learn little or nothing about the so-called 'prophets' (particularly Auld is concerned with the 'persons' Jeremiah, Isaiah et al.). (See A. G. Auld, "Prophets through the Looking Glass: Between Writings and Moses," *JSOT* 27 [1983] 3-23; Auld, "Words of God and Words of Man: Prophets and Canon," *Ascribe to the Lord: Biblical and Other Studies in Memory of Peter C. Craigie*, ed. L. Eslinger and G. Taylor [JSOTS 67; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988] 237-51; R. P. Carroll, "Poets not Prophets. A Response to 'Prophets through the Looking Glass'," *JSOT* 27 [1983] 25-31; and R. P. Carroll, "Inventing the Prophets," *IBS* 10 [1988] 24-36). Cf. also Stephen A. Geller, "Were the Prophets Poets?"

have offered not much promise to my culture-bound interest in the inner life of the prophets³ and the distinctive elements in the prophetic behaviour.⁴ Secondly, my incentive also grows out of

Prooftexts 3 (1983) 211-22 (in which Geller suggests that prophets can be and may be poets). Recent voices such as Hans M. Barstad represents the other end of the spectrum. In his "No Prophets? Recent developments in Biblical Prophetic Research and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy" (*JSOT* 57 [1993] 39-60), Barstad argues for the necessity of a comparative, phenomenological approach (rather than a narrowly historical approach) by taking the other ancient Near Eastern prophetic texts into consideration. He then concludes with the thesis that we can in fact learn a great deal about ancient Israelite prophecy and prophets through the prophetic books. For a comprehensive, multi-dimensional discussion of the identity issue, cf. Robert P. Gordon (ed.), *"The Place Is Too Small for Us": The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship* (Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 5; Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1995), Part 4: Prophecy and Society, 275-414. See also R. P. Gordon, "Where Have All the Prophets Gone? The "Disappearing" Israelite Prophet against the Background of Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy," *BBR* 5 (1995) 67-86.

³This interpretative preference is culture-bound. As a Chinese reader, I find Bishop K. H. Ting's (an ecclesiastical leader in Mainland China rather than an exegete or theologian) article, "A Chinese Example: 'The Silences of the Bible'," (*Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah [London: SPCK, 1991] 431-33) an example of Chinese readers as interpreters. To a certain extent, it suggests one aspect of the Chinese interpretative interest -- its concern for the 'hidden' aspect (or more colloquial, the 'mysteries') of the text. As a character, Isaiah plays a background role in the third person narrative section (Chs. 36-39) of the book. Therefore, to be able to look into a crucial area of his inner life -- his emotions through the 'I'- Passages (where he speaks in the first person singular voice)-- is in itself, a promising path for uncovering the hidden mysteries.

⁴Such as the conflicting notions of trust amidst doubt/lament (8:17); being a comforter yet refusing to be consoled (22:4); and the outbreak of the prophetic self (by using the personal 'I') in the course of prophetic speeches. Inquiries into these areas are also Chinese culture-specific. As John Y. H. Yieh has rightly observed, Chinese reading "seeks to bring all disparate parts to a totality, even if they are contradictory." Chinese "appreciate paradoxes" ("*Cultural Reading of the Bible: Some Chinese Christian Cases*," *Text and Experience: Towards A Cultural Exegesis of the Bible*, ed. Daniel Smith-Christopher [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995] 122-153; quotation from 152).

my response to the increasing cultural and contextual⁵ emphases in biblical studies -- i.e. biblical interpretation in a global and contextualized perspective. These two concerns set the agenda for this present research.

In this chapter, I shall give an account and assessment of the two concerns, followed by my proposal to bring together these two foci (the prophetic persona and culture-gender-context 'specific' interpretation) into one research project -- 'Prophetic Pathos⁶ in Isaiah: Reading as A Chinese-Canadian Woman'. Any attempt of this kind would inevitably require an articulation of the interpretative strategies and the methodological tools employed. I shall therefore present the

⁵I see that 'culture' is but one among several important shaping forces which influence one's reading. Besides ethnicity, geographical location, gender, social and/or political situatedness are prominent contributing factors to one's context. For most Asian readers, 'cultural context' denotes reading out of an Asian 'Contextual situatedness' (in Mark Daniel Carroll R.'s terminology, see *Contexts for Amos: Prophetic Poetics in Latin American Perspective* [JSOTS 132; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992] 20). However, my own case illustrates the diversity in speaking of the Asian (or more precisely, Chinese) reading convention. As a Chinese-Canadian woman, I am reading from the North American 'situatedness' (or social location) yet imbedded in the Chinese culture. In this respect, I see my gender role (which is socially defined) also as a contributing factor in defining my own 'context' -- i.e. a Chinese woman's response out of a North American situatedness.

⁶The term 'pathos' is used here in a general sense as the expressions of emotion and feeling in speech or action without any specific reference to (though not excluding) the idea of suffering. Tracing the changes in the significance of this word through time may help one to better grasp the broad spectrum of its meaning. Abraham J. Heschel's *The Prophets* (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1962) has an appendix devoted to these changes from the ancient Greek concept to modern times (Appendix, 489-92). As a thesis topic, I have intentionally chosen 'pathos' in the place of 'emotion' because of the two-fold connotations of the term: (1) the 'intensity' of the passion expressed; and (2) its 'pathetic affect' upon the reader/audience (Heschel, *The Prophets*, 490-91).

framework of this thesis by outlining the procedures in each of its six chapters.

1.1 The Prophetic Persona

1.1.1 State of Inquiry

Traditional approaches to the personhood of the prophets are governed by a variety of goal-oriented interests. This is evident in the spectrum of research done along and adjacent to this line of inquiry; and the variety of methods employed.⁷ With some degree of overlapping in methodology, inquiry into the prophetic persona can be approached from a number of perspectives: (1) biographical; (2) sociological; (3) theological; and (4) psychological.

(1) Represented by standard works such as J. Skinner's *Prophecy and Religion: Studies in the Life of Jeremiah*⁸ and

⁷Cf. Hobbs, "The Search for Prophetic Consciousness,"; and David L. Petersen (ed.), *Prophecy in Israel: Search for An Identity* (Issues in Religion and Theology 10; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987). The ways (e.g. analytical assessment of the different approaches, new proposals) that the specific subjects (e.g. prophetic consciousness, identity of the prophets) are treated in the respective works demonstrate two crucial points. First, the identity and consciousness issues should be taken together as parallel inquiries with the prophetic persona since all three concern one fundamental question: the ways in which a prophet thinks about himself/herself. Secondly, each line of inquiry is governed by specific interests (e.g. interests on methodology, critical assessment) and targeted toward specific goals (e.g. the search for a methodology that can stand up to critical scrutiny, rethinking of an old issue etc.). Consequently, prophetic research in the past has directly and indirectly touched on the persona issue yet only with limited results.

⁸Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922.

Abraham J. Heschel's *The Prophets*,⁹ the *biographical* approach seeks to find the 'historical prophet' in the book that bears his name. Both Skinner and Heschel approach the text(s) primarily as a collection of sources from which to construct their own biographies of the prophet(s). As a result of its exclusive diachronic interest, this approach betrays a major pitfall in its total neglect of the synchronic aspects of the text. For example, the textual portrayal of the prophet is either virtually ignored or at best, described in general terms and from a distance. With the exception of Jeremiah research,¹⁰ the whole area of the personhood of the prophets still remains a vacuum. The same can be said of Isaiah. The depiction of the Isaian 'self' in the 'first person' passages (the 'I'-Passages)¹¹ is essentially left unattended.¹²

(2) Central to the prophet's identity issue is the designation of the term 'prophet' which carries with it a complexity of societal functions and community expectations (in

⁹New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1962.

¹⁰Timothy Polk's *The Prophetic Persona* is devoted particularly to the textual portraiture of the prophetic persona. Subsequent works on the 'Confessions of Jeremiah' also exhibit close attention to the synchronic aspects of the text and they contribute significantly to this line of research. E.g. A. R. Diamond, *The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context, Scenes of Prophetic Drama* (JSOTS 45; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987); and Kathleen M. O'Connor, *The Confessions of Jeremiah: Their Interpretation and Role in Chapters 1-25* (SBL Dissertation Series 94; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988).

¹¹Hereafter in this thesis, they are referred to as the 'I'-Passages (i.e. places where the character Isaiah speaks in the first person singular voice). A full contextual analysis of the 'I'-Passages will be dealt with in Chapter Three.

¹²Cf. Edgar W. Conrad's discussion on "Looking for Isaiah in Isaiah," in *Reading Isaiah* (Overtures to Biblical Theology; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991) 6-12.

terms of role and behaviour).¹³ The *sociological* approach comes in from this angle. It centres on the redactional origin and development of the 'prophet' terminology within the texts. With the employment of modern sociological and socio-psychological theories, the crux of the argument is essentially "between a reconstructed text and extrinsic anthropological evidence."¹⁴ However, both textual reconstruction and the search for extrinsic supports are in essence, most distant from a text-centred, synchronic-literary approach which is necessary for any inquiry into the prophetic persona.

(3) Focus on the ethos or religion of the prophets is characteristic of the *theological* approach.¹⁵ As Timothy Polk has rightly perceived, theological interest tends to depreciate the personal in the prophet's faith and being in order to emphasize the corporate.¹⁶ A typical example is found in Abraham J. Heschel's discussion on the theology of pathos in which he expounds the inseparable relationship between the prophetic pathos and the pathos of God. The prophets, he argues, felt the emotions of God and God in turn suffered through the prophets.¹⁷ In essence, the prophetic pathos is perceived as

¹³Cf. the most update collection of essays in the discussion of 'Prophecy and Society' in Gordon, *The Place is Too Small*, 275-412.

¹⁴Gordon, *The Place Is Too Small*, 275.

¹⁵G. von Rad's *The Message of the Prophets* (ET; London: SCM, 1968) and M. Buber's *The Prophetic Faith* (New York: Harper Torch-Books, 1949-60) are among the standard references on the theology of the prophets.

¹⁶*The Prophetic Persona*, 12-13, 23.

¹⁷Ch. 1: "The Theology of Pathos," *The Prophets*, vol. 2 (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) 1-11.

entirely in relationship to God's suffering and the sins of the people. Consequently, the personal dimension of the prophetic faith and emotion as expressed in religious language is largely overlooked in this theological framework.

(4) In an attempt to explain the abnormal behaviours and passions in the prophets' religious experience, some scholars¹⁸ have taken a *psychoanalytical* approach to prophecy. Phenomena such as ecstasy are used to account for the exotic behaviours of the prophets. Such psychoanalysis is at best an ill-founded methodology which is highly speculative and *most* distant from the text.

To different extents these four approaches each in their own way, have provided a methodologically workable proposal to the question: What manner of men are the prophets? Directly or indirectly, they have touched on the periphery of the prophetic persona with marginal results.¹⁹

1.1.2 The Isaian Persona: A Proposal for An Alternative Approach

While traces of the conventional paths are still to be found

¹⁸This approach has been undertaken by scholars since the beginning of the century. Cf. D. E. Thomas, "The Psychological Approach to Prophecy," *AmJT* 18 (1914) 241-256, esp. his survey and assessment of the earlier works written with this approach (241-42). Traces of this approach are found in many standard works on prophetism such as J. Lindblom's *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962). Cf. also R. P. Carroll's cognitive psychological approach in "Ancient Israelite Prophecy and Dissonance Theory," *Numen* 24 (1977) 135-51; reprinted in Gordon (ed.), *The Place Is Too Small*, 377-91.

¹⁹I think primarily the diachronic interests are being served through these approaches. The persona inquiry, in essence, is literary and synchronic.

in the more recent works on the identity of the prophets,²⁰ new literary currents in biblical interpretation are shifting the diachronic paradigm. First, Polk's *The Prophetic Persona* has set a milestone in prophetic research on the person of the prophets. Specific to his approach is what he describes as 'synchrony and intentionality'.²¹ He seeks to look at the portraiture of Jeremiah as intended by the text through close exegetical reading with synchronic orientation. On another front, recent Isaian studies have developed new approaches in 'reading strategy' and the 'inner hermeneutical dynamics'.²² Yet in contrast to the host of works devoted to the so-called "Confessions of Jeremiah" (Jer 11-20)²³, the 'persona' of Isaiah has attracted little attention thus far.²⁴ Furthermore, commenting on the nature of

²⁰E.g. Petersen (ed.), *Prophecy in Israel*; James Luther Mays and Paul J. Achtemeier (eds.), *Interpreting the Prophets* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987); John T. Greene, *The Role of the Messenger and Message in the Ancient Near East - Oral and Written Communication in the ANE and Hebrew Scriptures: Communicators and Communiqués in Context* (Brown JS 169; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars, 1989); and Barstad, "No Prophets?".

²¹*The Prophetic Persona*, 8-18.

²²These two areas have become the major foci in the recent past. Conrad's *Reading Isaiah* is regarded by many as a groundbreaking endeavour on reading strategy. For a comprehensive survey of the current state of the Isaian research, cf. Marvin A. Sweeney, "The Book of Isaiah in Recent Research," *CR:BS* 1 (1993) 141-62. This observation is also evident in the *SBL Seminar Papers on Isaiah* in the past few years (1991-94).

²³Cf. n. 10. Polk's *The Prophetic Persona* is very much in line with the objectives and approach of my text-centred approach.

²⁴Note that in Christopher R. Seitz's "Isaiah 1-66: Making Sense of the Whole," (*Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah*, ed. Christopher R. Seitz [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988] 105-26), he has devoted a section on 'The prophetic Persona in Isaiah'.

prophetic literature in general and Isaiah in particular, Christopher R. Seitz has pointed out the difficulties in attempting to construct a prophetic persona from the book. To him, "... attempts to pull a prophetic figure out of 2 Isaiah have proven difficult, and out of 3 Isaiah, nearly *impossible*."²⁵

Seitz's observation presents a real challenge to my present study. As a character, Isaiah plays a minor background role in the third person narrative section of the book (chs 36-39).²⁶ However, in places where he speaks in the first person singular voice (most of which are 'monologues'), I have found a rich portrayal of the prophetic 'self' in terms of his emotions and feelings (both direct references and inferences). This preliminary observation shapes the focus of and gives diction to my initial interpretative interest. In this thesis, I seek to look into one specific aspect in the persona of Isaiah -- his emotions through a synchronic-literary study of the 'I'-Passages.

My synchronic-literary approach differs fundamentally from the traditional diachronic paradigm in that it focuses on the book's presentation of the prophet (as a character) rather than the prophet's (as the writer/poet) presentation of the book.²⁷

²⁵"Isaiah 1-66," 120, italics mine.

²⁶Though Isaiah emerges as a main character in chs. 6-8.

²⁷This is also the approach taken by Peter R. Ackroyd in his study of Isaiah 1-12. See "Isaiah 1-12: Presentation of a Prophet," *VTS* 29 (1978) 16-48. Reprinted in P. R. Ackroyd, *Studies in the Religious Tradition of the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1987) 79-104, esp. 102-3.

Instead of repeating the conventional approaches with cognitive emphases on the prophetic ethos (the religion/theology of the prophets) and logos (the prophetic message), in this thesis, I will focus on a non-cognitive²⁸ aspect of the Isaiah text -- the prophetic pathos.

1.2 Biblical Interpretation in A Global Perspective

The second concern to be addressed in this thesis is the emphasis on 'biblical interpretation in an international and contextualised perspective'. This term 'international'²⁹ as well as its counterparts (e.g. 'biblical studies in globalization'³⁰, 'cross-cultural biblical

²⁸The term 'non-cognitive' (the language of emotion and feeling, with pathetic affect upon the readers) is used in contrast to 'cognitive' (prophetic ethos and logos, i.e. knowledge acquired through the mental act such as reasoning and perception) of the text. This distinction may seem ill-founded as the cognitive theory of emotion is among the well established, leading theories in the field. The journal *Cognition and Emotion* is devoted to the study of emotion within the framework of cognitive psychology. However, I will maintain this differentiation on two grounds. First, as an articulation of my focus -- the language of emotion and feeling associated with the character Isaiah (which has not been dealt with in a comprehensive fashion in the past); and (ii) the 'pathetic affect' of this study upon me as a contemporary reader -- i.e. 'to pathetically feel the emotions and feelings of the character' is a non-cognitive pursuit. Cf. also n.6 on the two-fold connotation of the term 'pathos'.

²⁹Used by David J. A. Clines in the context of biblical research. (Cf. "Possibilities and Priorities of Biblical Interpretation in An International Perspective," *BibInt* I [1, 1993] 67-87).

³⁰Cf. David Jobling, "Globalization in Biblical Studies/Biblical Studies in Globalization," *BibInt* 1 (1): 96-110 (1993).

interpretation/hermeneutics'³¹, 'cultural exegesis'³², 'voices from the margin/third world biblical interpretation'³³, 'culture-specific biblical interpretation'³⁴, 'social-location specific biblical interpretation'³⁵), designates the developing cultural and contextual concerns in biblical studies. However, to a certain extent, they represent different goal-oriented objectives³⁶ and thus correspondingly address several related

³¹Cf. Yeo Khiok-Khng, *Rhetorical Interaction in I Corinthians 8 and 10: A Formal Analysis with Preliminary Suggestions for A Chinese, Cross-Cultural Hermeneutic* (Biblical Interpretation Series 9; Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995) 1-4.

³²Cf. Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Gandhi on Daniel 6: Some Thoughts on a Cultural Exegesis of the Bible," *Biblical Interpretation I* (3, 1993) 321-38; and his most recent edited work, *Text and Experience: Towards a Cultural Exegesis of the Bible* (The Biblical Seminar 35; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

³³Cf. R. S. Sugirtharajah (ed.), *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World* (London: SPCK, 1991).

³⁴For some representative works undertaking this 'culture-specific' approach, cf. Mark Daniel Carroll R. *Contexts for Amos: Prophetic Poetics in Latin American Perspective* (JSOTS 132; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); and Francisco O. García-Treto from his culture-specific, Hispanic perspective, "A Reader-Response Approach to Prophetic Conflict: The Case of Amos 7: 10-17," *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. J. Cheryl Exum and David J. A. Clines (JSOTS 143; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) 114-24.

³⁵Cf. in particular, the two volumes of Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (eds.), *Reading from This Place (Vol. 1): Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995); and *Reading from This Place (Vol. 2): Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

³⁶The goal-oriented objectives represented in the works cited in this section are: proposal for doing biblical interpretation in an international perspective (Clines), alerting to issues involved (Jobling), proposing a Chinese, culture-specific hermeneutics (Yeo), criteria for working out a 'cultural exegesis' and coining the term 'cultural exegesis' (Christopher-

issues instead of a single-facet 'cultural'. It is against this background that this trend has caused a bit of ambiguity, especially to those who engage in biblical interpretation from the perspective of a specific culture and social context, like myself. There is still much room for development within this trend.³⁷ I have to precisely locate my place in this trend and hammer out the specifics as related to my subject and goal.

It is therefore my purpose here to give (1) an account of my understanding of the situation; (2) to state my own rationale of the 'culture-context specific' approach to the Isaian pathos; and (3) to define the methodological tools utilized in order to achieve my goal.³⁸

1.2.1 State of the Issue

Recent voices calling for the need and priority for doing biblical interpretation in an international perspective are being heard across the spectrum of different under-represented cultures.³⁹ With the black theology⁴⁰ and Latin American's

Smith and others), the call for paying attention to third world underrepresented voices (Sugirtharajah and others), and demonstrating the plurality of reading through culture-specific interpretation (Carroll R., and García-Treto).

³⁷Especially in working out a guideline for cultural hermeneutic, it would demand a much developed system.

³⁸I will define my methodological tool: a 'reader-oriented approach' in a more extensive manner in Chapter 2.

³⁹For recent works written with such a focus, cf. the latest issue of *Biblical Interpretation* 2/3 (1994), with the whole volume devoted specifically to "Commitment, Context and Text: Examples of Asian Hermeneutics"; R. S. Sugirtharajah (ed.), *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World* (London: SPCK, 1991); Archie C. C. Lee, "Biblical Interpretation in Asian Perspective," *AJT* 7 (1, 1993) 35-9; Kwok Pui Lan, "Discover the Bible in the Non-Biblical World," *Semeia* 47 (1989)

liberation theology⁴¹ in the foreground in past decades, the focus in more recent years seems to be largely on Asia, or more precisely, the Third World Asian countries. These Asian voices collectively pass on a clear message to their First World (European-American) counterparts -- that Asian voices need to be taken seriously in the context of biblical interpretation. In the European-American sector, scholars have also drawn our attention to the call for openness to the plurality of cultural perspectives in biblical research.⁴² Others have endeavoured

26-28; and R. S. Sugirtharajah, "The Bible and its Asian Readers," *Biblical Interpretation I* (1, 1993) 54-66.

⁴⁰See in particular, J. Itumelong Mosala and Buti Tlhagale (eds.), *The Unquestionable Right to be Free: Black Theology from South Africa* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1986); Mosala, *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, c. 1989); Gerald West, *Biblical Hermeneutics of Liberation: Modes of Reading the Bible in the South African Context* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications, 1991); and Cain Hope Felder (ed.), *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991). For the orientation of womanist criticism as a rising force in Black theology, cf. the recent discussion on the subject in George Aichele (et al.), *The Postmodern Bible: The Bible and Culture Collective* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), Ch. 6, "Feminist and Womanist Criticism," 225-71.

⁴¹For a more comprehensive orientation of the Latin America liberation theology, cf. Ronald G. Musto, *Liberation Theologies: A Research Guide* (Garland Reference Library of Social Science 507; New York: Garland Pub., 1991). See also James Vincent Schall, *Liberation Theology in Latin America: With Selected Essays and Documents* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, c. 1982).

⁴²Clines, in "Possibilities and Priorities," has offered a more balanced and challenging address to the issue. Note that he has made an articulated definition of 'internationalization', opposing any moves to minimize the diversity of human distinctiveness (73). As a balanced counter-force towards the tendency of 'internationalization' (if with the mere focus on global intercommunication), he draws the distinction between the 'geographical' and 'methodological' location of the researchers (73-6). This essay is challenging in the sense that a new dimension of 'methodological diversity' is suggested. Perhaps, this should be taken into consideration along with the notion of

culture-specific biblical interpretation,⁴³ suggesting 'cultural exegesis' as a 'methodological procedure' for the interpretation of biblical texts. It is in this respect that Daniel L. Smith-Christopher's earlier proposal⁴⁴ and subsequent work⁴⁵ present a real challenge for biblical research. He states that "the promise of a cultural exegesis is not merely the recognition of cultural influence in textual interpretation, but the possibility that these culturally influenced interpretations can provide new directions for critical analysis of *all* scholars, and not only for those who share the cultural orientation of the specific reader."⁴⁶ In an attempt to coin the term 'cultural exegesis', biblical scholars across cultures have collectively inquired the extent to which the cultural background and experience of interpreters can or may influence the methods or

'contextual diversity' in any discussion on biblical interpretation from a global perspective.

⁴³Cf. ns. 31, 32 and 34.

⁴⁴"Gandhi on Daniel 6,"

⁴⁵*Text and Experience*, which includes discussion papers from the Casassa Conference (March 1992, Loyola Marymount University) -- an unusual gathering of biblical scholars from Asia, South America, Europe and elsewhere to discuss and interact on issues related to culture and biblical interpretation.

⁴⁶"Gandhi on Daniel 6," 338, italics mine. On the one hand, Smith-Christopher has successfully demonstrated an example of 'cultural exegesis' by citing the case of Mahatma Gandhi's comments on Daniel 6. Yet on the other hand, he fails to provide his readers the criteria for 'critical scrutiny' once such cultural interpretation is suggested (325).

results of historical and literary critical studies.⁴⁷ Yet there are still others who challenge the significance of the current trend of 'cross-cultural' interpretation. They argue that since biblical interpretation involves a modern interpreter and an ancient text, all interpretations are in essence 'cross-cultural'. What then characterises the current 'culture-specific' interpretations distinctively 'cross-cultural'?⁴⁸ Or should the non-American/non-European 'culture-specific' biblical readings be considered as *more* cross-cultural than their European/American counterparts? At the present state of the inquiry, there is no proven methodology nor any critically accepted guidelines for doing culture-specific biblical interpretation. Perhaps the comment of Rolf Rendtorff best summarises the present situation -- "The paradigm is changing. ... But the field is open."⁴⁹

Along this line of enquiry, two additional trends are emerging in the current scene. First, as an extension of the ongoing discussion of the influence of culture and experience (of

⁴⁷Cf. the collective work in Smith-Christopher (ed.), *Text and Experience*.

⁴⁸I find this concern quite legitimate and the issue is rather unique to biblical studies. In other disciplines, such as the 'cross-cultural' study on emotion (Chapter 5 of the present thesis), there is an obvious distinction between perception of emotions in different cultures and thus it justifies the need for doing a 'cross-cultural' study for that particular subject. Whereas in the case of biblical research, since it always involves an ancient text and a modern interpreter, the designation of 'cross-cultural' needs to be precisely defined in a way to encourage the plurality and distinctiveness of culture-context 'specific' readings.

⁴⁹"The Paradigm is Changing: Hopes -- and Fears," *BibInt* 1 (1, 1993) 34-53.

readers) on biblical interpretation, Scholars have begun to measure the impact of social location on the theory and practice of biblical interpretation.⁵⁰ They address the issues of the interplay between ethnicity, culture, and the social location of readers of the Bible. This new emphasis continues to throw new light on the interlocking issues on the identity of readers/interpreters whose identity is still ambiguously defined -- such as 'diasporic scholars', Asian Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, immigrants, post-colonial interpreters etc. This new dimension of 'social location' suggests an additional measure for the identity issue of interpreters -- an issue which I believe is very sensitive but essential for any consciously-undertaken biblical interpretations.

The second new trend is on the interplay between postcoloniality and biblical interpretation.⁵¹ While postcolonial discourse in anthropology and feminism flourished in the past decade,⁵² its impact on the theory and method of biblical interpretation is yet to be seen. Its implication, I believe, is to provide a forum for discussion, particularly among

⁵⁰Representative to this new trend are the contributors in Segovia and Tolbert (eds.), *Reading from This Place (Vol. 1): Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States;* and *(Vol.2): Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspective.*

⁵¹Cf. the forthcoming special issue in *Semeia* on 'Postcoloniality and Scriptural Reading'.

⁵²See especially Rey Chow, *Woman and Chinese Modernity: The Politics of Reading Between West and East* (Theory and History of Literature 75; Minnesota, Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); and Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989).

interpreters who grew up in a colonial setting but intellectually contextualised in the West later in life. In what ways will such make-ups influence biblical readings? This will be a forum for inquiries into the complex issues of under-representation, of identity, of otherness; of readings between East and West. Though both trends are still in their infancy,⁵³ on the practical level, their concerns can be boiled down to one fundamental question -- i.e. a question of *identity: Who am I? Where should I locate myself in the guild of biblical interpreters?*

1.2.2 Rationale

My response to the challenge of culture-context specific biblical interpretation is not (a) as an under-represented Chinese-Canadian woman's voice asking for sympathy or demanding to be heard; (b) claiming that my 'specific' perspective (Chinese-culture and Canadian-situatedness) in interpreting the Isaian pathos is unique in any sense; nor (c) do I hold that a Chinese reading is more 'cross-cultural' than, for example, the European-American readings.⁵⁴

Instead, in pursuing my culture-context specific interpretation, I affirm that culture and gender together play a crucial role in the area of emotion.⁵⁵ Different cultures can

⁵³I.e. in terms of its impact on biblical interpretation.

⁵⁴In fact, Asian readers should be more at home with the oriental milieu of the Old Testament texts.

⁵⁵I shall argue for the interrelatedness of the language of emotion, culture, gender and biblical interpretation in Chapter Five from a socio-psychological perspective.

have different perceptions and interpretations of the *same* emotional or physical phenomena. Since my research is on the language of emotion associated with the character Isaiah, a Chinese woman's perspective will enhance the strife for a better understanding of the Isaiah text. As Smith-Christopher has precisely pointed out,

Cultural exegesis involves the *moral imperative* to hear as many different readings as possible, especially different culturally influenced readings. The result can never be *the* reading of a text, but surely we can strive for a *better* reading or interpretation when readings are judged according to critically accepted criteria. The ideal of a cultural exegesis of the Bible is more accurate and meaningful understanding of the texts -- more accurate than if we listen only to a few perspectives.⁵⁶

1.2.3 Method Employed

With the above stated rationale, I attempt to use the reader-oriented approach as a methodological tool for a Chinese-Canadian, culture-gender-context⁵⁷ 'specific' interpretation of the prophetic pathos in Isaiah. Smith-Christopher has also suggested that a reader-oriented methodology is an appropriate means with promising results for cross-cultural biblical interpretation.⁵⁸ It is my hope that through subjective interaction with the Isaiah text from the perspective of a Chinese-Canadian woman reader, I will be able to provide yet another culture-specific perspective to the plurality of cultural

⁵⁶Smith-Christopher, "Gandhi on Daniel 6," 325, n. 13, italics mine.

⁵⁷I see 'gender' as a contributing factor to the identity of my social-context (or situatedness).

⁵⁸"Gandhi on Daniel 6," 324.

perspectives. This plurality (not necessarily diversity) of perspective will in turn contribute to the better understanding of the text. Moreover, it is through pursuing this reader-oriented approach that I seek to provide a worked-out example of 'reader-oriented cultural exegesis' (which precisely describes my twofold approach in this thesis: text-centred and reader-oriented). Along with other heuristic attempts in the field, this example will then help in better shaping a methodology for reader-oriented approaches with cultural orientation.

1.3. Procedure and Objective

The twofold concern and issues laid out in this chapter set the agenda and objectives of this research. Crucial to any thesis is the methodologies employed. I will first attempt to define the two apparently conflicting approaches (text-centred and reader-oriented) taken in this project by stating my own rationale. Moreover, I will argue that a *balanced* consideration of both 'synchronic-literary' aspects and 'reader-oriented' perspectives will enhance any meaning-making reading process (Chapter Two). Contextual issues of the 'I'-Passages will be dealt with in Chapter Three. I will first give an account of the reading strategy adopted in my thesis, followed by a discussion of the criteria for determining the various speaking voices in the Isaiah text. Other contextual issues will be studied from the literary-theoretical perspective.

The core of my thesis is the synchronic-literary analysis of the 'I'-Passages in Isaiah (Chapter Four). Through my

synchronic reading with literary emphasis, I hope that reference as well as inference of the Isaian pathos will be identified. Chapter Five is devoted to the cross-cultural studies on emotion. It is a socio-psychological-based study with special reference to Chinese culture, Canadian context, and woman's perspective. My findings in this chapter serve as the background for my 'response' as a Chinese-Canadian woman reader in Chapter Six. Chapter Six is the working-out of my reader-oriented approach to the prophetic pathos in Isaiah.

I will conclude this study with a final section on a summary of the results of my inquiry. Realizing that my scope (the 'I'-Passages) will cover some crucial (but not all) aspects of the characterisation of the prophet Isaiah, and that my approaches (synchronic-literary and culture-gender-context 'specific') represent not all but a few perspectives, I will end with a reflection -- suggesting possibilities and potentials for future research along this line of enquiry.

The ultimate goals of this thesis are (1) to offer an original contribution to one neglected area of the Isaiah Text - - prophetic pathos; and (2) to provide a research agenda toward a version of culture-gender-context 'specific' interpretation. This is through bringing together in one research project (1) interdisciplinary studies on emotion; (2) Chinese culture and gender aspects as related to emotion; and (3) Isaiah studies.

CHAPTER TWO

DEFINING MY APPROACHES

Crucial to this thesis is the question of method. In a discussion on interpretative interests, Mark G. Brett has precisely pointed out their interrelatedness to 'method' and 'goal.' As a methodological procedure, "any talk about method should be preceded by an analysis of interpretative interests; a 'method' will only be coherent if it is guided by a clearly articulated question or goal."¹

I have followed the basic schema of Brett's statement as the starting point of my research agenda. In Chapter One, I began with an explication of my culture-bound 'interpretative interest' and 'goal'. Here in this chapter I shall articulate the methodological tools to be employed in this study. In formulating a method that is goal-oriented, coherent, theoretically grounded² and in dialogue with current trends in

¹Mark G. Brett, "Four or Five Things to Do with Texts: A Taxonomy of Interpretative Interests," *The Bible in Three Dimensions: Essays in Celebration of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*, ed. David J. A. Clines et al. (JSOTS 87; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 357-77; quotation from 357.

²My emphasis is not so much on positioning myself in relation to particular literary and other interdisciplinary theories. Rather, my primary concern is pragmatic -- to 'tailor-make' a goal-oriented methodology which is built on sound theories and in an integrated fashion. As Stephen R. Haynes and Steven L. McKenzie have commented, this sort of endeavour is "to show biblical criticism in action by demonstrating how particular methods may be implemented in the interpretation and explication of specific texts" (*To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticism and Their Application*, ed. Stephen R. Haynes

biblical criticism,³ my rationale behind this 'tailor-made' design must be critically examined. I shall therefore begin with a discussion of the methodological issues involved. This will be followed by a definition of the two approaches: synchronic-literary and reader-oriented.

2.1 Rationale

In view of my primary concerns of interpretative interest and goal, several interrelated issues have to be taken into consideration: (1) the coherence of methods;⁴ (2) the nature of biblical texts and of the reading process; and (3) a guideline for 'culture-context' specific interpretation. The following discussion states my rationale in adopting a methodology which includes both the synchronic-literary and reader-oriented approaches to the 'I'-Passages in the Isaian text.

and Steven L. McKenzie [Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993] 2; underlying mine). For them, these collective efforts are to be perceived as filling in the 'gap' in biblical scholarship.

³For a comprehensive introduction to the current trends, cf. Aichele et al., "Introduction," *The Postmodern Bible*, 1-19. Clines has pinpointed "'the asking of literary questions' as the most important single trend that has developed and is still in its early flowering" ("Possibilities and Priorities," 82). This trend is characterised in terms of three areas of concentration: (i) the final form of the text; (ii) the role of the reader in the construction of meaning; and (iii) the nature and the processes of interpretation, the nature of texts and of language (82). In this respect, the two approaches (synchronic-literary and reader-oriented) undertaken in this thesis are 'literary' in nature and they share the same areas of concern.

⁴E.g. conflicts about methods, the 'either-or'/'both-and' issue as related to the 'text-centred'/'reader-centred' emphasis, legitimacy of the co-existence of competing approaches, etc.

2.1.1 The Coherence of Method

To varying extents, the twofold emphasis (text-centred and reader-oriented) in this thesis has been perceived by many as conflicting in nature. The crux of the issue lies in the legitimacy of the 'either-or' exclusive approach or the 'both-and' dual foci. On theoretical grounds, M. H. Abrams's system of categorization draws a distinction between the two approaches. The text-centred type of approach is classified as 'objective' whereas the various reader-oriented approaches belong to 'pragmatic' (or 'subjective') criticism.⁵ On the practical level, there is also a sharp contrast between the two competing approaches. A text-centred synchronic approach focuses on the intrinsic textual elements while largely ignoring factors that are extrinsic to the text -- such as culture, gender, context and the commitment of the reader. The diverse reader-oriented approaches all have their focus on the reading process and affirm the predominant role of the reader in the construction of meaning. Thus a reader-centred approach underscores extrinsic factors which affect one's reading. When carried to the extreme, this approach adopts the view that a text means whatever it means

⁵M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1958, repr. 1979) 3-29. Cf. also Mark Allan Powell (ed.), *The Bible and Modern Literary Criticism: A Critical Assessment and Annotated Bibliography* (New York; Westport, Connecticut; London: Greenwood Press, 1992) 5-15. Note that the same system of categorization has been adopted in the book. In Powell's assessment, the different schools of literary theory are classified into four basic types of literary criticism: Mimetic; Expressive; Objective (text-centred); and Pragmatic (reader-centred).

to its readers.⁶ The situation is best described in current works on biblical criticism, referring to the Bible as 'the open text'⁷ and the phenomena of interpretation as 'everyone interprets the Bible in their own ways.'⁸

Facing this apparent conflict in methodological emphasis, it is not my intention to minimise the distinction between the two but rather to emphasise the *interweaving* effect of the two distinct approaches.⁹ As John Goldingay has rightly perceived, "to emphasize this interweaving is not to collapse the distinction; it perhaps makes it more important."¹⁰ Phyllis Tribble in her latest book on rhetorical criticism also comments on the mingling effect of a two-centred approach (text and reader

⁶Clines and J. Cheryl Exum, "The New Literary Criticism," *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. J. Cheryl Exum and David J. A. Clines (JSOTS 143; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) 19.

⁷Cf. Francis Watson (ed.), *The Open Text: New Directions for Biblical Studies?* (London: SCM, 1993).

⁸Cf. "Introduction," *To Each Its Own Meaning*, 1-8.

⁹As distinct from the 'comparative' or 'apologetic' objectives representative in the following works: cf. Donald K. Berry, *The Psalms and their Readers: Interpretive Strategies for Psalm 18* (JSOTS 153; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) (comparative); Joe M. Sprinkle, *'The Book of the Covenant': A Literary Approach* (JSOTS 174; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994) (apologetic); Daniel Hojoon Ryou, *Zephaniah's Oracles Against the Nations: A Synchronic and Diachronic Study of Zephaniah 2:1-3:8* (Biblical Interpretation Series 13; Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995) (comparative); and W. H. Bellinger (Jr.), *A Hermeneutic of Curiosity and Readings of Psalam 61* (SOTI 1; Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1995) (comparative).

¹⁰"How Far Do Readers Make Sense? Interpreting Biblical Narrative," *Themelios* 18 (2, 1993) 5-10, quotation from 7. See also Goldingay, *Models for Interpretation of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans; Carlisle: The Paternoster Press, 1995) 46.

centred).¹¹ An appropriate interpretation is attained through the mingling effect of the proper articulation of 'form-content' (text-centred) and 'meaning' (reader-centred).¹²

In view of the above, I propose to interweave the two by working on dual foci: (1) a close reading¹³ of the 'I'-Passages with specific focus on the intrinsic elements pertinent to the language of emotion; and (2) a reader-construal of the same texts from the perspective of a Chinese-Canadian woman. Since my subject matter is the language of emotion (a non-cognitive aspect in Isaian studies which presumably has a pathetic effect upon the reader),¹⁴ it necessitates an approach which is both text and reader centred. The coherence of my method is reflected in my conviction that there can never be an absolutely 'objective'

¹¹*Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 97-101.

¹²Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 100-01. Note that while Tribble adopts the significance and effect of a two-centred approach, she works at the boundary of text and reader with the former as her emphasis. In regard to the 'appropriate meaning' as perceived by the reader, she specifies that her rhetorical criticism works between the two alternatives: "more than a single meaning and fewer than unlimited meanings" (99).

¹³In Stanley E. Porter's comment on the practice of reader-response criticism in New Testament, he points to the necessity of 'close reading' before engaging in reader-response approaches ("Reader-Response Criticism and New Testament Study: A Response to A. C. Thiselton's *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*," *LT* 8 (1, 1994) 102; cf. also n. 5, 102). It is interesting to note that Porter seems to render a methodological priority of 'close reading' over engagement in reader-response criticism. To highlight the effect of a text-centred approach, Goldingay also remarks that no close reading of a work is ever close enough, since there is always more to discover (*Models for Interpretation*, 46).

¹⁴I shall elaborate further on this later in this chapter.

reading of the text.¹⁵ Meaning-making can never exclude factors that are extrinsic to the text (e.g. the reader's repertoire: culture, commitments, context).

From another perspective, to maintain this dual focus is to provide a reciprocal constraint between the two approaches: a textual constraint to the reader and a contextual constraint to the text as the object of meaning-making.¹⁶ This textual constraint can be taken as one of the *interweaving* effects in that I myself, as a flesh-and-blood contemporary reader, am safeguarded from 'reading into' the text unthinkingly and uncritically.¹⁷ Likewise, the text is protected from the greater crisis of its meaning being 'created' by me in this 'open text' postmodern situation.¹⁸

2.1.2 The Nature of the Biblical Texts and of the Reading Process

My discussion in this section is of pragmatic orientation. While I am drawing insights from current discussions on

¹⁵As we all read with the advantages and disadvantages of our background and commitments.

¹⁶As meaning is context-bound and context is boundless.

¹⁷Regardless of the fact that my context is boundless, the text exerts a certain directiveness upon me in appropriating my own context to the text -- the object of my meaning-making.

¹⁸Against the background of the incredibly broad range of meanings for the term 'postmodern/postmodernism' (cf. Aichele et al., *The Postmodern Bible*, 8-12), I have adopted the description put forth by Terence J. Keegan in the context of its impact on biblical criticism. According to Keegan, "Postmodernism ... accepts indeterminacy, polyvalence and subjectivity as necessary elements in the study of a reality that is incapable of ultimate definition" ("Biblical Criticism and the Challenge of Postmodernism," *Biblical Interpretation* 3 [1, 1995] 1-14; quotation from 2).

hermeneutics and biblical criticism, my frame of reference is basically the 'reading strategy'¹⁹ adopted in this thesis. In other words, I will ask questions which are germane to my reading strategy. What is the nature of the biblical texts? What actually happens in the interaction between the 'I'-Passages and I myself as a contemporary reader? The fundamental concern is therefore twofold: what the biblical text 'is' and what it 'does.'²⁰

In line with my pragmatic objective, I shall approach the discussion here from the perspective of a special category of readers -- with religious commitment to the biblical texts yet engaging in academic study of the Bible.²¹ With this defined focus, I have found that current discussions on the status of the biblical texts are insufficient, especially among reader-response practitioners in biblical studies.²² The postmodern distinction

¹⁹There are two levels of reading strategy referred to in this thesis. The first designates the overall approach to the Isaian pathos from the perspective of a Chinese-Canadian woman reader. The second level delimits itself to the reading strategies as applied to the Isaiah text in general and to the 'I'-Passages in particular. Each of these two levels of reading strategy will be discussed in subsequent chapters (Six and Three). The first level of reading strategy is referred to here.

²⁰Cf. Gabriel Josipovici, *The Book of God: A Response to the Bible* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), esp. Section One: The Reader and the Book (3-52) and Section Six: The Book of God ('Responding to the Bible,' 297-310).

²¹Of course other categories of Bible readers without any religious commitment also exist. My approach here is more interest-oriented than exclusive -- leaving out of account readers without religious commitment. In other words, my focus is on the application of reading-theories to the phenomenon of reading among readers with religious commitments.

²²In *Semeia* 71 (1995), Robert B. Robinson has drawn scholars' attention to the ways that religious texts (such as the scripture) function within the community of faith. He states, "(w)hen the texts to be interpreted are central to a religious

between an author's 'work' and a critic's 'text' is still a matter of emphasis.²³ Leading theories of reading do not account for the interplay between readers with religious commitments and texts that have a scriptural status.²⁴ Readers with religious commitments²⁵ do go back to reading religious texts such as the Bible repeatedly during their life time.²⁶

tradition, ethical considerations are heightened and assume a different seriousness" ("Introduction," 13).

²³In the sense that this distinction is drawn to highlight the affectual effect of the reading process upon the reader. A 'work' is viewed as only a physical object; but the idea of a 'text' extends to any response or experience derived from the 'work'. Along the same line, the collective voice of *The Postmodern Bible* affirms that "the self is a text; experience is a text" (*The Postmodern Bible*, 130). Tribble also draws on this distinction to underscore the inevitable outcome of the plurality of meanings as a characteristic feature of postmodern rhetorical criticism (*Rhetorical Criticism*, 60-61).

²⁴In this regard, Philip R. Davies has argued for the fundamental divergence between the 'confessional' and 'non-confessional' approaches to biblical literature. The two should not be confused either in theory or in practice. They "imply different definitions of the subject matter, and create two different kinds of discourses on biblical matters." Moreover, "these discourses are so fundamentally divergent as to require and to imply separate disciplines" (*Whose Bible is it Anyway?* [JSOTS 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995] 13). However, one should also note that non-confessional approaches to biblical studies may yield insights which can be used for a confessional purpose (or vice versa).

²⁵As commitment is an essential constituent of a reader's repertoire, it is appropriate to take into consideration the 'faith' commitment of readers of religious texts such as the Bible.

²⁶Contrast Stanley Fish's theory of sequential, line by line reading ("Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics," *Reader-Response Criticism*, ed. Jane P. Tompkins [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980] 70-100) which applies only to 'first-time' readers. It fails to describe responses to texts such as the Bible that is often read repeatedly during a reader's life time.

With 'human desire for consistency' as the guiding principle, Wolfgang Iser's theory of phenomenological reading successfully describes a model of readers' response to the text as a whole. However, it falls short to account for the

Particularly when the interplay between the Bible and readers is considered in terms of its impact on individual readers responding or experiencing out of a certain religious commitment, the effects cannot be underestimated.²⁷ A case in point is Northrop Frye. In his *The Great Code*, Frye is to an incredible degree able to keep apart his faith as a Christian and his insight as a literary critic.²⁸ Yet he remarks that the emotive affect of the biblical texts upon readers could often be "emotionally explosive".²⁹ When cast against this background, Frye's comment stands out even more distinctively -- whether it is to be understood as a remark on the intensity of the pathetic effect of the Bible as literature or as a reflection of his pre-textual³⁰ attitude out of his Christian bias.³¹

conflicting yet enduring (in terms of willing suspension of disbelief) reading experience due to the faith commitment of individual readers. (Note that the same issue has been addressed in scholarly works such as Craig C. Broyles' *The Conflict of Faith and Experience in the Psalms* [JSOTS 52; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989]; and "What is a Sacred Text?" *Semeia* 31 [1985] 215-230, esp. 223-25).

²⁷Anthony C. Thiselton has conceptualized this process as a "transformation" and referred to it as "the capacity of texts to transform readers" (cf. *New Horizons in Hermeneutics* [London: Harper-Collins, 1992] 31-46).

²⁸The same notion has been observed by Ian Balfour (*Northrop Frye* [Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988] 95).

²⁹*The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (London, Melbourne and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982) xx.

³⁰I.e. the faith commitment of a reader. I borrow this term from Detweiler, "What is a Sacred Text?" 224, 225.

³¹Cf. Appendix A, on the data-analysis of the reader-response surveys on Isaiah 21:1-12. One of the results indicates that readers' pre-textual religious commitment affects their interpretation.

My text-centred and reader-oriented approaches recognize both the religious status of the Isaian text and its pathetic effect upon me as a reader with religious commitment. As commitment is a potentially important constituent of one's repertoire,³² Keegan's following remark is noteworthy.

Recognizing that every reading of a biblical text is a reading that proceeds from the repertoire of the reader, a repertoire that includes a given faith perspective, will lead to the recognition that differences in interpretation are largely due to differences in the repertoire of the readers.³³

Closely related to the status of the texts is the issue concerning the reading process. Contemporary reading theories agree on one basic point, that meaning comes into being at the meeting point of text and reader. However, considering the role of the reader in the construction of meaning, there is still a significant 'gap' between (1) 'the construction of meaning' and 'the creation of meaning'³⁴; (2) between 'no intrinsically right or wrong interpretation' and 'the text means whatever it means

³²My use of the term 'repertoire' here refers to the collective constituents of one's background and experience. As 'storehouse' for any committed skilled worker, it provides the capability for one to do things that she/he is 'accustomed' or 'well prepared' to perform. This acquaintance with performance is such that one carries out the job naturally, since the acquired skills have become part of oneself; (e.g. a writer writes, a pianist plays, a clown makes people laugh).

³³Keegan, "Biblical Criticism," 12. From a reader-response approach, Detweiler also concludes that "believing readers of a sacred text encounter it with an aggressively 'faithful' attitude" ("What is a Sacred Text?" 216).

³⁴To qualify this statement, I see 'construction of meaning' as analogous to putting together a puzzle. The pieces are 'there' and they belong to the 'picture' (just as the textual elements are 'there' in the 'text'). Yet in the 'creation of meaning', one creates the pieces (which are not 'there') and produces 'whatever picture' one chooses to produce.

to me' (regardless how unacceptable the meanings may seem to other readers); and (3) between 'textual indeterminacy' and the 'continual quest for textual meaning'.³⁵ A tension is created in each pair of the notions.

The same questions are asked in the current discussion on textual indeterminacy/determinacy.³⁶ Recent voices among literary critics and biblical scholars have begun to readdress the question of the interplay between texts and reading.³⁷

³⁵Along this line of inquiry, Adele Berlin has noted that "the principle of textual indeterminacy threatens to undermine the ability of communities of readers or guilds of scholars to share common ground in their quest for textual meaning" ("The Role of the Text in the Reading Process," *Semeia* 62 [1993] 143).

³⁶I find that there is still a 'methodological gap' in the postmodern notion of textual indeterminacy (see n. 18). Just as there are several possible degrees of objectivity/bias exercised in the act of reading, there should also be several levels of 'textual determinacy/indeterminacy' exhibited in the construction of meaning. (Somehow current critical discussions have failed to define these various levels/degrees). The same statement can be carried further with relation to the contributions of empirical studies. (Norman Holland's psychoanalytical approach is significant in that he has conducted empirical studies on actual contemporary readers. Cf. *5 Readers Reading* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975]). Just as readers of different contexts reading the same text may come up with the same meaning/interpretation (showing some relative degree of textual determinacy), the same can be true for readers of the same context reading the same text but come up with different interpretations (exhibiting a certain degree of textual indeterminacy). Either the notion of textual determinacy or indeterminacy can be appealed to in these two cases. Tribble has perceptively summed up the situation in the form of a rhetorical question: "Do not different readers in the same setting and similar readers in different settings and all combinations thereof guarantee heterogeneous responses?" (*Rhetorical Criticism*, 98). It seems clear that it is basically a matter of different levels or degrees in speaking of textual determinacy/indeterminacy. The nature of texts as well as the mapping out of the different levels of textual indeterminacy/determinacy seem to be the two 'methodological gaps' to be readdressed in any discussion of the subject.

³⁷Cf. *Semeia* 62: Textual Determinacy, Part One, ed. Robert C. Culley and Robert B. Robinson (SBL; Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1993) esp. "Introduction," v-xiii.

Robert C. Culley has stated the issue precisely: "To what extent and in what manner do texts determine and control their own interpretation and to what extent and in what manner is meaning determined by factors lying outside the text in the reading process?"³⁸ This line of inquiry, as perceived by Adele Berlin, is a *compromise* between the extremes, in that readers bring something to their reading of a text and the text employs a certain influence on the process of reading.³⁹ The repertoire which a reader brings to the text in the reading process is certainly a factor that is extrinsic to the text. The crucial issue seems to lie in the *extent* and *manner* (or directiveness) which the text influences how it is read. *Semeia* 62 intentionally delimits its task to the widening and broadening of this discussion on text and reading.⁴⁰ Culley himself has expressed his uncertainty and hesitancy in moving to the larger spheres of the subject in concern.⁴¹ It is therefore not my intent to arrive at a firm position here. However, I am in

³⁸"Introduction," *Semeia* 62 (1993) viii.

³⁹"The Role of the Text in the Reading Process," *Semeia* 62 (1993) 143.

⁴⁰vii.

⁴¹xii. In fact, Part two on Textual Determinacy (*Semeia* 71 [1995]) came out after a long wait of two years, this highlights the kind of uncertainty as expressed by Culley. While the discussion in the second volume has taken on new dimensions (cf. Robinson, "Introduction," 7-16), and has suggested more focused future directions (namely, more detailed reflection on the conjunction of the determinacy or indeterminacy of the text and the differing logics of the ways texts function within communities [16]), the essays in this volume collectively point to the complexity of the determinacy/indeterminacy issue. A typical example is Clines' "Varieties of Indeterminacy," (17-28) in which the notion of 'irony' stands out in his explication and affirmation of the 'situation' of indeterminacy.

accord with Berlin in affirming that "just as no reading is free of input from the reader, so no reading is free of input from the text."⁴²

The above discussion explains yet another basis for my rationale in undertaking a method which is both 'text-centred' and 'reader-oriented'.

2.1.3 A Guideline for 'Culture-Context' Specific Interpretation

My cross-cultural interpretation of the Isaian pathos entails two specifications: 'Chinese culture' and 'North American situatedness'.⁴³ Together with my gender, they become the three essential factors in defining my 'context'.

With these stated specifications, I have found that there is no proven methodology nor any critically accepted guidelines to follow.⁴⁴ First, on the non-Chinese scene, there are worked-out samples from various cultural perspectives. Carroll R.'s

⁴²"The Role of the Text in the Reading Process," *Semeia* 62 (1993) 144.

⁴³In my own context, 'situatedness' is an important factor which potentially affects my reading. (Cf. Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert [eds.] *Reading from this Place* [Vol.1]: *Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States* [Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995] for insights in this area of discussion). Mark Daniel Carroll R. has remarked that "... how to read a text involves both the *textual method* and the *contextual situatedness* of the reader" (*Context for Amos: Prophetic Poetics in Latin American Perspective* [JSOTS 132; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992] 20; italics mine). In Thiselton's discussion on 'transforming texts/transforming readers (reading communities), he also points to the 'situational' and 'horizontal' factors which will affect one's interpretation (*New Horizons in Hermeneutics*, 31-46).

⁴⁴As to the state of the inquiry, Smith-Christopher has perceptively remarked that once a new cultural "interpretive idea is suggested, it should hold up to critical scrutiny and not simply be accepted on the basis of a moral sympathy with the source" ("Gandhi on Daniel 6," 325).

Contexts for Amos and García-Treto's "A Reader-Response Approach to Prophetic Conflict: The Case of Amos 7:10-17," are significant examples. Each in their own way has provided preliminary suggestions for an interpretative/reading strategy. Against the background of Latin American liberation theology, Carroll R.'s attempt is in essence, an explication of a 'textual method.'⁴⁵ García-Treto identifies himself both ethnically and culturally as Hispanic, reads the text politically out of his North-American 'situatedness.'⁴⁶ However, his political reading is more a demonstration of what a reader-oriented approach can produce than a proposal for a culture-context specific reading strategy. Drawing on the insights of the sociology of reading,⁴⁷ Smith-Christopher⁴⁸ presents a case study of culturally influenced interpretation --- "Gandhi on Daniel 6" as a methodological challenge for a 'cultural exegesis.' As a North-American male with a Quaker theological orientation,⁴⁹ he has pointed out convincingly a proper direction at the earlier stage of the inquiry. To him, "intentionally seeking culturally influenced readings of biblical texts is an important source of new issues

⁴⁵He states explicitly that his aim is to articulate a fruitful 'textual method' (Preface, *Context for Amos*, 9).

⁴⁶'A Reader-Response," 116-119. It is his social and geographical locations that are more in line with my own context.

⁴⁷Smith-Christopher cited in particular the insights of Pierre Maranda and Jacques Leenhardt from their essays in *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*, ed. S. Suleiman and I. Crosman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980) 183-204, 223.

⁴⁸"Gandhi on Daniel 6,"

⁴⁹As he specifies, the Quaker openness to minority voices breeds a hermeneutics of suspicion towards orthodoxies of all kinds. Cf. "Gandhi on Daniel 6," 325, n.12.

for critical examination."⁵⁰ Perhaps, this should be the first step toward a critically accepted guideline. In his latest work *Text and Experience: Towards a Cultural Exegesis of the Bible*,⁵¹ drawing on the insights of scholars representative of multi-cultural backgrounds, he attempts to coin the term 'Cultural Exegesis'. I believe that the significance of this work lies in pinpointing the future direction of the inquiry. It raises the issue of whether the cultural backgrounds and experiences of the readers of the Bible can not only influence conclusions about contemporary theological issues, but even influence the methods and results of historical and literary critical methodologies. Yet as for setting a model for 'Chinese' culture-gender specific interpretation, there is still a long way to go.

Second, as a Chinese woman reader, I consider drawing insights from the Chinese interpretative scene as essential. Against the background of the conventional 'context-to-text' Asian interpretative strategy,⁵² emerging interpretative models

⁵⁰"Gandhi on Daniel 6," 328.

⁵¹Ed. Daniel Smith-Christopher (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

⁵²As a point of reference, cf. Sugirtharajah (ed.), *Voices from the Margin* and Sugirtharajah (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation* 2 (3, 1994): On the global Chinese scene, one key element in bridging the 'hermeneutical gap' for Chinese Christians is their intense engagement in doing 'context-to-text' theological reflections on current trends or movements. As a result, a few contextualized theologies have emerged in the recent past: the theology of the June 4 Massacre; the theology of Immigration (the influx of Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong to North America and the United Kingdom); 'Green' theology; and the theology of the work of the Holy Spirit (as a defence against the 'third wave' movement) etc.

such as Yeo's 'interpathetic reading'⁵³ and Archie C. C. Lee's 'intertextual/cross-textual'⁵⁴ model have received much attention in recent years. Both attempt to find hermeneutical links between the Bible and Chinese cultural-religious texts. Yeo's approach is of particular interest to Chinese interpreters as it appeals to important aspects of Chinese culture.⁵⁵ However, the criteria for a legitimate 'interpathetic' interpretation have yet to be worked out.⁵⁶ Lee's 'intertextual' model of using Chinese ancient texts to interpret the Bible may work for certain isolated biblical texts. As an interpretative strategy, it will be difficult for it to stand up to critical scrutiny.⁵⁷

⁵³I.e. 'affective experiencing'. This approach of 'interpathy' involves "an intentional cognitive envisioning and affective experiencing of another's thoughts and feelings, even though the thoughts rise from another process of knowing, the values grow from another frame of reasoning, and the feelings spring from another basis of assumptions." Cf. Yeo, "I Corinthians 8 and Chinese Ancestor Worship," *BibInt* 2 (3, 1994) 301, quotation from David W. Augsburger, *Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986) 29. Cf. also Yeo's more elaborated working-out of this 'interpathetic' approach in Yeo, *Rhetorical Interpretation*.

⁵⁴I.e. the biblical text is to be interpreted in our own context and in constant interaction with our own cultural-religious texts. Cf. Lee, "Biblical Interpretation in Asian Perspectives," *AJT* 7 (1, 1993) 35-9 and idem, "The Chinese Creation Myth of Nu Kua and the Biblical Narrative of Genesis 1-11," *Biblical Interpretation* 2 (1994) 312-24.

⁵⁵Such as 'jen' (love), 'chih' (knowledge), and 'tao' (principle/way of).

⁵⁶Cf. the response to his approach in Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, "Listening to Asian Voices," *BibInt* 2 (1994) 363-66, esp. 363-65.

⁵⁷Cf. the critique in Kowk Pui-Lan, "Gospel and Culture," *Christianity and Crisis* 51 (1991) 224; Sugirtharajah, "Introduction, and Some Thoughts on Asian Biblical Hermeneutics," *BibInt* 2 (1994) 257.

On the one hand, these heuristic attempts toward a contextualized interpretative strategy are significant. They have collectively demonstrated the depth and breadth of culturally influenced readings and the demand to take seriously 'cultural-contextual' perspectives as a methodological procedure in biblical interpretation.⁵⁸ However, the difference in methodological and theological orientations, in goals and in interpretative interests as reflected in the examples discussed above make it more complicated to map out criteria for critical scrutiny. The situation is best summed up in the collective voice of *The Postmodern Bible* that there is "no detailed, comprehensive, or fully accurate road map."⁵⁹

In view of this situation, I endeavour to hammer out an interdisciplinary, culture-gender-context specific interpretative strategy for the Isaian Pathos.⁶⁰ With respect to this goal, a twofold approach will be undertaken in this study. It is designated as synchronic-literary and reader-oriented.

⁵⁸Against this background, I am also aware of the opposing voice which refers to this contextualization of biblical interpretation as 'a fallacy of self-referential incoherence'. See William A. Dembski, "The Fallacy of Contextualism," *Themelios* 20 (3, 1995) 8-11.

⁵⁹George Aichele et al. (The Bible and Culture Collective), *The Postmodern Bible*, 15.

⁶⁰This endeavour is in response to Sugirtharajah's plea for bicultural diasporic biblical interpreters to work out an interpretative strategy that will reflect both the insider/outsider (in my own context, both the Chinese/N. American) perspective. (Cf. Sugirtharajah, "Introduction, and Some Thoughts on," 261).

2.2 Synchronic-Literary Approach

With a 'both-and' ('text-reader' centred) emphasis, the first approach undertaken in this thesis is synchronic-literary. This approach designates two specifications. 'Synchronic'⁶¹

⁶¹Theoretically, 'synchronic' designates a conceptionally distinct approach (versus 'diachronic') to the study of a language. It was first introduced into structural linguistics by the Swiss scholar Ferdinand de Saussure (cf. F. de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ET of the 3rd ed. [1931] of *Cours de linguistique général* [ed. C. Bally and A. Sechehaye; Paris: Payot, 1916], trans. W. Baskin [Glasgow: Collins, 1974]). This distinction is often drawn by scholars in distinguishing 'historical' (diachronic) from 'descriptive' (synchronic) study of language. See also Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1975) 11ff.

On the applicational level, Brett points out that this synchronic-diachronic distinction is still loosely defined, since, although both terms are widely familiar, they are understood in different ways ("Four or Five Things," 365, cf. also 365-77 for an assessment of Saussure's thesis and its implication to biblical studies). Taking the meaning of the synchronic study of a language as "the description of a particular 'state' (at some 'point' in time) of that language" (versus diachronic, "the description of its historical development 'through time'"), theorists such as John Lyons argue for the priority of 'synchronic' description. Cf. *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1969) 46-49. When applied to biblical studies, arguments over the priority of the 'synchronic' approach (see esp. Paul R. Noble, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Biblical Interpretation," *LT* 5 [1993] 130-48; R. W. L. Moberly, *At the Mountain of God* [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983]; Meir Steinberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985]; and Joe M. Sprinkle, *The Book of the Covenant: A Literary Approach* [JSOTS 174; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994]) and discussions on the relationship between the synchronic-diachronic methods dominate (see esp. Brett, "Four or Five Things," 365-77 and Noble, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches,"). The worked-out example of an 'operational priority' of the synchronic approach is demonstrated in Daniel Hojoon Ryou's *Zephaniah's Oracles against the Nations: A Synchronic and Diachronic Study of Zephaniah 2:1 - 3:8* (Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995).

My use of the term 'synchronic' here is an innovative extension of its conceptual meaning (e.g. 'text as mirror' in my reading strategy). No attempt is made to argue for the priority of the synchronic approach over the diachronic.

here denotes a 'strategy of reading'⁶² while 'literary' specifies certain 'areas of concentration' in close-reading. For the purpose of clarification, both terms merit some qualifications.

2.2.1 Synchronic

First, the 'synchrony' in my reading strategy constitutes two reading orientations: (a) Isaian pathos as depicted in the text; and (b) text as mirror.

(a) *Isaian Pathos as Depicted in the Text*

My goal-oriented study of the 'I'-Passages in Isaiah requires a focus on one aspect of the 'biblically depicted Isaiah' -- his emotions. In other words, it is the literary persona instead of a historical figure which specifies my concern. To put this reading strategy into action, I will be reading the texts⁶³ in a synchronic (descriptive, the meaning of the text as constructed through the syntactic, stylistic and thematic analyses of the 'literary work' itself)⁶⁴ rather than

⁶²Both levels of my reading strategy are referred to here (see. n. 19).

⁶³I shall describe this reading activity as 'conscious subjectivity' -- acknowledging both the inevitable subjective factors in my reader-involvement and a certain directiveness of the text (the totality of its intrinsic elements). Ryou also includes this reader-involvement in defining his synchronic approach as an analysis which "aims at describing how the reader's progress through the text constitutes the world of the text from syntactic and stylistic, rhetorical elements" (*Zephaniah's Oracles Against the Nations*, 7).

⁶⁴With this focus on the text itself, M. Kessler ("A Methodological Setting for Rhetorical Criticism," *Art and Meaning*, ed. D. J. A. Clines et al. [JSOTS 19; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982] 9-10, 14) attempts to identify 'synchronic

a diachronic (historical, the meaning of the text as constructed through the historical references to events and persons)⁶⁵ way. This means reference to historical events or persons will be understood solely from the perspective of their functions within the text itself. No attempt will be made to reconstruct them as a textual context for interpretation. Rolf Rendtorff has labelled the synchronic approach as 'a reversal of scholarly priorities' (from diachronic) which addresses the question: 'What is the meaning of the text in its given context?'⁶⁶ In this sense, to adopt a synchronic approach to the 'I'-Passages is to view the Bible as a 'literary work' and to regard the 'final form' of the Isaiah text as a unified whole.⁶⁷

criticism' with 'rhetorical criticism' (in the broadest sense). However, the classical usage of 'rhetoric' as the 'art of persuasive speech' and its close affinity to form-criticism (cf. J. Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 [1969] 1-18) do not warrant such an equation. Tribble's latest *Rhetorical Criticism* provides a more up to date and comprehensive treatment of the critical method. However, in her demonstration of the book of Jonah at work on the method, the Muilenburg rubric, that "proper articulation of form-content yields proper articulation of meaning" (with 'meaning' equating with authorial intentionality), is still very much alive in the process (91-97, quotation from 91). In this sense, on the methodological level, my synchronic approach is distinct from rhetorical criticism though both share certain common literary concerns on the syntactical and linguistic levels.

⁶⁵Of course the text makes frequent historical references to events and persons (e.g. in the case of the 'I'-Passages, 6:1, 8:2, 21:2, 9, 22:6-12). My concern is solely on how these references function within the text itself.

⁶⁶Rolf Rendtorff, "The Book of Isaiah: A Complex Unity. Synchronic and Diachronic Reading," *SBL 1991 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1991) 13.

⁶⁷As applied to the complex unity of Isaiah, Rendtorff notes that a synchronic question should be: 'What does the text (in all its complexity) mean in its given final shape?' ("The Book of Isaiah: A Complex Unity," 17).

(b) *Text as Mirror*

'Text as mirror' is a common metaphor used in literary approaches. While it remains common, the metaphor has been used in various ways to serve different goals.⁶⁸ My use of the image is more generic, focusing on the reflective function of the mirror. To adapt the imagery of 'text as mirror' is to view the act of reading as a 'reflective' interaction between the text (e.g. Isaian pathos and 'self') and I myself as the reader (i.e. correspondingly, my emotional make-up and 'Chinese self').⁶⁹ A synchronic reading strategy with a focus solely on the text itself provides an 'uninterrupted' setting⁷⁰ for the reader to

⁶⁸To name a few representative examples, Murray Krieger uses the metaphors of window and mirror to explain the threefold function of poetry: (1) as window to the world; (2) as an enclosed set of endlessly faceted mirrors of reflections; and (3) as this same set of mirrors which becomes a window again (*A Window to Criticism* [Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964] 3). Stephen A. Geller uses the same metaphors to argue for a 'relational and dialectical approach' between historical and aesthetic (note that to him, "'subjective' emotion is characteristic of aesthetics") analyses. While the window moves toward the author and the world, the mirror moves toward the reader. Cf. "Through Windows and Mirrors into the Bible: History, Literature and Language in the Study of Text," *A Sense of Text: The Art of Language in the Study of Biblical Literature*, (JQRS; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1982) 3-40, esp. 21-22, 39, quotation from 14. More recently, 'text as window and as mirror' is used by Tribble to highlight the significance of the third metaphor -- 'text as picture' (omitted in the above studies). In an abbreviated fashion, she points to the notion that when all three elements are taken into consideration, they can be related to the three elements in the total act of communication: author (text as window); text (text as picture); and reader (text as mirror). Cf. *Rhetorical Criticism*, 99, n. 28.

⁶⁹On the same ground, my response to the Isaian pathos and 'self' (Chapter Six) is also a reflective activity out of my own context.

⁷⁰E.g. setting aside matters of history, issues on the development and composition of the text.

readily allow her emotions to be evoked through directed (intrinsic textual elements) self-reflection.⁷¹

2.2.2 Literary

Second, the 'literary'⁷² in my text-centred approach designates the specific areas of concentration in reading. Two operational perceptions are essential. (1) A synchronic perspective takes the final shape of the text as an unified whole and interprets it in its own right.⁷³ Meaning and coherence of

⁷¹Both the subject matter ('pathos') and approach (reader-oriented) in my study demand such a reading strategy. Geller has raised the issue of scholars' readiness to deal with emotions in reading texts. He points to the connection between emotion/feeling and meaning. To him, in literature as well as in art, "meaning comes from the relation between form and emotion" ("Through Windows and Mirrors," 25, 27-28, 34, quotation from 28. See also 14 where he states "'subjective' emotion is characteristic of aesthetics"). To adopt Geller's view is adding an opposing voice to Monroe Beardsley and William K. Wimsatt (Jr.)'s "affective fallacy" (i.e. to evaluate a poem in terms of its emotional effect is to confuse the poem with its result; cf. *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry* [Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1954] 21-40). Discussions on the affective effect in the interaction between text and interpreter are primarily concentrated in poetry. The 'I'-Passages in the Isaiah text are also largely poetry. In this respect, a close link is established between my subject matter (emotion), the literary genre of the text(s) (poetry), and one aspect of my reading activity (reflection) as a flesh-and-blood contemporary reader.

⁷²Again, the designation of 'literary' has been used in biblical scholarship to specify a variety of concentrations and goals (cf. J. M. Sprinkle, "Literary Approaches to the Old Testament: A Survey of Recent Scholarship," *JETS* 32 [1989] 299-310). Steinberg labels the literary approach as 'discourse-oriented analysis' in contrast to the source-oriented criticism (*Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 15).

⁷³As Rendtorff remarks, "... a changing view of the Book of Isaiah should allow, and even require, studies on topics, themes, expressions, ... A synchronic reading, if carried out with the necessary sophistication, should have its own right" ("The Book of Isaiah: A Complex Unity," 16). Here Rendtorff does not indicate the 'methodological tools' required for a sophisticated, synchronic reading. My synchronic-literary approach is a

individual units are sought only in terms of their functions within the whole. (2) The manner of reading is that of a close-reading.⁷⁴ Linguistic, syntactical, stylistic, and thematic elements in their relations to the language of emotions are the foci of my attention.⁷⁵

Since the scope of my thesis is confined to the 'I'-Passages, the 'literary' in my reading falls on one crucial area: the inner hermeneutical dynamics. With this confined focus among the other literary 'concerns,'⁷⁶ four pivotal and promising areas are identified: (1) the transitions of speaking voices; (2) depth and intensity of the language of emotions expressed as directly related to the literary Isaiah's religious experience; (3) language of the 'self'; and (4) language of religious faith in its relationship to the language of emotion. Strictly speaking, these four areas of concentration are more linguistic-syntactical than hermeneutical. However, a synchronic-literary approach to the Bible entails viewing the Bible as language.⁷⁷ It is a 'system of relations', a 'functional whole.' The meaning of its parts (e.g. isolated portraiture of the language of emotion in individual 'I'-Passages) depends on the parts'

heuristic attempt to meet this challenge.

⁷⁴While the Hebrew Text (BHS) is the primary text for my reading, the cross-disciplinary nature of my study demands occasional reference to the Chinese 'Union - New International Version' (CUV) (Berkeley: Hymnody and Bible House, 1990).

⁷⁵E.g., I will examine if the language of religious faith is the language of emotion (see 3.5).

⁷⁶E.g. linguistic, stylistic, and syntactical elements.

⁷⁷Similarly, cf. Polk, *The Prophetic Persona*, 15.

relation to the whole (a portrait of the Isaian pathos in the 'I'-Passages). In this sense, linguistic-syntactical concerns also function hermeneutically.

2.3 Reader-Oriented Approach

The designation 'reader-oriented' denotes a broad spectrum of perspectives and goal-oriented approaches.⁷⁸ In formulating my own reader-oriented method, instead of proceeding from the theoretical ground and positioning myself in certain reading theories,⁷⁹ I shall attempt to hammer out my own strategy. It

⁷⁸This observation is evident in works on the application of reader-response criticism to biblical studies. In *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans; The Paternoster Press, 1985), Roger Lundin (et al.) have applied the method as one legitimate model of biblical hermeneutics termed as 'reader-response hermeneutics' (79-114). The cultural perspective is well represented by García-Treto ("A Reader-Response Approach to,"); Smith-Christopher ("Gandhi on Daniel 6," and *Text and Experience*); and the collective voice in *Voices from the Margin* (ed. Sugirtharajah). Katheryn Pfisterer Darr uses a reader-oriented method as an 'interpretative tool' in her attempt to demonstrate a reader's construal of Isaiah as a coherent literary work (cf. "Isaiah's Vision and the Rhetoric of Rebellion," *SBL 1994 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. [Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1994] 847-82). Cf. also Darr, *Isaiah's Vision and the Family of God* (Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994).

While my concern is on the application of the method, I find Jane P. Tompkins' introduction on the method most perceptive and comprehensive. Cf. "An Introduction to Reader-Response Criticism," *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1980) ix - xxvi. See also Holland, "Literature-and-Psychology," *Holland's Guide to Psychoanalytic Psychology and Literature-and-Psychology* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) 29-58, esp. 54-58 for an analysis of reader-response criticism from the psychoanalytic perspective: i.e. viewing the interaction between text and reader as a psychological process.

⁷⁹I have learnt from Clines' *What Does Eve Do to Help?*. Instead of proceeding from a theoretical position, he expounds on three readerly concerns as the introduction to his book which

is tailored to the 'specifics' of my goal (three-in-one: interdisciplinary studies on emotion; Chinese culture; and Isaian studies), my commitment to the 'both-and' (text-reader centred) approach, the nature of the subject matter of my study (non-cognitive, emotive), and the 'particulars' of myself as a contemporary reader (a woman reader, nurtured in Chinese culture and North American situatedness). These factors together become the essential constituents of my description here.

2.3.1 Operational Procedures

My synchronic-literary reading of the 'I'-Passages in Chapter Four provides a stable⁸⁰ textual context for my response in Chapter Six. The text is stable in the sense that my

is, in itself, a worked-out example of 'reader-response criticism' (see esp. 12, 21). My own approach is also in response to Stanley E. Porter's plea for biblical scholars to have less second-hand dependence upon literary critics for their theoretical grounding. (See "Why Hasn't Reader-Response Criticism Caught on in New Testament Studies?" *LT* 4 [3, 1990] 290; and "Reader-Response Criticism and New Testament Study: A Response to A. C. Thiselton's *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*," *LT* 8 [1, 1994] 95-6, 101). My reservation in adopting the whole package provided by reader-response theorists is not so much the 'biblical versus secular' division (as spelled out in Porter's essay as the reason for his reservation, see "Why Hasn't," 290). Rather, as an end-user, my concern is on the application of the method to biblical studies in general and to my thesis in particular. In hammering out my own reader-oriented approach, I adopt useful insights from literary critics and draw on innovative adaptation-models in the biblical circle. Among them, K. Darr's thematic treatment of Isaiah from the reader-oriented perspective is a typical example ("Isaiah's Vision and the Rhetoric of Rebellion,"). Drawing on the theory of sequential reading and Rendtorff's synchronic approach, supplemented by John A. Darr's three critical premises (*On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts* [Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox, 1992] 17-22), she has successfully demonstrated her reader-response method at work in the book.

⁸⁰I.e. through the directiveness of the intrinsic elements.

subjectivity is not totally unrestrained and my self-reflection is not egotistic.⁸¹ Since my reading strategy is 'culture-gender-context' specific, the operational procedures are therefore designed to achieve such goals. Chapter Five is a socio-psychological study on emotion with specific reference to the Chinese woman perspective.⁸² This is an attempt to explicate primarily my cultural background (in its relationship to emotion) -- an irreplaceable aspect of my repertoire from which I interact with the text(s). Other 'particulars' of myself as a contemporary reader (i.e. commitments, gender, North American situatedness etc.) will be discussed in Chapter Six under the topic 'My horizon as a Chinese-Canadian woman'. Once the cultural and contextual background has been examined, I will proceed with the 'response' proper in Chapter Six.

2.3.2 Dynamics

The dynamics described in this section gives my reader-oriented method its flavour and distinctiveness. First, the steps undertaken in my approach are in essence an *enactment* of the critical premises which I have adopted. They can be summed up in my commitment to (1) a two-centred approach; (2) a certain degree of textual directiveness; (3) the interrelationship between emotion on the one hand, and culture-gender on the other;

⁸¹Otherwise, as cautioned by Tribble, "... a reader-centered approach risk(s) turning the text into a 'mirror for narcissistic self-reflection'" (*Rhetorical Criticism*, 98-9).

⁸²With special attention to the axis between 'self' and 'emotion' which corresponds to the same axis discussed in Chapter Three.

and (4) 'context-to-text' (or vice-versa) interpretative strategy.

Second, my interaction with the text is, in essence, a merger of the intrinsic textual elements (perceived through conscious, restrained subjectivity) and my reader-oriented extrinsic perspectives. It is in the course of this merger that meaning-making takes place.

Third, my reading activity is reflective.⁸³ Given the interrelatedness between culture-gender and emotion, and that emotions are constructions of one's self,⁸⁴ two crucial implications can be derived. (1) My Chinese culture and my perspective as a woman will definitely have strong bearings on my perception of the Isaian pathos. (2) Moreover, this perception is in a sense, a reflection of my own identity and my emotional make-up (an important aspect of my personality).⁸⁵ In

⁸³Cf. my discussion in the section 'Text as Mirror. Also in Conrad's *Reading Isaiah*, he remarks that "to read an ancient and alien text such as Isaiah means that we must be more consciously reflective in our reading endeavor" (31).

⁸⁴I shall argue for these theses through a socio-psychological study on emotion in Chapter Five.

⁸⁵At this point, I am in accord with Norman N. Holland's psychoanalytical (transactive) theory. He stresses the effect of personality on perception. A reader makes sense out of a text by transferring its content in accordance with her own identity. His theory is based on the empirical studies he carried out in his book *5 Readers Reading* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975). Five actual readers are involved in the discussion of their responses to samples of 20th century short stories. Together with psychological tests, Holland has elucidated how the five readers' readings relate to their psychological make-up.

Holland (together with David Bleich, cf. esp. *Readings and Feelings: An Introduction to Subjective Criticism* [Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1975]; *Literature and Self-Awareness: Critical Questions and Emotional Responses* [New York: Harper and Row, 1977]; and *Subjective Criticism* [Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978]) is one of the first who advocates the strategic role of the 'psychology of the self' in

particular, when the pivotal points of entry for my response are 'emotions' and 'self', my psychological make-up and my 'self' are therefore the two important factors in my repertoire which affect my response.

Fourth, my response is *experiential*⁸⁶ in that I allow my own emotions to be evoked through the textual directiveness of the Isaian pathos.⁸⁷ In this sense, it is a 'pathetic-

reader-response criticism. In his perceptive analysis of reader-response criticism, he points to the fact that most American reader-response critics tend to use real readers (sometimes the practitioner's own 'self') and study actual feelings. In essence, they are drawing heavily on psychology (often psychoanalytic psychology) as it addresses individuality. He concludes that "reader-response criticism is, in the world of literary criticism, the most practical embodiment of the basic psychoanalytic insight that all knowledge is personal knowledge" (cf. *Holland's Guide to Psychoanalytic Psychology and Literature-and-Psychology* [New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990] 54-58, quotation from 58).

My adaptation of Holland's model is for a pragmatic reason. The non-cognitive nature of my subject matter and the desired level of my reader-involvement demand a reading model that is also non-cognitive (personal experiencing) and of a higher degree of reader-engagement (i.e. a reflective activity leading to the revelation of my own 'self').

⁸⁶Holland's discussion on 'literature-and-psychology' comes into play here (cf. *Holland's Guide to Psychoanalytic Psychology and Literature-and-Psychology*, 29-58). In the largest sense, all literary criticism is psychological criticism in that all theories "proceed from assumptions about the psychology of the humans who *make or experience or are portrayed in literature*" (29, underlining mine). Holland defines reader-response criticism as the study of "readers reading a text" with specific focus on "their experiencing of a text" (54, 55). It is this aspect of 'experiencing' in its individuality that characterises an important aspect of my reader-oriented approach here.

⁸⁷On the question of affect in experiencing literature, cf. Holland, "Appendix A: The Question of Affect" *5 Readers Reading*, 292-299. Holland admits that there is no satisfactory theory of affect in existence. Part of the difficulty comes from language itself as words do not describe feelings directly with much precision (292). With his experience with real readers reading, he offers a revised version (from his *The Dynamics of Literary Response* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1968] 298-301) of his 'model of literary affect' (293-99).

experiencing' activity⁸⁸ and it is what makes my 'experiential' response distinct from the other 'reading as experience' theories.⁸⁹

Last, my approach has its empirical aspects.⁹⁰ As a goal-

⁸⁸'Pathetic' is my preferred description as it points to the intensity of the passions expressed in the text(s) and the potential 'pathetic' affect it has upon me as a reader. See n. 5 in Chapter One.

⁸⁹Leading theories on reading generally adopt the view of 'reading as experience' in the broadest sense. Differences are seen first, in the ways that this 'experience' is described; and second, the status of text(s). Fish's model of 'affective stylistics' sees reading as an 'event' in the reader. The event (in terms of 'reader experience') itself becomes the text's meaning (cf. "Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics"). However, for Fish, the text is unstable. The reader is a member of an interpretative community that decides what the text is. Therefore, 'community' makes literature; 'interpretive strategies' shape texts (*Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980] 11-17, esp. 11). Iser's phenomenological model of reading views the experience of reading as an evolving process of anticipation, frustration, retrospection, and reconstruction. It is throughout this 'wandering' (reading) process that the reader experiences reading as an actual event (cf. *The Act of Reading*, 118f; 122-34).

⁹⁰I believe that a shift in focus from sophisticated discussion of reading theories to the experimentation of readers is taking place. David Bleich pioneers the study of the actual feelings and reader-engagement. He has applied the findings in his four books to formulate a theoretical reading model and to transform the classroom teaching of literature (Cf. *Readings and Feelings: An Introduction to Subjective Criticism*; *Literature and Self-Awareness: Critical Questions and Emotional Responses*; *Subjective Criticism*; and *The Double Perspective: Language, Literacy, and Social Relations* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1988]). Holland's *5 Readers Reading* is an outstanding example of the empirical and psychoanalytical approach to reading (cf. also Audrey N. Grant, *Young Readers Reading* [Melbourne: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987]). More recent works such as *Reading Texts: An Introduction to Strategies of Interpretation* (ed. Danuta Fjellestad and Eleanor Wikborg [Oslo-Stockholm-Copenhagen-Boston: Scandinavian University Press, 1995]) follow the same empirical emphasis. It aims to bridge the gap between sophisticated reading theories and students' own experience of texts. Moreover, the book is a significant example for my culture-gender specific reading strategy. It addresses the issues of gender and race in textual representation and in the interpretation of texts (i.e. what it means to read a text from

oriented, pragmatic method, I go beyond discussions on socio-psychological and reading theories. I have conducted small scale, culture-gender specific and cross-cultural reader-response surveys and interviews.⁹¹ While some aspects of the results of my analysis are still inconclusive, others have been used to provide an empirical dimension to my discussions. The value of my empirical studies is not so much result-oriented.⁹² It is the involvement of actual flesh-and-blood participants (other than myself) which gives my reader-oriented approach its real dynamic.

2.3.3 Toward a Definition

It is my intention to defer a proper definition of my reader-oriented method to this last section. The broad spectrum of reader-response approaches and the varied conceptual understandings of the method necessitate a definition of my own. To sum up the discussion here, I am more ready than before to articulate a multi-faceted definition. Methodologically defined, my reader-oriented approach is socio-psychological. With respect to the nature of reader-engagement, it is 'pathetic-experiencing'. If a more precise definition is sought, I find my method very suited to be described as 'pragmatic' --- in the sense that it is tailor-made to serve my goals.

a gender- or ethnic-specific position; cf. Unit Five, "The representation and the reading of gender and race," 40-77). In a classroom setting, the issue is not only openly discussed but also experienced by students who engage in the experiment.

⁹¹See Appendices A and B.

⁹²Particularly when only a small-scale sampling is carried out, the results are far from conclusive.

CHAPTER THREE

THE 'I'-PASSAGES IN CONTEXT

This chapter aims at providing a contextual background for the 'I'-Passages included in this study. A discussion of the reading strategy¹ adopted positions the 'I'-Passages in the overall framework of the Isaian text (3.1). In view of the problems in marking and distinguishing the different speaking voices, the first person singular 'I' (identified as Isaiah²) requires special consideration (3.2).

Three subsequent literary-oriented³ discussions of the relationship between (1) monologue and language of self; (2) language of emotion and self; and (3) language of religious faith and language of emotion will follow (3.3 to 3.5). In the larger context of contemporary literary theories, biblical texts will be used as the focal point of reference.⁴ Chinese texts

¹The second level of my reading strategy is referred to here. It applies to the reading of the Isaian text in general and to the 'I'-Passages in particular (cf. Chapter Two, n. 19).

²Hereafter, Isaiah refers to the literary persona.

³As distinct from the socio-psychological orientation in Chapter Five, the topics are examined primarily from a literary-theoretical perspective.

⁴My concern is the Bible in the context of contemporary literary criticism. The rationale behind this approach requires some explanation. On the one hand, Jason P. Rosenblatt and Joseph C. Sitterson, Jr. rightly regard applying the insights and methods of literary theories to biblical studies as 'the child's repaying the parent' ("Introduction," *"Not in Heaven": Coherence and Complexity in Biblical Narrative*, ed. Jason P. Rosenblatt and Joseph C. Sitterson, Jr. [Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991] 1). Yet on the other hand, I take

pertaining to these areas will be used in Chapter Five as a primary resource. Whenever they are referred to in these sections, they function in building up a larger literary context for the 'I'-Passages only. No attempt will be made to draw any cultural-conceptual implications. I hope that the results will collectively contribute toward the literary-theoretical⁵ premises of the interrelatedness between emotion, self and the Isaian persona. This operational scheme outlines the agenda in setting a contextual background for my synchronic-literary approach in Chapter Four.

3.1 Reading Strategy

There has been a major shift in the focus of critical research on the book of Isaiah since the 1980s.⁶ The old

caution in avoiding a 'one-way traffic' type of application. That is to borrow bits of literary theory to explicate biblical texts (see *The Postmodern Bible*, 111-3). On the defensive side, Meir Sternberg claims that since "Scripture emerges as the most interesting as well as the greatest work in the narrative tradition," secular literary criticism has much more to learn from it than to offer (*The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985] 518, n. 24; see also *The Postmodern Bible*, 113). This suggests another one-way traffic from the other direction. My emphasis here is a 'two-way' traffic approach: drawing insights from contemporary literary theories and yet with a view to appreciating the distinctiveness of the biblical texts, to see what the Bible has to offer to the larger field of literary criticism.

⁵Again, as distinct from the socio-psychological propositions in Chapter Five.

⁶For a comprehensive, insightful survey with critical assessments, see Marvin A. Sweeney, "The Book of Isaiah in Recent Research," *CR:BS* 1 (1993) 141-62. This essay traces the development of current discussions of the book of Isaiah as a whole. Cf. also Jacques Vermeylen (ed.), *The Book of Isaiah/Le*

paradigm of historical reconstruction of events and persons has to a large extent given way to an increasing interest in the literary aspects of the text.⁷ Attention has been drawn to the structure of the book as a unified whole, the thematic developments, the redactional formation of the book and its intent, and the inner hermeneutical dynamics. While discussions of the book's formation and unity have still dominated Isaian research since the early 1990s,⁸ one new area of concentration

Livre D'Isaïe (BETL 81; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989) for a survey of research.

⁷It is also to be noted that literary aspects such as the unity/redactional formation of the book are still currently explored under the traditional historical-critical methods and with fruitful results. For representative examples, cf. H. G. M. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); and Brooks Schramm, *The Opponents of Third Isaiah: Reconstructing the Cultic History of the Restoration* (JSOTS 193; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995). Representative works which exhibit a 'close reading approach' and interest in the literary aspects are J. C. Exum, "Of Broken Pots, Fluttering Birds, and Visions in the Night: Extended Simile and Poetic Technique in Isaiah," *CBQ* 43 (1981) 331-52; S. A. Geller, "A Poetic Analysis of Isaiah 40:1-2," *HTR* 77 (1984) 413-20; J. F. A. Sawyer, "Daughter of Zion and Servant of the Lord in Isaiah: A Comparison," *JSOT* 44 (1989) 89-107; and Barry G. Webb, "Zion in Transformation: A Literary Approach to Isaiah," *The Bible in Three Dimensions*, ed. D. J. A. Clines, S. E. Fowl, and S. E. Porter (JSOTS 87; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 65-84.

⁸This emphasis is best represented in The Society of Biblical Literature's Annual Consultations (1990-1991) and Seminars (1992-1996) on 'The Formation of the Book of Isaiah' (chaired by Melugin and Sweeney). For consultation and seminar papers and other related works, cf. Roy, F. Melugin and Marvin A. Sweeney (eds.), *New Visions of Isaiah* (JSOTS 214; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996). See esp. Rendtorff, "The Book of Isaiah: A Complex Unity," (*SBL 1991 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. [Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press] 8-20); Roy F. Melugin, "The Servant, God's Call, and the Structure of Isaiah 40-48," (*SBL 1991 Seminar Papers*, 21-30); Gerald T. Sheppard, "The Book of Isaiah: Competing Structures According to A Late Modern Description of Its Shape and Scope," (*SBL 1992 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. [Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press] 549-82); Christopher R. Seitz, "On the Question of Divisions Internal to the Book of Isaiah," (*SBL 1993 Seminar*

is emerging and showing signs of flowering. This new direction focuses on the adaptation of newer advances in literary theory to Isaian studies -- particularly in the area of reading strategy. Conrad's *Reading Isaiah* is a ground-breaking endeavour toward this goal. His reading model⁹ has considerable impact on Peter D. Miscall's reading of Isaiah in the new Readings series.¹⁰ Barry G. Webb, in his "Zion in Transformation: A Literary Approach to Isaiah," exhibits a postmodern orientation of subjective-interactive readings.¹¹ Among these scholarly efforts, Katheryn Pfisterer Darr's is noteworthy. In "Isaiah's Vision and the Rhetoric of Rebellion," she adapts insights from contemporary reading theories and innovatively works out sophisticated tools¹² to demonstrate a reader's construal of Isaiah as a coherent literary work. Her subsequent work *Isaiah's Vision and the Family of God*¹³ is also based on a reader-

Papers, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. [Atlanta: Georgia, Scholars Press, 260-73]; and C. A. Evans, "On the Unity and Parallel Structure of Isaiah," VT 28 (1988) 129-47.

⁹I shall elaborate further in the following sections (3.1.1 and 3.1.2).

¹⁰*Isaiah* (Readings; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).

¹¹This essay is of a postmodern orientation in the sense that the author explicitly indicates that his subjective interaction with the text is an essential part^{of} his interpretation (65).

¹²Based on the reader-response critical premises developed by J. A. Darr (cf. *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of characterization in Luke-Acts* [Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992]).

¹³Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994.

oriented approach.¹⁴ From the perspective of a first-time sequential reader who belongs to post-exilic Israel's cognoscenti,¹⁵ she expounds on the meaning of the recurring child and female tropes in the book. With the exception of the book of Psalms¹⁶ and a number of cultural-political readings of

¹⁴Again, primarily based on J. A. Darr's critical theories, cf. n.12.

¹⁵By 'cognoscenti' is meant those whose literary, cultural and historical competencies transcended that of a general level of readership (i.e. a "layperson's level of understanding" *Isaiah's Vision*, 30) and enabled more complex and literate readings (such as reading the Isaian text which is of a "highly complex literary entity", 19). K. Darr's locating of her text-implied, sequential readers in the fourth-century BCE guild of experts in Israel exhibits a methodological drawback in her adapted reader-oriented approach. In order to qualify the required level of competency in the sequential mode of reading, her readership is restricted to the specialists, the highly trained and skilled readers of the post-exilic community. One may ask: In what way would the text's intent to persuade readers "to new ways of perceiving their world" and "to discover fully the purpose of a divine plan" (45) through moving within and out of Isaiah's vision be realized within the post-exilic community at large?

¹⁶Cf. Donald K. Berry, *The Psalms and Their Readers: Interpretive Strategies for Psalm 18* (JSOT 153; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); W. H. Bellinger, Jr., *A Hermeneutic of Curiosity and Readings of Psalm 61* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1995); and David J. A. Clines, "A World Established on Water (Psalm 24): Reader-Response, Deconstruction and Bespoke Interpretation," *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. J. Cheryl Exum and David J. A. Clines (JSOTS 143; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) 79-90.

Note that I have not included John D. W. Watts' 2 Vols. commentary on Isaiah (WBC 24; 25). Though he claims to undertake a reader-oriented approach, his commentary demonstrates a rather 'structured' reading of the text as a 'vision' genre -- i.e. as a drama, with acts, scenes and episodes; together with his precise identification of the various speaking voices. His locating of the book's 'first readers/audience' at the time of the book's completion (c. 435 BCE) (*Isaiah* 1-33, xxiv, xxix-xxx) is neither in accord with the reading orientation of a drama nor congenial to a commentary proper (cf. also Williamson's comment in *The Book Called Isaiah*, 17).

isolated passages,¹⁷ adaptation of reader-response theories in Old Testament studies is largely concentrated in works written from feminist perspectives.¹⁸ It is in this respect of 'one of a kind' representation that K. Darr's contribution is significant. First, she has shown that adaptation of literary theories such as reader-response can be used with innovative sophistication instead of direct second-hand borrowing. Second, her synchronic, reader-oriented approach demonstrates the book of Isaiah as a coherent literary work. This suggests yet another promising direction toward the unity issue under the new paradigm of literary focus.

My subject matter and the confines of my scope also require certain sophistication in working out a reading strategy specific to this study. As Webb interacts with the text subjectively and K. Darr's reader reads sequentially through the book of Isaiah as a unified whole; I will be approaching the 'I'-Passages synchronically concentrating on the portrait of Isaian pathos. Since my reading is synchronic, I will not pursue matters

¹⁷E.g. G. West, "Reading 'the Text' and Reading 'Behind the Text'. The Cain and Abel Story in A Context of Liberation," *The Bible in Three Dimensions*, 299-320; G. West, "Difference and Dialogue: Reading the Joseph Story with Poor and Marginalized Communities in South Africa," *BibInt* 2 (1994) 152-70; Renita J. Weems, "The Hebrew Women Are Not Like the Egyptian Women: The Ideology of Race, Gender and Sexual Reproduction in Exodus 1," *Semeia* 59 (1992) 25-34; Smith-Christopher, "Gandhi on Daniel 6,"; García-Treta, "A Reader-Response Approach."

Note that I have not included here works like *Voices from the Margin* (ed. Sugitharajah) and *Text and Experience* (ed. Smith-Christopher) on the ground of their distinctive culture-context 'specific' rather than theoretical and applicational orientation.

¹⁸E.g. *The Feminist Companion to the Bible* series (ed. A. Brenner, Sheffield Academic Press); J. Cheryl Exum, *Fragmented Women: Feminist (Sub)versions of Biblical Narratives* (JSOTS 163; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).

pertaining to author, date and redactional history of the book. The following sections spell out the particulars of my reading strategy toward this goal.

3.1.1 The Book as A Whole

Together with the majority of critical studies on Isaiah since the mid-eighties,¹⁹ I share the same approach to the book as a unified work. My focus is solely on the final form of the book as a whole.²⁰ Realizing that my scope covers only part of the Isaian persona (or even part of the Isaian voice, since the corporate 'I'²¹ is not considered extensively in the present study), and that the 'whole' is not necessarily the sum total of

¹⁹Commentaries and critical works written since the mid-eighties witness the rebirth of attempts to interpret the book as a unified whole, regardless of how this unity is perceived and developed. For representative examples, cf. John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33, 34-66* (Word; Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1985, 1987); John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah. Chapters 1-36* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1986); C. R. Seitz, "Isaiah 1-66: Making Sense of the Whole," *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah*, ed. C. R. Seitz (Fortress, 1988) 105-126; Seitz, "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *JBL* 109 (2, 1990) 229-47; Webb, "Zion in Transformation," Conrad, *Reading Isaiah*; Seitz, *Isaiah 1-39* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993); Miscall, *Isaiah*; and J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Leicester: Inter-varsity Press, 1993).

²⁰As Sweeney has noted, "the recent focus on the final form of the book has clearly established itself as the central issue of Isaiah studies" ("The Book of Isaiah in Recent Research," 141). He further comments on the need to abandon the traditional concepts of First and Second Isaiah when considering the structure and message of the book as a whole (141-42). Along the same line, Oswalt also remarks that "it is in its wholeness that the grandeur of the book's message can be seen" (*The Book of Isaiah*, 23).

²¹E.g. 25:1-11, esp. vv. 1 & 9.

its 'parts,'²² this awareness helps me to appropriately locate my study in the overall portrayal of the Isaian persona in the book. The 'I'-Passages spread out through the 66 chapters. To read the passages sequentially is to listen to the Isaian 'I'-voice speaking synchronically (i.e. as it stands in the order of the book) through these chapters. No attempt will be made to reconstruct the 'I'-voice diachronically (i.e. as it develops in the book's formation). In other words, the scope and focus of my study entail a reading strategy that takes the final shape of the book as a unified whole.²³

This perception of 'wholeness' (the portrait of the Isaian persona in the book) in its relation to its part (the portrait of the Isaian pathos in the 'I'-Passages) should be supplemented by another reading orientation. The book is to be read on its own terms -- i.e. as religious literature.²⁴ I believe that my study necessitates such an orientation for two reasons. First, it helps to bridge the gap between Isaiah as a distant ancient

²²See n. 20.

²³Again, in this context, the book's unity is perceived synchronically (i.e. 'as it stands') rather than diachronically (i.e. 'as it develops through stages of redactional activity').

²⁴For implementing the 'Bible as a literary work' reading strategy to biblical studies, cf. the discussion in Polk, *The Prophetic Persona*, 14-16. Using the analogy of the Bible as a language -- 'a system of relations', 'a functional whole', he points out that the meaning of its parts depends on their relation to the whole. To apply this view to my present study, a reading strategy which views the Isaian text as a literary work and focuses solely on the final shape of the book is to view the meaning of its parts (isolated portrayures of the Isaian pathos in individual 'I' - Passages) solely in its relation to the whole (i.e. 'the whole' in its two levels: [1] the portrait of the prophetic pathos; and [2] the portrait of the prophetic persona in the book). For the 'Bible as religious literature', cf. also my discussion in 2.1.2.

text and I myself as a contemporary reader in constructing meaning. It shortens the distance of this remoteness as I focus on Isaiah's final shape -- as a literary work written in the past.²⁵ John Barton in his "Reading the Bible as Literature: Two Questions for Biblical Critics,"²⁶ raises the question: What critical approach should a modern critic use when studying literature from the past (such as the Bible)?²⁷ He then suggests that the critic must make a decision whether a literary work is to be studied historically or non-historically (i.e. synchronically) as there should be no middle way. To opt for the non-historical alternative "means that all suggestions about the text's meaning are to be justified in terms of features within the text as read by a modern reader."²⁸ Second, this 'biblical text as a literary work' approach enables me to establish a literary-oriented context for the 'I'-Passages which are the core of my study. It is on this ground that sections 3.3 to 3.6 (following) are structured.

²⁵Note that one aspect of the fruitfulness of reader-response criticism is that it can be applied practically to all types of literature (poetry, prose, fiction, drama), ancient or contemporary as all it takes for a proper response is a text, a reader and the act of reading.

²⁶*LT* 1 (2, 1987) 135-53.

²⁷137-38.

²⁸138. Barton also cautions that since the Old Testament does not fall easily within the category of 'literature' (because of some authorless, non-intentional texts), either mode of criticism (historical and non-historical) alone tends to narrow our vision of what is actually in the Bible (152-53).

3.1.2 Inner Hermeneutical Dynamics

One of the significant current foci of Isaian studies is on the internal hermeneutical dynamics of the book. There are three noteworthy attempts which are literary in nature and are geared toward the coherence and unity of Isaiah.²⁹ (1) In terms of the overall structure of the book, Watts³⁰ and Conrad³¹, followed by Miscall³², take the whole text of Isaiah as a 'vision'. Chapters 1-39 contain the full message of the vision which was lost on its original audience who were 'deaf' and 'blind'. The vision is given a new setting (the future community of receptive audience) in chapters 40-66.³³ (2) Another hermeneutical link is found in contrasting the image of the kings. P. R. Ackroyd in his 1982 "Isaiah 36-39: Structure and Function,"³⁴

²⁹As Seitz remarks, unity and coherence are sought "in the 'reciprocal relationships' between the literary blocks of First (1-39), Second (40-55), and Third (56-66) Isaiah ("Introduction," *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah*, 17).

³⁰Cf. my comment on Watts' 2 vols. commentary in n. 16.

³¹*Reading Isaiah*, Ch. 6. To Conrad, the book is structured in such a way as to provide a present context (i.e. the framework: chs. 1-5 and 40-66) for the reception of the ancient 'vision' of Isaiah (6-39) (155).

³²*Isaiah*, "Introduction," esp. 10-12. To Miscall, speaking of the book of Isaiah as a vision is "in the sense of a text that presents something to be seen and imagined rather than just thought and conceptualized ... (It) is a vision of a community, of an ideal way of life" (*Isaiah*, 12).

³³With the 'vision' as the overall structure of the book, Watts has correlated Isaiah's vision on the future of Jerusalem in 2:2-4 to the rest of the book. The view of the future there shapes the attitude of chapters 40-66. It culminates in a description of the vision by the creative act of God at the end of the book (65:17-66:24) (*Isaiah* 1-33, xxvii).

³⁴*Von Kanaan bis Kerala* (AOAT 211; Neujirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 3-21), reprinted in P. R. Archroyd, *Studies in the Religious Tradition of the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1987) 105-20.

demonstrates that chapters 36-39 contrast the favourable image of Hezekiah with that of Ahaz in 7:1-9:6 in a similar crisis situation. They provide the transitional link between the two major component parts of the book. Ahaz's rejection of the prophet's message becomes the basis for Israel's judgment in chapters 1-35; and Hezekiah's faithful acceptance of the message provides the ground for Israel's salvation in chapters 40-55.

(3) The third internal link is found in the language of commissioning in the context of the heavenly council in both 40:1-8 (the opening of the second main part of the book) and chapter 6. Both Seitz³⁵ and Roy F. Melugin³⁶ argue that linguistic similarities between 40:1-8 and the commissioning of Isaiah in chapter 6 suggest that 40:1-8 presupposes chapter 6. By means of 40:1-8,¹ causes the readers to re-enter the divine council in chapter 6 and thus consciously introduces the setting of "the new things" (chs. 40-66) as distinct from that of "the former things" (chs. 1-39).³⁷ H. G. M. Williamson has devoted a whole chapter on the strategic status of chapter 6 in terms of

³⁵"The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *JBL* 109 (1990) 229-47.

³⁶"The Servant, God's Call, and the Structure of Isaiah 40-48," *SBL 1991 Seminar Papers*, 21-30.

³⁷Note that Seitz takes a step further to argue that the book of Isaiah consciously brings the ministry of the 8th cent prophet to a close in ch. 39. By means of 40:1-8, causes the reader to re-enter the divine council when Isaiah was first commissioned ("The Divine Council," 243-45). A conscious distance between the time of Isaiah ('the former things') and the exilic periods ('the new things') is achieved by employing the language of commissioning once again to introduce the periods of the 'new things' (244).

its influence on 40:1-8 and on the later parts of the book.³⁸ This association as observed by scholars places both chapter 6 and 40:1-8 in pivotal positions within the book. On the one hand, a hermeneutical link is established between the two major parts of the book. On the other hand, they provide clues for interpreting the book as a unified whole and for chapters 40-48 in particular.³⁹ Focusing on the 'hardening of the heart-not seeing-not hearing-not understanding' theme in 6:9-10, John L. McLaughlin has pointed out that this same concept is not only repeated (44:18; 63:17) and intensified (29:9-10), but also reversed (32:3-4a; 42:7) in the second major part of the book (chs.40-66).⁴⁰ He then concludes that the association of chapters 40-66 with the rest of Isaiah is not the result of chance but of design.⁴¹

The implications of these inner hermeneutical links position the 'I'-Passages in vital places within the Isaian text. First, if the book is to be understood as a 'vision' of Isaiah, identifying and interpreting⁴² the Isaian 'I'-voice contribute not only to the construal of the prophetic persona but also to the understanding of the 'vision' -- the main message of the book. Secondly, several of the 'I'-Passages (chs. 6; 8; 40)

³⁸*The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944) 30-56.

³⁹See esp. Seitz, "The Divine Council," 243-47 and Melugin, "The Servant," 23-29.

⁴⁰"Their Hearts Were Hardened: The Use of Isaiah 6:9-10 in the Book of Isaiah," *Biblica* 75 (1994) 1-25.

⁴¹25.

⁴²I.e. impact of the vision upon Isaiah as expressed in the personal 'I'.

included in this study are located at crucial places where internal hermeneutical links have been established.⁴³ Thirdly, since the 'I'-Passages spread out sporadically throughout the book, a reading with attention to the internal hermeneutical dynamics suggests a promising, coherent portrait of the Isaian pathos.

3.1.3 From Prophetic Pathos to Isaian Individuality

Inquiry into the pathos of Isaiah is, in essence, looking into an important aspect in the persona of the character. There is, of course, a clear distinction between reading the Isaiah in the text which bears his name as a real 'person' or as a reading construct, a literary character. On the methodological level, this distinction exists all the way in this thesis. However, my reading focus (identifying the language of emotion and feeling associated with the character Isaiah) requires a certain degree of 'closeness' which allows me to get into the depth (inner life)

⁴³I.e. ch. 6 in relation to ch. 40 (the commissioning); ch. 40's pivotal location in relation to the 'vision' (marking the transition from the old setting to the new -- 'the future community of receptive audience') and it provides clues for interpreting chs. 49 and 50; ch. 8 in the context of 7:1-9:6 and in relation to chs. 36-39 (contrasting the two kingly images in times of crisis; also, Isaiah appears as a character in these chapters, a crucial textual background in understanding the Isaian persona).

Ch. 6 in particular, crucial hermeneutical links have been found which bear significant implications to the unity and coherence of the book. Besides its remarkable similarities with ch. 40 in the context of divine council and commissioning, the recurrence of the 'hardening of hearts' motif (6:9-10) in the latter part of the book "adds to the body of evidence that the association of the chaps. 40-66 with the rest of the Book of Isaiah was not the result of chance but of design" (McLaughlin, J. L. "Their Hearts Were Hardened: The Use of Isaiah 6:9-10 in the Book of Isaiah," *Biblica* 75 [1994] 1-25; quotation from 24). Cf. my discussion of this passage in 4.2.2.

of this character through first-hand experiencing the text (the Isaian pathos).⁴⁴ Practically speaking, this closeness with the text facilitates me to progressively construct the character more and more as an 'individual' rather than a 'personality'.

Current discussion of characterisation centres around the question of whether characters in any text are persons or words (or are characters, individuals or personalities).⁴⁵ The debate further focuses on the issue of the degree of individuality that can be attributed to characters in biblical literature.⁴⁶ This opens up an enquiry as to the criteria upon which reader-critics are allowed to speak of characters as 'persons'. Fred W. Burnett has proposed that depending on (1) the degree of characterization; and (2) the existence and continuum of the textual indicators, it is justifiable to speak of characters as 'persons'.⁴⁷ In other words, characters in the text could be

⁴⁴In *The Reader, the Text, the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), Louise Rosenblatt has emphasized that reading has both a cognitive and an affective component. To read is to experience the text fully rather than merely to analyze it. My tailor-made reader-oriented approach (cf. 2.3) entails a 'reading as experiencing' strategy which necessitates a definite degree of 'closeness' with the text in order to experience it fully (cf. 2.3).

⁴⁵Cf. esp. *Semeia* 63: *Characterization in Biblical Literature* (1993).

⁴⁶Cf. esp. the response of Robert M. Fowler in "Characterizing Character in Biblical Narrative," *Semeia* 63 (1993) 97-104.

⁴⁷See Fred W. Burnett, "Characterization and Reader Construction of Characters in the Gospels," *Semeia* 63 (1993) 1-28, esp. 4-5, 19. His essay (among others in *Semeia* 63) offers the most thorough discussion of the theory of characterization.

read as developing and approaching 'individuality'.⁴⁸ When these notions are put into the context of a reading strategy to be applied to the 'I'-Passages, the implications are significant.

Provided that the 'I'-Passages consist of sufficient textual indicators, then a more rounder character, a fuller depiction of Isaian pathos will be developing from my study. Since depth (I am dealing with the character's emotion, an important aspect of his inner life) and coherence (through the continuum of textual indicators) are demanded for this thesis, then there is a justified necessity to read the character Isaiah as a 'person' with developing 'individuality'. Therefore, as a manner of perception, this 'personage' Isaiah does exist in my reading strategy.

3.2 The Speaking Voices

Several voices speak in the book of Isaiah (the narrator⁴⁹, God, Isaiah, the people of Israel/the communities of audience, and other anonymous voices⁵⁰),⁵¹ yet crucial to constructing the Isaian pathos in the 'I'-Passages is the identification and

⁴⁸Burnett, "Characterization and Reader Construction," 19.

⁴⁹E.g. 1:1, 2:1, 13:1 which introduce the Isaian speaking voice.

⁵⁰E.g. 16:4; 21:8-9; 40:3-8; 48:16.

⁵¹As for chs. 40-66, Samuel A. Meier has pointed out that only two primary voices predominate: the voice of God and an unidentified human voice which is clearly not God's (*Speaking of Speaking: Marking Direct Discourse in the Hebrew Bible* [VTS 46; Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1992] 253-4).

precise marking of the Isaian first-person voice among other speaking voices. From the linguistic and statistical perspective, Samuel A. Meier's *Speaking of Speaking: Marking Direct Discourse in the Hebrew Bible* offers the most comprehensive study on the subject. His enquiry into the issue reveals the degree of difficulty and thus gives a rather gloomy picture as to the possibility of identifying and marking direct speeches in the prophets with any degree of certainty.

According to Meier, the problem unique to Isaiah is fourfold. First, with the exception of chapters 6-8, 20, 36-39 (which are narratives), the book is primarily poetry. While some form of the verb לִדְבַר is obligatory before direct discourses in biblical narratives, the verb is, in contrast, essentially dispensable in poetry.⁵² Secondly, even in cases where the introduction of speeches (with markers such as כִּי־אָמַר and וַיִּרְאֶה ; and the rubric: "The word/vision ... which (Isaiah) ... saw concerning Judah ..."⁵³) are clearly defined, the concluding boundaries are not always evident.⁵⁴ Thirdly, "there is no interest expressed in the process by which God's word is transmitted to the prophet and the manner in which the prophet then communicates to an audience."⁵⁵ Fourthly, the particular lack of concern for differentiating God's voice among the other

⁵²*Speaking of Speaking*, 94.

⁵³E.g. chs. 1 and 2 are introduced with this rubric.

⁵⁴*Speaking of Speaking*, 246-49.

⁵⁵*Speaking of Speaking*, 242.

speaking voices (especially in chs. 40-66) indicates yet another difficulty.⁵⁶

Inquiries into the inner hermeneutical dynamics and reading strategies provide a quite encouraging picture instead. Attention has been drawn to the identification of the prophetic voice in Isaiah from a variety of interpretative interests. The Isaian voice has been recognised as a key pointer toward the coordination of the distinction between the former and the latter things as represented by chapters 1-39 and 40-66.⁵⁷ Conrad's ground-breaking reading strategy also pays considerable attention to the speaking-voice identification, particularly in the second major part of the book, chapters 40-66.⁵⁸ Written from a reader-oriented perspective, Watts reads the book dramatically (with acts, scenes and episodes) after the 'vision' genre. His 'drama' reading requires and thus produces a detailed analysis of the different speaking voices in each pericope of the Isaian text.⁵⁹ Both pictures will be taken into consideration in my own reading. On the one hand, I take note of the fact that the

⁵⁶Unlike most of chapters 1-35, chapters 40-66 contain long, sustained speeches by God or an individual who talks about God (*Speaking of Speaking*, 252-3). There are also places where the speaking voice is clearly not God's (40:12-31; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:7-54:6; 59:1-20; 61:1-11; 62:1-12; *Speaking of Speaking*, 254).

⁵⁷This emphasis is evident particularly in the works of Seitz. Cf. "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *JBL* 109 (1990) 220-47; "Isaiah 1-66: Making Sense of the Whole,"; and "On the Question of Divisions Internal to the Book of Isaiah," *SBL 1993 Seminar Papers*, 260-66.

⁵⁸*Reading Isaiah*.

⁵⁹*Isaiah 1-33*. Watts, however, does not seek to provide textual justification for his identifications (as also observed by Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 17).

'I'-Passages such as Chapters 21 and 40 are notoriously complex in their interweaving of speaking voices. There is a definite degree of difficulty in my attempt to identify or to mark the Isaian voice with any certainty or precision. On the other hand, my two-centred approach entails an engagement not in reading according to a mechanical, or statistical analysis, but making sense out of the text. Identification and marking of the Isaian 'I'-voice is thus a basic necessity in my construction of meaning. A synchronic-literary reading enables me to pay close attention to the intrinsic textual elements (such as pronominal shifts; the emergence of sub-voices in imaginary speeches/dialogues;⁶⁰ the embedded voices within the primary discourse of God or prophet;⁶¹ the development as well as recurrence of certain 'emotive' motifs). Moreover, a reader-oriented approach should allow some space to exercise my subjectivity in reading.⁶²

Basic to my reading strategy is the assumption that the primary speaking voice in the book which bears the name Isaiah

⁶⁰E.g. 21:8-9.

⁶¹E.g. 16:3; 22:13; 24:16; 25:9.

⁶²In making this statement, I affirm that in identifying and marking speaking voices in complex texts such as Isaiah, both text-specific and reader-oriented reading strategies should be employed. A reading solely based on a reader's perspective potentially exhibits a weakness in textual support. Yet a text-driven attitude may lead one to a dead-end in determining the Isaian 'I'-voice. The complexity in identification necessitates a reader's active role in filling in the gaps, applying imagination in reading, wrestling with tension and inconsistency etc. I believe that Watts' problem lies primarily not in his lack of textual justification (in fact he claims to undertake a reader-oriented approach to his commentary; see *Isaiah 1-33*, xxiv), but in the weight of his reader perspective in a 2 volume commentary proper. Cf. also n. 54.

is Isaian. My criteria for identifying and marking the Isaian 'I'-voice in the passages selected are: (1) special textual indicators attributing speech to Isaiah (e.g. 6:1 and 8:1 in the first-person narrative); (2) the immediate and larger contexts of the passage; (3) pronominal referents (particularly the shifting of personal pronouns as indicators of the change of speaking voices);⁶³ (4) the larger literary context based on my discussion in 3.4 to 3.6; (5) specific markers as indicators to the change/boundary of the speaking voices in order to single out the first-person Isaian; and (6) my role as reader in filling in textual gaps, imaginary construction, resolving tensions and inconsistency.⁶⁴ I shall seek to justify my identification and marking in my reading of individual 'I'-Passages in Chapter Four.

3.3 Monologue and Language of Self

Certain places within the 'I'-Passages in my study can be read as monologues in which the character Isaiah talks to himself in his own words (e.g. 6:5; 8:17-18; 15:5, 16:9, 11; 21:1-10; 22:4-5; 24:16; 40:6-8; 49:1-5; 50:4-9; 51:19; 61:1-3, 10; 63:7). In my attempt to analyse the Isaian monologic speeches, I have to take note of the same degree of difficulty (as explained in 3.2) in determining the first-person voice. As Meir Sternberg has precisely pointed out, speaking voices within dialogue and monologue are often 'indeterminate' because there are "pockets

⁶³I note also that the fluctuation between the 'I' of the prophet and the 'I' of God is problematic for interpretation (cf. Meier's comment on this point, *Speaking of Speakings*, 209).

⁶⁴See. n. 57.

of monologue in dialogue and imaginary dialogue in monologue."⁶⁵ Passages such as 21:1-10 and 40:1-8 reveal such difficulty which is beyond any objective control. Moreover, it has been observed that the dividing line between a character's inner speech and prayer is not always clear,⁶⁶ particularly in poetic texts such as 5:1 and 63:7 (in their context). The focus of my discussion here is, however, not on the precise identification of monologic voices within the 'I'-Passages.⁶⁷ In providing a broader literary-contextual background for the 'I'-Passages, I shall aim at (1) functions of monologue as a literary device; and (2) implications of using this device as a means to uncover a character's inner 'self'. In other words, I seek to find some directiveness in reading the monologic speeches.

3.3.1 Monologue in Narrative/Fiction

Broadly defined, monologue is a discourse produced by one character and not addressed to other characters. Should it be unspoken (consist of a character's non-verbalized thoughts), it constitutes an 'interior monologue'. When it is spoken, it becomes an 'exterior monologue' or 'soliloquy'.⁶⁸ Recent scholarship on biblical narrative approaches monologue in its

⁶⁵"The World from the Addressee's Viewpoint: Reception As Representation, Dialogue As Monologue," *Style* 20 (1986) 317.

⁶⁶M. Niehoff, "Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves? Narrative Modes of Representing Inner Speech in Early Biblical Fiction," *JBL* 111 (4, 1992) 580.

⁶⁷The identification issue will be dealt with in my reading of individual 'I'-Passages in Chapter Four.

⁶⁸Gerald Prince, "Monologue," *Dictionary of Narratology* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1987).

relation to dialogue⁶⁹ while contemporary literary studies refinely divide monologue into different modes of discourse, such as narrated, quoted, and dramatic.⁷⁰ Further implications are drawn in relating interior monologue to 'free indirect discourse'.⁷¹ As a literary technique, interior monologue

⁶⁹Cf. esp. Meir Sternberg, "The World from the Addressee's Viewpoint: Reception As Representation, Dialogue As Monologue," *Style* 20 (1986) 295-318; and Luis Alonso Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics* (subsidia biblica 11; Roma: Editrice Pontificio Biblico, 1980) 170-79.

⁷⁰In 'monologue' studies, I have found that Dorrit Cohn's *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978) offers the most comprehensive discussion of the subject. The book discusses 'consciousness' in the third-person 'context' and also 'consciousness' in the first-person 'texts'. To Cohn, consciousness in third-person narrations fits into one of the following three types: (1) psycho-narration: the narrator's discourse about a character's consciousness (21-57); (2) quoted monologue: a character's mental discourse (58-99); or (3) narrated monologue: a character's mental discourse in the guise of the narrator's discourse (99-142). Cohn discusses first-person narrative in chapters on "Retrospective Techniques", "From Narration to Monologue", and "Autonomous Monologue". See also Cohn, "Narrated Monologue: Definition of A Fictional Style," *Comparative Literature* 18 (2, 1966) 97-112; Alan Sinfield, *Dramatic Monologue* (Critical Idiom 36; London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1977); S. S. Curry, *Browning and the Dramatic Monologue: Nature and Interpretation of An Overloaded Form of Literature* (New York: Haskell House, 1965).

⁷¹In the words of Cohn, the 'narrated monologue' or 'free indirect discourse' "may be most succinctly defined as the technique for rendering a character's thought in his own idiom while maintaining the third-person reference and the basic tense of narration" (*Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* [Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978] 100). Cf. also Brian McHale, "Free Indirect Discourse: A Survey of Recent Accounts," *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 3 (1978) 249-78; and Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature* (Centre for Non-Western Studies; Netherlands: Leiden University, 1992). For application of 'free indirect discourse' to biblical narratives, see Niehoff, "Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves?".

conveys the inner world of a character, particularly in the 'stream of consciousness' novels.⁷²

In earlier biblical narrative studies, it has been a common misconception that the Bible does not present to us the inner life of the characters.⁷³ It offers us nothing in the way of detailed rendering of the mental process. Textual indications of a character's inner life, feelings and emotions are rather minimal.⁷⁴ Sternberg⁷⁵, Bar-Efrat⁷⁶, and Niehoff⁷⁷ have each

⁷²In a comprehensive study of monologue in its relationship to variant literary concepts, Constantin-George Sandulescu concludes that "stream of consciousness, stream of thought, interior monologue, monologue intérieur, and even silent soliloquy ... were used to denote the same phenomenon in fiction" (*The Joycean Monologue: A Study of Character and Monologue in Joyce's Ulysses Against the Background of Literary Tradition* [Colchester: A Wake Newsletter Press, 1979] 23).

See Cohn, "Narrated Monologue," esp. 108-110; Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature* (CNWS publications 9; Netherlands: Leiden University); Melvin Friedman, *Stream of Consciousness: A Study in Literary Method* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955) 1-25. Thus far, this 'stream of consciousness' literary method has not been explored in biblical studies. Cohn refers it to a 'genre' whereby the 'interior monologue' is taken as a 'technique' in rendering a character's self-awareness in 'stream of consciousness' novels ("Narrated Monologue," 108).

⁷³E.g. R. Scholes and R. Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966) in which it is stated that: "The inward life is assumed but not presented in primitive narrative literature, whether Hebraic or Hellenic" (166).

⁷⁴E.g. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (London, Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1981) 114.

⁷⁵"Between the Truth and All the Truth: The Rendering of Inner Life in Biblical Narrative," *Hasifrut* 29 (1979) 110-46; in Hebrew, no English abstract. Cf. also his *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985) 97, 454-5 where he analyses the issues of the narrator's rendering of the characters' inner life (i.e. the ambiguity of the biblical 'said' between thought and speech; and the obscure dividing line between the end of the inside view and the beginning of the narrator's voice).

pointed out in their works that such generalisation is incorrect. They have demonstrated instead that biblical narrative uses numerous direct and indirect ways to present the feelings and attitudes of its characters. However, as Niehoff has pointed out, in recent scholarship on characterisation of characters in the Hebrew Bible,⁷⁸ attention has been drawn primarily to 'how' the narrator depicts the literary characters' inner feelings and their perspectives on the world around them (or characters' point of view) through the direct (such as quoted interior monologue) and indirect means (such as speech and actions). In essence, the focus is on the literary technique as employed by the narrator in depicting characters. As a result of this preoccupation, "the contemplating and self-reflective tendencies of the figures have thus far been largely ignored."⁷⁹ In other words, the characters' self-representation through various means such as monologue and imaginary dialogues has not been seriously explored.

⁷⁶*Narrative Art in the Bible* (JSOTS 70; Bible and Literature 17; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989 [ET]) 53-64.

⁷⁷"Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves?," esp. 581.

⁷⁸E.g. R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981) 114-30; Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*; A. Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983) 33-42; Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 321-41.

⁷⁹Niehoff, "Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves?," 278. Further, Niehoff also points to the fact that 'inner debates' which are considered as one of the known functions of interior monologues are not presented in the same fashion as in modern novels (579).

3.3.2 Reading the Monologic Speeches in the 'I'- Passages

The above observations help to sharpen the focus of my discussion here. Looking into the emotions and feelings of Isaiah is, in essence, a reading into an important aspect in the inner life of the character. Methodologically speaking, it is a well defined textual approach -- the characterisation of Isaiah. However, in applying theories of narratology to my present study, the following has to be taken into consideration.

First, biblical research on characterisation of characters is overwhelmingly done on narratives only. Besides chapters 6 and 8, the 'I'-Passages in my study are primarily poetry. Therefore, application of the narrative-depiction of characters' inner thoughts through monologue will have to be refined with more sophistication.⁸⁰ Accordingly, the definition of 'monologue' within the 'I'-Passages will have to be expanded to a broader sense.⁸¹ Secondly, one of the essential starting points of my reading strategy is reading the character Isaiah as depicted in the text. However, there is still a significant difference between reading the narrator's depiction of Isaiah through the literary device of monologic speeches on the one hand, and reading with respect to the character's inner thoughts and emotions through his self-representation by means of self-

⁸⁰That is one of the reasons that I have decided on (1) a two-centred approach: text-centred and reader-oriented; and (2) to establish pivotal points of entry for my synchronic-literary study in Chapter Four.

⁸¹I.e. wherever Isaiah speaks in the 'I'-voice verbally (exterior monologue) or in the form of non-verbalised thoughts (interior monologue). In fact, most of the 'I'-speeches in the passages do not constitute a long monologic discourse, if monologue is to be strictly defined.

reflective, contemplative first-person speeches on the other.⁸² Reading with a view to the character's self-representation, the individuality of the character Isaiah is developing while keeping the narrator at a distance. Since the 'I'-Passages are primarily poetry, the narrator's voice is rather silent, and instead the Isaian voice (as well as God's) dominate the whole book. In the case of the first-person narrative in chapter 6, Isaiah is the narrator and, at the same time, the primary speaking voice. In this context, reading with a focus on the self-reflective, self-revelatory aspects in the monologic speeches of Isaiah provides an appropriate point of entry into the inner self of the character.

3.3.3 Monologue as a Literary Device: Its Functions

The above discussions contextualise 'monologue' in narratology. This section is a close-up look at its functions.

(a) *Foregrounding of a character's inner feelings, in the realm of tension, struggle and debate*

Contemporary literary studies on monologue focus on two pivotal areas: (1) different modes of monologic discourse and their interrelations; and (2) detailed grammatical and stylistical analysis in differentiating one mode from the other.⁸³ The functions of monologic speech are discussed in the

⁸²See 3.1.3.

⁸³E.g. Free indirect speech as distinct from interior monologue both stylistically and grammatically. Cf. discussions in Cohn, "Narrated Monologue," 108-110; C. D. King, *Édouard Dujardin, Inner Monologue and the Stream of Consciousness* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1953) 116-125, in coining the concepts of

broadest sense -- as a literary device in depicting the self-consciousness and aspects of the inner life of a character. Attention has been particularly drawn to literature of a specific genre such as 'stream of consciousness' novels⁸⁴ and drama⁸⁵.

In biblical narrative studies, attention is drawn primarily to the detailed syntactical and stylistical analysis through close-reading. Current biblical scholarship approaches monologues in its relationship to dialogues.⁸⁶ L. Alonso Schökel further links monologue with 'interior dialogue' which functions to bring about an internal 'doubling' of the individual. Therefore, stylistically speaking, monologue is not one person speaking, but "the breaking into a context of dialogue with a reflection directed to oneself."⁸⁷ Schökel cites

inner monologue and the stream of consciousness through tracing their development in the writings of Dujardin, William James, James Joyce etc.

⁸⁴E.g. Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness*; Shiv Kumar, *Bergson and the Stream of Consciousness Novel* (New York: New York University Press, 1963); Leo T. Rosenberg, *The Theory of the Stream of Consciousness: Its Development by William James* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); Erwin R. Steinberg (ed.), *The Steam-of-Consciousness Technique in the Modern Novel* (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1979).

⁸⁵E.g. J. Harvie and R. P. Knowles, "'Dialogic Monologue' -- A Dialog: The Dialogic Function of Monologue in Some Contemporary Canadian Plays," *Theatre Research in Canada* 15 (2, 1994) 136-63; Robert Woodrow Langbaum, *The Poetry of Experience. The Dramatic Monologue in Modern Literary Tradition* (New York: Norton, 1963).

⁸⁶Cf. esp. Sternberg, "The World from the Addressee's Viewpoint -- Dialogue as Monologue." L. Alonso Schökel also remarks that "monologue must be understood in its relationship to dialogue" (*A Manual of Hebrew Poetics* [subsidiaria biblica 11; Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1988] 178). See also Sternberg, "Double Talk: The Indirections of Biblical Dialogue," *"Not in Heaven": Coherence and Complexity in Biblical Narrative*, 28-57.

⁸⁷*A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 178.

examples from the Psalms which provide insights into the functions of the monologue as a literary genre. When the psalmist says, "Bless the Lord, my soul",⁸⁸ it is to be understood as if he 'doubles' himself to encourage himself. He is affirming to himself that his soul hears this 'I'.⁸⁹

As a literary genre, what then, are the precise functions of this 'doubling-of-oneself'? By citing further examples from Deut 32:19-27; Psalms 42:6-7, 12; 43:5;⁹⁰ and 73:16-18,⁹¹ Schökel insightfully explicates the notions of 'internal tension' and 'inner struggle'/'inner debate'⁹² within the inmost part of the individual, expressed so forcefully and dramatically through this device. Without such a refined technique, the depth and intensity of these inner feelings could not have been brought to the foreground.

Schökel's investigation is significant in that the bulk of his observations are drawn from the book of Psalms, a literary genre that is distinctively non-narrative but poetic. It is in

⁸⁸E.g. Psalm 103:1, 2 and 104:1.

⁸⁹*A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 178.

⁹⁰This poetic device of 'doubling' expresses magnificently the internal tension as result of experiencing God's presence and absence at the same time (Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 178).

⁹¹Without using the 'doubling' device but the narrated monologue instead (Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 179).

⁹²*A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 178-9. In the words of Miehoff, monologue is the textual depiction of the characters' 'inner debates'. The character's externalized self is portrayed as being confronted by his internal self ("Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves?," 595). Likewise, in Cohn's analysis of the function of narrated monologue in Jane Austen's *Emma*, he also notes that the device is employed to render the rhythm of inner debate in the character Emma's consciousness ("Narrated Monologue," 107).

this aspect that his observations have significant bearings on my present study.

The same conclusion can be drawn in New Testament studies. In Philip Sellow's attempt to analyse monologue as a narrative device in Luke's parables, he has come up with the observation that the characters in Jesus' parables in Luke (12:16-20; 42-46; 15:13-32; 16:1-81; 18:2-5; 20:9-16) voice their inner thoughts as a way to dramatize their private interior debate. The dynamic in these debates is that one's "'soul' disputes with itself."⁹³

In the contemporary film 'The Bridges of Madison County',⁹⁴ the same notions of inner struggle and 'divided self' are dramatically portrayed through the monologue genre. The character Francesca's⁹⁵ 'second character' or 'hidden self' is portrayed as being uncovered, within four days with Robert. Engaging in the affair, her struggle is then between her 'divided self', or the two versions or possibilities of her life. Her inner struggle is also between (1) her craving for a romance that has eluded her in her youth (contrasting her now quiet life in the mid-west); and (2) the domesticity of a marriage in which she feels tired and bland.⁹⁶ In a scene in which Francesca is seen

⁹³"Interior Monologue as a Narrative Device in the Parables of Luke," *JBL* 111 (2, 1992) 239.

⁹⁴By Robert James Waller, 1992. The framing device is: Francesca's grown son and daughter learn of the affair from her journals after her death. The scenes of her son and daughter serve both (1) as intermissions in the romance; and (2) as depictions of the developing 'responses' to the affair and the impact on their own lives -- as they gain more understanding in reading on.

⁹⁵played by Meryl Streep.

⁹⁶Note that she describes her husband as 'clean' yet serene and comfortable.

as performing very mundane chores in the kitchen, this drama of the inner struggles within her 'divided self' is brought forth forcefully through a series of interior monologues. Through this device, she is depicted as struggling through different states of mind, reflecting on different stages of the romance and climaxing in a rational debate within her 'divided self' as to whether to leave with Robert or stay. From my audience perspective,⁹⁷ it is interesting to note that 'dialogues' cannot convey the 'inwardness' of the struggle. 'Actions' cannot even come close to portraying a struggle that is both emotional and mental. Through the course of these unspoken inner thoughts, these inward silent acts, I perceive the developing, accumulating, intensifying, deepening results of her inner struggles being brought to the foreground. It seems that 'monologue' is the most powerful and effective means to bring things which are embedded and inward (e.g. emotions) to the foreground.

(b) *Literary depiction of a character's self-consciousness*

In both biblical and contemporary literary studies, monologue has been regarded as the most refined literary depiction of a character's self-consciousness. Niehoff has pointed out in her insightful essay that in a monologue the

⁹⁷'Film as a research site' seems to be the current emphasis and likely to be a future direction in emotion-studies. The leading figure in the sociological study of emotion, Norman K. Denzin has argued throughout his essay that "sociologists must learn how to use and read film and television as research site for the sociology of emotions" ("On Understanding Emotion: The Interpretive-Cultural Agenda," *Research Agenda in the Sociology of Emotions*, ed. Theodore D. Kemper [New York: State University of New York Press, 1990] 107).

character is portrayed as formulating his or her thoughts in his or her own familiar words or idioms. This self-reflection thus clearly conceptualizes what might otherwise be unconscious feelings or dormant emotions.⁹⁸ She further states that the ability of addressing to oneself reflectively "presupposes a highly complex character who has a strong sense of his or her individuality."⁹⁹

Along the same lines, Sellw also observes that this technique of a character's self-address has long been employed in Greek mimetic or dramatic literature, especially in epic poetry, tragedy, and the Hellenistic novels.¹⁰⁰ It is used as a means for an author to paint more vivid and poignant portraits.

3.3.4 Monologue and Self: Implications

The discussions above provide a literary context for the Isaian monologue. However, any direct borrowing of critical theories on the subject has to be done with moderation.

Literary techniques such as 'free indirect discourse' is analysed in grammatical terms. As Niehoff has pointed out, the relatively limited tense system in Hebrew suggests a certain degree of difficulty in terms of finding parallel cases.¹⁰¹ In fact there is no fully developed, elaborated monologue within the

⁹⁸"Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves?," 577.

⁹⁹Niehoff, "Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves?," 577.

¹⁰⁰See "Interior Monologue as a Narrative Device," 239, n.2 for works cited.

¹⁰¹"Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves?," 582.

'I'-Passages if they are to be strictly defined as a 'long', self-addressed discourse. Again, Niehoof is correct in stating that it is mainly the context that provides clues in identifying inner speech which functions in depicting dimensions of a character's inner life and thoughts.¹⁰²

However, considering the functions of monologue against the larger background of contemporary literary and biblical studies, significant implications can be drawn along this line of inquiry. As a refined depiction of a literary character's self-reflection and consciousness, the soliloquizing figure is self-representing aspects of his/her inner life through thinking out loud, or addressing himself/herself in his/her own familiarised words. There are abundant biblical references which point to this aspect of inner debate or internal struggles within a character's 'divided self'. In sum, there exists a powerful link between 'monologue' as a literary device and 'self' as a pivotal constituent in a persona.

3.4 Language of Emotion and Self

The subject matter of my synchronic-literary study is on prophetic pathos. It requires a reading focus on the language used in depicting the emotions of Isaiah. In the case of monologues within the 'I'-Passages, the locus can be further confined to the character's self-representation.

¹⁰²"Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves?," 582.

3.4.1 Emotion Language and Self

Studies in emotion can be taken from different approaches in the social sciences and the humanities.¹⁰³ As a general contextual background, I start at the outset with a statement that has gained much consensus within various fields of emotion studies -- emotions are the markers of the construction of the self.¹⁰⁴ On the relationship between 'self' and emotion, Polk argues convincingly through his monograph that:

(E)motion language not only attests a self, it is constitutive of the self. People become selves as they use such language, for using the language is essential to the exercise and development of the capacities for feeling, thought, and action which give the self definition and substance.¹⁰⁵

To orientate my discussion here in the literary-theoretical context, I begin with the genre of the 'I'-Passages as poetry within the framework of speech. The strategic question is: 'How should the poetic 'I'-Passages be read and understood?' Or more precisely, 'How should the 'I' in these passages be read in its relationship to the language of emotion identified there?' The results of my discussions of the two-centred approach (Chapter

¹⁰³E.g. socio-psychological, anthropological, socio-cultural and philosophical etc. Chapter Five is devoted specially to the socio-psychological study on emotion.

¹⁰⁴See June Crawford et al., *Emotion and Gender: Constructing Meaning from Memory* (London: SAGE Publications, 1992) 126; Catherine A. Lutz & Lila Abu-Lughod (eds.), *Language and the Politics of Emotion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 162; Kemper (ed.), *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions*, 88. See especially N. K. Denzin's three-fold structure of 'emotion as feeling-for-the-self' in *On Understanding Emotion* (San Francisco and London: Jossey-Bass, 1984) 3; and "Emotion as Lived Experience," *Symbolic Interaction* 8 (1985) 224.

¹⁰⁵*The Prophetic Persona*, 24. Note that Polk's centre of study is akin to my own as he works on constructing the prophetic persona of Jeremiah from the personal 'I'-passages.

Two) and reading strategy (3.1) have significant implications on this question. (1) I have to work by crossing the boundaries between the expressive and pragmatic theories on poetry.¹⁰⁶ (2) I shall view poetry as a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings and emotions, an expression of personality.¹⁰⁷ (3) Reading the 'I'-texts as a literary work,¹⁰⁸ I have to appropriate the expressive theory on poetry and to fine-tune the focus to Isaiah's self-representation in terms of his emotions and feelings through various poetic devices such as simile and metaphor.¹⁰⁹ The theses brought out here serve as the literary-theoretical premises in linking the language of emotion to the concept of self in my construction of the Isaian persona.

3.4.2 Identifying the Language of Emotion

The following strategic criteria will be used in my reading. First, I shall begin with the everyday common sense understanding of the meaning for the term 'emotion', such as joy, sorrow, fear, hate, love, anger. The feasibility of such a non-technical, pragmatic approach has been successfully undertaken by empirical

¹⁰⁶Cf. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp*, 3-29. See also Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 10-13 for a precise analysis.

¹⁰⁷Cf, William Wordsworth, "Preface to the Second Edition of *Lyrical Ballads*," *Critical Theory Since Plato*, ed. Hazard Adams (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971) 441, contrast T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," *Critical Theory Since Plato*, 783-87.

¹⁰⁸See 3.1.1.

¹⁰⁹On metaphors and simile, see my discussion in 3.5.3. Cf. also Stephen A. Geller, "Were the Prophets Poets?" *The Place is Too Small for Us: Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship*, ed. Robert P. Gordon (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1995) 154-65. Reprinted from *Prooftexts* 3 (1983) 211-21.

studies on the subject.¹¹⁰ Joel R. Davitz's 'A Dictionary of Emotion Meaning'¹¹¹ is compiled through a series of intensive interviews and written reports on a variety of emotional experiences. Focusing on the systematic description of the language used to describe various emotional states, the results are summarised as the product of the dictionary. To a certain extent, it reflects the common consensus of words that are commonly used to label emotional states. On the basis of these definitions, a common-sense understanding of emotion language is identified. Emotion language such as love, fear and the more sophisticated anxiety, apathy and frustration are labeled through this process. As a first step in my reading, I seek to identify emotion language such as those more commonly associated terms which are expressed in the 'I'-Passages.

Second, emotion language is more than a single term or word. Emotion in itself is not only the expression of a state but the description of a process, an experience. K. Darr, in her study on the female images in Isaiah,¹¹² has highlighted the emotive impact of figurative language such as metaphor and simile.

¹¹⁰E.g. Kemper, *Research Agendas*,; Crawford, *Emotion and Gender*, 15. Of course, socio-cultural studies on emotion must be considered as a research agenda. Chapter Five of this thesis will cover this dimension of the potentiality of differences in understanding emotion across cultures.

¹¹¹Chapter 2, "A Dictionary of Emotional Meaning," *The Language of Emotion* (New York and London: Academic Press, 1969) 32-86.

¹¹²"Two Unifying Female Images in the Book of Isaiah," *Uncovering Ancient Stones: Essays in Memory of H. Neil Richardson*, ed. Lewis M. Hopfe (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994) 17-30. Cf. also her *Isaiah's Vision and the Family of God* for a more exhaustive study on metaphors employed in Isaiah.

Imagery is not just a fancy way of saying something that can be replaced by a literal expression without loss of cognitive content.¹¹³ Rather, the emphasis is on what lies behind the imagery.¹¹⁴ Figurative language does have its ability to elicit from the reader a strong emotional response. Citing the metaphor in Isa 40:6b "all flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field," and the simile of the 'travailing woman' in 21:1-10, she argues that the meaning of the two images lies in what is hidden behind rather than the surface literal meaning. The intensity (anguish-filled Isaiah in 21:1-10) as well as the depth (a long sigh over the brevity of youth in 40:6b) are forcefully brought to the foreground. K. Darr's observation has an important bearing on my reading of the prophetic pathos. In addition to looking for more explicit emotive expressions, a search for the more hidden, subtle, yet forceful depictions of the Isaian emotions through metaphors and similes will also be the focus of my synchronic-literary reading.

The third criterion is drawn on the ground that emotions are constituted in the ways which one interprets and makes sense of the happenings and events in one's environment, particularly in the ways that one communicates those understandings to others. The Isaian response to his surroundings ('seeing' and 'hearing' God's vision; people's reactions) through words and acts should

¹¹³Contrast the 'substitution' theory of metaphors. See for example, Gerald Prince, "Metaphor," *Dictionary of Narratology* (Lincoln and London: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1987); Janet Soskice, "Chapter 1: Classical Accounts of Metaphors," *Metaphor and Religious Language* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985) 1-14.

¹¹⁴"Two Unifying Female Images," 18-19.

be the general context against which the Isaian pathos can be identified.

3.5 Language of Religious Faith and Language of Emotion

The discussion in 3.3 provides a legitimate entry point for reading the Isaian pathos through his monologic speeches. This section aims at building an additional tool in my reading strategy -- to establish a crucial link between the Isaian language of religious faith and his emotion. I shall look into three fundamental questions. The first is 'textual'. What is the Isaian language of religious faith as expressed in the 'I'-Passages? Secondly, crucial to the whole inquiry is the 'theoretical' question: Is religious language emotive language? Thirdly, the related 'literary' question is whether it is feasible to establish any link between the literary features of the Isaian language of religious faith and the language of emotion.¹¹⁵

3.5.1 The Isaian Language of Religious Faith

Isaian first-person expressions such as "I will sing for the one I love" (5:1); "I will wait for the Lord" (8:17); "I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord" (63:7) occur in places throughout the 'I'-Passages. They are located spontaneously within the framework of speeches and not necessarily in a context of worship or prayer. The fundamental question remains: whether

¹¹⁵Note that I have already established the literary-theoretical link between metaphors and language of emotion in 3.4.2.

the 'singing', 'waiting' and 'telling' (in their individual context) are language of religious faith. In my synchronic-literary study in Chapter Four, I shall attempt to look into Isaiah's emotion through his first-person expressions of his religious experience. There is little dispute that to a religious person, using language such as praise, sorrow, anguish, hope, joy indicates the basic structure of his/her religious experience. Such language expresses the emotions, attitudes, and feelings which arise as one's faith responds to the world around one. The character Isaiah is commissioned by God to fulfil an unusual task (6:9-10).¹¹⁶ His first person response to this mission is in essence, a response out of his inner struggle which expresses itself in religious language such as 'waiting' and 'trusting' the Lord as in the context of 8:17 -- "I will wait for the Lord who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob. I will put my trust in him." With the context as my guide, the Isaian first person response out of his religious experience is, in essence, the language of his religious faith.

3.5.2 Is Religious Language Emotive Language?

The question to be addressed here is theoretical: Is religious language to be understood as the language of emotion? In the study of religion, it is a commonly accepted theory that "emotions are both the vehicle and the content of religious

¹¹⁶I shall elaborate on the unusual nature of this Isaian mission in my reading of the chapter in Chapter Four.

behavior."¹¹⁷ The new edition of *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion* elaborates on this statement:

As the vehicle, emotions demonstrate the profound significance of religious attachments; as the content they demonstrate the uniqueness of religious experience, which distinguishes it from other types of experience.¹¹⁸

Written from the perspective of prayer in religious experience, Don E. Saliers remarks that "the language of religious faith is the language of emotion," as it gives expression to the deepest aspirations, hopes, desires, and experiences of the human heart.¹¹⁹ Focusing on the rhetoric of prophetic speeches, Abraham J. Heschel concludes that since the primary aim of the prophetic speech is to move the soul, to engage the attention of the audience, it is out of imagination and passion that a prophet speaks.¹²⁰ In other words, prophetic utterance is in essence, emotive language.

However, the credibility of these statements may suffer due to the strong bias in the history of Western thought which regards systems of religion as over-emphasising the emotive meaning of religious thought and action, and therefore as irrational and devoid of genuine cognitive content.¹²¹ Since my focus here is on 'theories', a consideration from the perspective of language systems is necessary.

¹¹⁷"Emotion," *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion*, ed. Jonathan Z. Smith (London: HarperCollins, 1996) 336.

¹¹⁸"Emotion," *HarperCollins Dictionary*, 336.

¹¹⁹*The Soul in Paraphrase: Prayer and the Religious Affections* (New York: Seabury, 1980) 21-22.

¹²⁰*The Prophets*, vol. 2 (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1962) 1-11.

¹²¹"Emotion," *HarperCollins Dictionary*, 336.

On theoretical grounds, the language of emotion is scientific language.¹²² Viewed from the fact that the Isaian language of religious faith is replete with metaphors and similes,¹²³ and the study of figurative language (such as metaphors and similes) is scientific discourse, therefore the two systems of language (emotion and religion) are essentially cognitive in nature. As to the role of models and metaphors in science and religion, Janet Martin Soskice argues that they are significantly analogous.¹²⁴ She affirms that religious models (such as metaphors and similes) are both affective (or compel commitment)¹²⁵ and depictive.¹²⁶ Her arguments suggest a promising 'link' (in terms of the use of figurative language) between religious language and emotive language. To extend my answer to the question, I intend to go beyond the aspect of language systems and focus on exploring this literary 'link'.

¹²²The fact that this study is undertaken also from the socio-psychological perspective illustrates the cognitive emphasis of my approach (other than some non-cognitive aspects in my empirical studies on emotion).

¹²³Cf. discussion in 3.4.2.

¹²⁴"Chapter 6: Model and Metaphor in Science and Religion: A Critique of the Arguments," *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) 97-117.

¹²⁵*Metaphor and Religious Language*, 109.

¹²⁶In the context of reading metaphors in theological realism, Soskice argues that "realism accommodates figurative speech which is reality depicting without claiming to be directly descriptive" (*Metaphor and Religious Language*, 148).

3.5.3 The Link between Language of Religious Faith and Language of Emotion

As a reading strategy, my synchronic-literary study necessitates a legitimate entry point in identifying the Isaian emotions through expressions of his faith (his religious language). Pertinent to the expressions are the use of figurative language within the 'I'-Passages. In this section, I shall attempt to draw on the theories of metaphor and simile in building a literary-theoretical ground for my adaptation. I seek to identify a theory that will, with some adaptation, ground my identification of Isaian emotions in the expressions of his religious faith.

In this regard, Soskice's *Metaphor and Religious Language* is a significant contribution to the study of metaphor and simile (particularly in the context of religious language). As a lecturer in Theology, her monograph provides a provocative and informative analysis of the link between metaphors, science, and religion. She rejects both the mere 'substitution'¹²⁷ and 'emotive'¹²⁸ theories of metaphor and favours a version of the 'incremental theories' (viewing metaphors as both 'nondispensable' and 'meaning-expanding') which she terms

¹²⁷Which "holds that metaphor is another way of saying what can be said literally" (Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 24).

¹²⁸This theory denies any cognitive content to metaphor at all. Instead, what is original to metaphor is the affective impact it has (Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 26; K. Darr, *Isaiah's Vision and the Family of God*, 37).

'interanimative'.¹²⁹ She specifies that the most distinctive function of metaphors is how they are capable of extending reference. Since the fundamental unit of a metaphor is an utterance, not a term per se, Soskice argues that "the meaning of the metaphor should *not* be thought of as the meaning of some words that in an utterance are 'used metaphorically' or have peculiar 'metaphorical meanings,' but rather as the meaning of the complete utterance as construed in its context of uttering."¹³⁰ In locating her own preferred 'interanimation' theory of metaphor, she highlights the following two 'basics':¹³¹

(1) It should regard metaphor neither as a simple substitution for literal speech nor as strictly emotive. (2) Metaphor should be treated as both nondispensable and meaning-expanding (i.e. it should explain how metaphor gives "two ideas for one").

Pertinent to my adaptation are some other crucial points that can be drawn from Soskice's discussion. Drawing insights

¹²⁹A theory she adopts from I. A. Richard's *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936) which describes how metaphors create meaning as "we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction" (93).

¹³⁰*Metaphor and Religious Language*, 53. Likewise, the reference which the metaphor makes is not a split reference determined by the individual terms used in a metaphor; "it is rather the reference effected by the speaker's employment of the whole utterance in its context" (53).

¹³¹*Metaphor and Religious Language*, 44.

from scholars' own adaptation,¹³², for pragmatic reasons I shall add the following:

(3) Since metaphor has both informative (its ability to communicate ideas) and performative (its ability to elicit participation on the part of reader/audience) functions, one should go further to account for the speaker's intention to use metaphor as well as the reader's/hearer's reception of it.¹³³ Since figurative use of language invites communication of a special kind between speaker and reader/hearer, "the act of interpreting metaphor will always be more intense."¹³⁴ (4) While metaphor and simile differ significantly in grammatical form, functionally they are basically equivalents in terms of their impact on the reader/hearer.¹³⁵ (5) Last, but most essential, as K. Darr remarks, "Context remains crucial to metaphorical construal."¹³⁶ These five literary-theoretical premises will be used to ground my identification of Isaian emotions with particular focus on the figurative language used in the 'I'-

¹³²Particularly K. Darr's adaptation in *Isaiah's Vision*, 36.

¹³³K. Darr, *Isaiah's Vision*, 43, drawing on K. Nielsen, *There Is Hope for A Tree: The Tree As Metaphor in Isaiah* (JSOTS 65; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989, 56-67); Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 44.

¹³⁴Wayne C. Booth, "After Thoughts on Metaphor," *On Metaphor*, ed. S. Sacks (Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 1979) 173. Exum also highlights the foremost motive of literary tropes as 'mediums of persuasion'. "They are forceful ways of making a point; they center attention and involve the listener in making essential connections necessary for interpretation" ("Of Broken Pots, Fluttering Birds and Visions in the Night: Extended Simile and Poetic Technique in Isaiah," *CBQ* 43 (1981) 331-52; quotation from 331.

¹³⁵Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 59-61; K. Darr, *Isaiah's Vision*, 39-40.

¹³⁶*Isaiah's Vision*, 44.

Passages in general; and the Isaian expressions of his religious experience in particular.

In sum, I have drawn on the insights of K. Darr to argue that metaphors are more hidden, subtle yet powerful depictions of emotions (3.4.2). Religious language such as that found in the expressions of Isaiah's religious experience in the 'I'-Passages¹³⁷ is full of metaphors and similes. To conclude, the Isaian language of religious faith is thus, in essence, the language of emotion. Figurative language such as metaphor and simile is a legitimate 'link' between the language of religious faith on the one hand, and the language of emotion on the other.

3.6 Emotion, Self and the Prophetic Persona

The relationship between theories of the self and theories of text can be approached from any number of perspectives.¹³⁸ In the above discussions, I have illustrated a specific approach in building up such a relationship -- 'self' in the larger context of literary criticism and the Bible. My results have demonstrated that a powerful 'link' exists between self and the literary device of monologue on the one hand; and self and the language of emotion on the other. Using figurative language such as metaphor and simile as a literary link between the language of religious faith and the language of emotion, I have also

¹³⁷Cf. examples cited in 3.5.1.

¹³⁸E.g. David H. Fisher has illustrated an approach from the perspective of 'viewing interpretation of texts as defense in self' ("Self in Text, Text in Self," *Semeia* 51 [1990] 137-54; esp. 137).

argued for a legitimate entry point to look into the emotion of Isaiah through expressions of his religious faith -- another aspect of the 'self.'

As a contextual background for my synchronic-literary study of the 'I'-Passages, this relationship (emotion-self-persona) in its three dimensions is vital. It provides the 'focus' (language of emotion); the 'direction' (i.e. legitimate entry-points leading to the Isaian self) and a 'promising goal' toward the literary construction of the Isaian persona.¹³⁹

¹³⁹On the ground that both emotion and self are constitutive of a persona.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROPHETIC¹ PATHOS AS DEPICTED IN THE 'I'-PASSAGES:
A SYNCHRONIC-LITERARY STUDY

4.1 Reading Isaian Pathos: Operational Tools

I have argued in Chapters Two and Three that a synchronic-literary reading of Isaian pathos requires certain sophisticated tools. In the course of my discussion, these tools have been hammered-out to facilitate my reading of the 'I'-Passages. As operational tools, together they designate the axioms, foci, criteria, and points of entry specific to my study here.² The following is a summary.

First, individual 'I'-Passage will be read with a view to its strategic position in the book in light of the internal hermeneutical dynamics (3.1.2).

Second, the Isaian 'individuality' is a necessary reading perspective (3.1.3).

Third, the primary speaking voice in the book which bears the name Isaiah is Isaian (unless textual reference indicates otherwise). Similarly, with the exception of the marked God's

¹Note that three times in the book Isaiah is mentioned specifically as 'the prophet': 37:2; 39:3; and 38:1.

²In other words, they specify both the reading strategy and areas of concentration in my study (see 2.2).

first-person speeches³ and a few others⁴, the 'I'-voice throughout the book is also Isaian (3.2).

Fourth, the 'I'-Passages are basically poetry in the framework of speech. As poetry, they can be read as the vehicle of the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings and emotions -- the expression of personality (3.4.1).

Fifth, four crucial entry-points have been identified: (1) The Isaian monologic speeches with focus on (a) Isaiah's self-representation (3.3.1); (b) Isaian monologues in their relationship to imaginary dialogues (3.3.3); and (c) the breaking out of the 'I'-voice in the immediate context (3.3.3); (2) The development and recurrence of 'emotive' motifs; (3) Figurative language such as metaphor and simile -- as powerful means of emotion language (3.4.2 & 3.5.3); and (4) Religious language used in the context of Isaian first-person responses to his vision and religious experience (3.5).

4.2 Identifying Isaian Emotions in the 'I'-Passages

The following readings will follow a general approach. This includes an analysis of the different speaking voices represented with the Isaian 'I'-voice precisely marked. Identification of the reference or inference of Isaian emotions will be proceeded with the four pivotal entry-points as my criteria.⁵ Moreover,

³In cases where they are unmarked, context is my guide.

⁴E.g. King Hezekiah's first-person voice in the narrative section of the book (chs. 36-39); people's voice represented in the corporate 'I' (e.g. 3:6-7).

⁵See the 'Fifth' section in 4.1.

I seek to analyse the type/realm of emotions depicted in each passage with the anticipation that a developmental or recurring pattern will be attested as I proceed sequentially through the chapters. Nevertheless, context remains my guide in appropriating the employment of various operational tools. I shall summarise my findings at the end of each passage.

4.2.1 "I Will Sing to My Beloved" (5:1-30)

Chapter 5 begins with an Isaian first-person song which introduces the parable of the vineyard (v. 1). The parable is comprised of Isaiah's detailed description of the activities of the vineyard's owner in terms of his loving care (v. 2). It then switches to a juridical context with God's first-person call to the people of Judah as judge between him and his vineyard (vv. 3-6). The climax of the parable is in its interpretation (v. 7) then followed by a series of six woes (vv. 8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22). In between these announcements of woe, the Isaian 'I'-voice breaks out twice in the form of declaration of judgment (vv. 9, 13) and lament (v. 13).

The focus of my reading here is threefold: (1) the literary aspect of 'song and parable'; (2) the functional aspect of this 'song-parable' literary device in the depiction of Isaian emotions; and (3) the breaking out of the Isaian 'I'-voice in verses 9 and 13 in its immediate context.

If the 'I'-voice in 3:12 is taken as God's instead of Isaian,⁶ then the first occurrence of the Isaian 'I'-voice in

⁶On the ground that 3:15 is taken as the Lord's speech.

verse 1 is vital.⁷ In the context of praise and in the form of a song,⁸ Isaiah's feeling toward God is expressed by the word \aleph in its threefold description. With an emphatic determination: "Now, I will sing" (\aleph \aleph \aleph), Isaiah conveys to his audience that the song has to do with one 'who is beloved by him'; it 'belongs' to his beloved; and it 'concerns' his beloved -- his beloved's vineyard (v. 1).⁹ Reading from the perspective

⁷Particularly when chs. 1-5 are taken as the framework for the whole vision of Isaiah (chs. 6-39); and ch. 5 immediately precedes the chapter on his call (cf. Conrad, *Reading Isaiah*, 155 and 3.1.2), the proper interpretation of 5:1 bears significant implications on the relationship between the prophet and God.

⁸At the beginning of a poetic work (such as a song) in which God's name is praised, the verb 'to sing' is often used: E.g. Exod 15:1; Judg 5:3; Isa 26:1; 42:10.

⁹Decisive to the exegesis of this passage is the meaning of the word \aleph in verse 1. Primarily, it can be rendered as (1) 'darling' (*The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, Vol. II, ed. David J. A. Clines [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995] 625)/ 'beloved' both in a context of sexual love (Jer 11:15; cp. Ps 45:1) or without sexual associations with reference to God's love to man (Deut 33:12; Ps 60:7; 108:7; 127:2); and (2) 'friend' (J. A. Emerton favours this meaning, cf. his "The Translation of Isaiah 5:1," *The Scriptures and the Scrolls: Studies in Honor of A. S. van der Woude on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. F. Garcia Martinez, A. Hilhorst and C. J. Labuschagne [VTS 49; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992] 18-30, esp. 29).

In spite of the fact that the word is in the masculine gender in verse 1 and verse 2 refers to \aleph in the third person masculine, my reading of the verse in the context of a 'love song' is justified on two grounds. First, as Isaiah expresses the intensity of the painful effect of the grievous vision upon him as a woman in labour (21:3), the simile is used without any sexual connotation. The emphasis of the analogy is rather on the severity of the pain. In like manner, in 5:1 he chooses to describe his passion toward God as the kind of 'love' and attachment between two lovers. Second, the representation of a 'love-relationship' between two people is not necessarily bound by the notion of opposite sex in the Hebrew Bible. 2 Sam 1:23-26 presents an outstanding example in that David's love toward Jonathan extends beyond life (v. 23) and it surpasses that of women (v. 26). In other words, whether \aleph is rendered as 'beloved' or 'friend' is not the issue here. My reading focuses on the depth and intensity of the 'passion' between Isaiah and God as expressed in this first-person song of praise.

of a singer-worshipper, Isaiah chooses to praise God in public by explicitly affirming his love and passion toward him in form of a 'love song'.¹⁰ A strong notion of intimacy between the prophet and God is reflected here.

"My beloved has a vineyard on a fertile hillside" (v. 1) provides a smooth transition from a song to that of a parable (vv. 2-7).¹¹ From the literary aspect, the framing device of a parable allows detailed narrative depiction of the caring activities of the owner toward his vineyard (v. 2). It also serves the purpose of self-vindication¹² among the people of Judah as the parable develops into a juridical context (vv. 3-6). What sort of Isaian emotion prevails here? Heschel has pointed out that verses 2-6 contain a gentle allusion to the grief and disappointment of God in abandoning his vineyard. God's 'sorrow' rather than the people's 'tragedy' is the theme of this

¹⁰Cp. Song 2:15-16, 4:16, Ps 128:3.

¹¹The transition here has attracted much scholarly debates which focus on the literary genre of vv.1-7 as the crux for interpretation. Reading from both the literary and functional aspects, I concur with Gale A. Yee that there are two literary forms conjoined in vv.1-7: a song and a juridical parable. "Within the overall framework of a song the parabolic element operates covertly to bring about the hearers' own judgment against themselves" ("A Form-Critical Study of Isaiah 5:1-7 as a Song and a Juridical Parable," *CBQ* 43 (1981) 30-40; quotation from 40). See also Sheppard, "More on Isaiah 5:1-7 as a Juridical Parable," *CBQ* 44 (1982) 45-47 which provides further investigation in support of Yee's conclusion. For a summary of scholarly interpretations of 5:1-7, cf. J. T. Willis, "The Genre of Isaiah 5:1-7," *JBL* 96 (1977) 337-62.

¹²Note the use of the two rhetorical questions in v. 3 which have their self-vindication effect among the audience: (1) "What more could be done to my vineyard that I have not done in it?"; and (2) "Who knows I waited for it to yield grapes but it yielded bad grapes?"

'parabolic-song'.¹³ Isaiah feels strongly for his involvement in the divine situation.¹⁴ His empathy is for God whose care for the vineyard has been of no avail.

If the whole 'parabolic-song' (vv. 1-7) is meant to be sung, then reading with a view to the transition of Isaian emotions is inspiring. Isaiah is emotionally immersed in love (v. 1). He sings a love song to his beloved (God) and describes in detail God's loving care toward the people of Judah (v. 2). He identifies himself with the people as the recipient of God's loving care and patience (vv. 2-7).¹⁵ The loving and sentimental setting in verses 1-2 takes a sudden turn when the parable develops into a juridical court (vv. 3-4) then followed by the sentence (vv. 5-6). With an emphatic וְ, Isaiah breaks the suspense with an explicit interpretation (v. 7). He empathises with God his disappointment and he suffers with his people over the outcome of God's judgment (vv. 5-6; cf. also 13). In other words, the same 'passion' is expressed in the process of 'love' (v. 1) to 'empathy' (both towards God and the people of Judah, vv. 2-7).

In the larger framework of six woes, the rest of the chapter (vv. 8-30) presents to us a grievous picture of God's never-ceasing punishment in form of complete destruction and wide-scale death (v. 25). Verse 9 literally reads: "In my ears! the Lord

¹³*The Prophets*, 85.

¹⁴Note especially the transition from v. 1 to v. 2 which indicates what he is going to say in vv. 2-7 'concerns' his beloved.

¹⁵Note that the word וַיִּחַל "wait" occurs three times in the parable (vv. 2, 4, 7).

of hosts (has declared)!" then followed by an affirmative $\text{X}^{\text{b}}\text{OX}$ to highlight the certainty of the total desolation. J. A. Motyer remarks on both the dramatic intensity and explosive effect of this verse.¹⁶ Reading after a 'vision' genre, Miscall has commented that "(to) speak of Isaiah as a vision (is) in the sense of a text that presents something to be seen and imagined ..."¹⁷ Here, I will add another important dimension to Miscall's statement. Grasping the explosive impact of the construction: "In my ears! the Lord of hosts! (has declared)," implies that Isaiah's vision is to be read with a view to its explosive impact on the prophet -- both physical and emotional.¹⁸ The magnitude and intensity of this impact is explicated in the imagery here that manifestations of God's anger (vv. 9, 24-25) are not only to be seen and imagined, they are also to be 'heard' *first* -- in Isaiah's own ears! A vivid picture of Isaiah's consciousness of his prophetic mission as the *first* recipient of God's vision is depicted through his first-person declaration here.

With the announcement of the inevitable captivity,¹⁹ Isaiah refers to the people of Judah as 'my people'. He empathises with God²⁰ and laments²¹ over the tragic fate of his people.

¹⁶*The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Leicester: IVP, 1993) 70-71.

¹⁷*Isaiah*, 12.

¹⁸Anticipating my results in this synchronic-literary study, I presume that the impact of Isaiah's vision upon him is both physical and emotional.

¹⁹Note that the exile is spoken of as something which has already occurred in the past -- a reality.

²⁰Cp. 3:12, 15.

Summary: Several notions of prophetic pathos are depicted in this passage. Isaiah is portrayed as one who is full of passion. His passion is manifested both in his intimate love toward God and empathy toward God and the people of Judah. He is conscious of the magnitude and intensity of the impact of his prophetic task upon him. The three different occasions whereby he expresses himself in the first-person 'I' (vv. 1, 9, 13) provide helpful hints for looking into two aspects of his inner life: his capacity to love; and to endure. This chapter presents a case in which the Isaian pathos are depicted as transmitted from one end (love in its intimacy) to another (passion in terms of empathy and endurance) within the same realm.

4.2.2 "For How Long, O Lord?" (6:1-13)²²

This chapter²³ is a first person narrative of Isaiah in that the prophet is both the narrator and the main character. In the overall framework of narrative, it provides detailed

²¹The very force of 'לָמַח is to lament for victims of disaster (cf. *DCH*, II: 503-4).

²²For an insightful analysis of the structure of ch. 6 under the framework of the 'heavenly' (vv. 1-4); 'intermediate' (vv. 5-10); and 'earthly' (vv. 11-13) domains, cf. Jonathan Magonet, "The Structure of Isaiah 6," *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Division A: The Period of the Bible; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1986) 91-97; esp. 94-95.

²³I have discussed the strategic position of ch. 6 in its relation to the whole in 3.1.2. In addition, Seitz has noted specifically that the placement of chapter 6 within the presentation of chapters 1-12 is not accidental but of a particular purpose. The design is such that "the word of God, in a more comprehensive form, might provide the broader context in which to understand the depiction of the prophet and biographical aspects of his activity" (*Isaiah 1-39* [Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993] 27).

description of the magnificent scene of the heavenly council with the majestic appearance of God as the focal point of description (vv. 1-4). The first speakers are the seraphim (v. 3). In reaction to his presence before the heavenly council, Isaiah breaks out with an interior monologue (v. 5). This scene closes with a seraph's action and speech as response to the Isaian monologic speech (vv. 6-7). The first person narration then continues with God's call and Isaiah's commission depicted through the dialogue between God and the prophet (vv. 8-13). This God-Isaian dialogue is structured by two questions (vv. 8a and 11a) with their corresponding answer/response (vv. 8b and 11b). In between the two 'questions and answers' lies God's commission for Isaiah concerning the centrality²⁴ of his prophetic mission (vv. 9-10).

After the 'vision' genre of the book, chapter 6 is of a highly dramatic character. Unique to this chapter is the scenic rendering of situations and events and, in particular, of the characters' speech (or thought) and behaviour.²⁵ I see that a 'drama-reading'²⁶ of this chapter is most appropriate. The

²⁴Cf. my discussion in vv. 9-10.

²⁵Cf. Gerald Prince, "drama," "Dramatic treatment," *Dictionary of Narratology* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1987) 23.

²⁶I.e. with imagination and experiencing from the reader/audience perspective. Watts assigns the genre of the book as 'vision-drama'. The general structure of his commentary is divided into ten acts, each with several scenes and smaller parts under each scene -- episodes. Cf, also his argument for the development and existence of the drama in ancient Israel ("Excursus: Literary Drama in the Old Testament," *Isaiah 1-33*, xlvi-1).

audio-visual elements²⁷ (the awesome view of God, the exotic appearance of the seraphim, the sound and magnitude of the noise, the shaking, the smoke) provide the most crucial stage-setting as background for understanding the speeches and actions of the character(s). In other words, the dramatic nature of this chapter invites an audience perspective in readers. The narrative is better to be imagined and beheld in order to grasp the full impact of its scenic depiction -- i.e. as I, the reader become the audience of its performance.

The focus of my 'drama-reading' is threefold: (1) imaginary reading of the scenic rendering of situations and actions as the setting for the Isaian emotive responses (vv. 1-7); (2) depiction of Isaian emotions in his self-representation through the literary device of interior monologue (v. 5); and (3) the Isaian emotions as embedded in the God-Isaian dialogues (vv. 8-13).

After giving a brief referential introduction (v. 1a), the first person narrator retreats to the background. The Lord is now at the centre of the scene. Interestingly, even though the drama begins with Isaiah's first person 'I'-voice -- "I saw the Lord", the description here has nothing to do with the face of God. It centres on his majesty, splendor, holiness and glory -- very abstract matters to human perception. From an audience perspective, I witness with Isaiah God sitting on a throne, wearing a robe so large that its train occupies the whole space of the temple. I perceive what it means to be "high" and

²⁷I note also that the audio-visual effects assist in bringing the abstracts (e.g. the 'holiness' and 'glory' of God) more concretely to the foreground -- in a more comprehensive way to the reader/audience.

"exalted" -- his majesty. The audio-visual scene described in verses 2-4 assists in bringing what seem to be abstract perceptions more concretely to the foreground -- in a more comprehensive way to the reader/audience. The actions and voice of the seraphim bring alive a more in depth depiction of the Lord. The six-wings beings are flying and calling to one another: "Holy (וְלִקְוֹ), Holy, Holy, is the Lord Almighty; and the whole earth is full of his glory (לְכָל הָאָרֶץ)" (v. 3). Their voices are so loud that the doorposts and thresholds are shaking, and the temple is filled with smoke (v. 4). The unusual appearance of the seraphim, their loud voices, the shaking of the temple, and the smoke in it -- all contribute to my comprehension of the וְלִקְוֹ and לְכָל הָאָרֶץ of God (vv. 2-4). To the reader/audience, these would have been very abstract matters without the audio-visual aids. It is an awesome depiction, an awful feeling, a frightening experience. Considering Isaiah as the sole object of this vision, the impact on him would even be greater, as is evident in his first-person response in the form of an interior monologue (v. 5). Overwhelmed with awe and in a state of shock, Isaiah breaks out with a desperate cry: "Woe (אֵי) to me! I am finished (אֲנִי אֲבָדָה)!" The Isaian use of אֵי and אֲבָדָה compliment each other in this self-representation. As a general expression of dismay, אֵי carries the notion of a self-lamenting cry over one's situation.²⁸ The force of this lament is further

²⁸DCH I:150. Cf. also Isa 24:16; Jer 10:19; 15:10 in similar context.

strengthened by using $\pi\Delta\tau$ ²⁹ together which points to a fatal, hopeless situation, as if Isaiah's very existence is at the verge of being wiped off. The whole expression here (v. 5a) echoes a funeral setting -- as if a life is gone forever, there is absolutely no hope for survival but mourning.

This lament is followed by a soliloquy³⁰ (v. 5b). In his own familiar words, Isaiah is addressing to his inner self the reason for his frightened state: "For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (v. 5b). In spite of the fact that he is overwhelmed with fear and grief, he is fully conscious of the miserable state of his existence -- an immense gulf exists between the 'holiness' of God (v. 3) and his/his people's 'uncleanness.' He is able to formulate his own thoughts/reflections in his own words in form of a monologic response.³¹ With this initial Isaian response, the drama goes

²⁹The proper translation for $\pi\Delta\tau$ is still uncertain. When used in the niphal, it has been rendered as "be silent", "be ceased", "be cut off", "be ruined", "be undone" (DCH II:448; BDB 197-98; TDOT III: 260-65). TDOT while favours the more natural translation "remain (be) silent" (III: 264; cf. the context in Lam 2:10; 3:28), draws attention to its usage in the context of 'funeral dirges' (III: 263). However, when used together with $\gamma\aleph$, "be silent" gives too weak a meaning to a lamenting cry -- "Woe to me!" Therefore, $\pi\Delta\tau$ rendered as "I am finished/I am ruined" fits more into the present context. The CUV provides a dynamic translation here which gives the notion of both 'lamenting cry' and 'self-pity over one's fate': [不彀哉！我滅亡]！

³⁰The soliloquy has been regarded as the most refined narrative depiction of a literary character's self-awareness and self-reflection (Niehoff, "Do Biblical Characters," 595). Cf. also my discussion in 3.3.1 and 3.3.3.

³¹The employment of the monologue here is a good example of the literary depiction of a character's self-consciousness. In the context of a first-person narration, Isaiah is self-

on with the act of cleansing. One of the seraphim flies to Isaiah with a live coal in his hand which he has taken from the altar with a tong (must be burning hot!) (v. 6). Then comes the announcement: "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin is covered" (v. 7).

The impact of this cleansing and announcement of forgiveness provides a crucial setting for the God-Isaian dialogue (vv. 8-13). The essential question is whether they are taken as a relief for Isaiah or not. The text itself leaves gaps (the Isaian immediate response at this point) for the reader/audience to fill in. From the audience perspective, Isaiah is still in the state of shock after his vision of God. He then witnesses a seraph taking a live coal from the burning altar, flying to him and touching his lips with the live coal. He has experienced an awful experience, a painful and burning sensation! The announcement of the forgiveness of sins comes at the highest point of this intense sensation -- rather than a more relieved, settled mental state.

'Intensity' is one key element in the plot of this drama. The God-Isaian dialogue begins with the voice of the Lord saying "whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" (v. 8). This is a twofold rhetorical question. Isaiah responds simultaneously and decisively: "Here am I. Send me!" The notions of willingness, determination and readiness are indicated in this succinct response. Next, there comes the commission of God to Isaiah, and the content of which is highly paradoxical. He is

representing his 'self-awareness' by addressing his inner self in the form of an interior monologue. Cf. my discussion in 3.3.3 (b).

instructed to go and say to the people: "Hear (שָׁמַע) indeed, but do not understand (לֹא יָדְעוּ), and see (רָאוּ) indeed, but do not perceive (לֹא יִרְאוּ)" (v. 9).³² By way of explanation, Isaiah is told his prophetic task is to make people's heart calloused, their ears dull, and to coat their eyes. The whole purpose of this is to make the people deaf, blind and ignorant so that they might not repent and be healed (v. 10). As both Craig A. Evans³³ and John L. McLaughlin³⁴ have concluded, the causative aspect of the command in verse 10 states explicitly that it is God's purpose to harden his people in order to prevent repentance, and to render judgment certain.³⁵ McLaughlin further remarks that verses 9-10 serve to explain Isaiah's lack of success as a fundamental part of God's divine plan for him and it is of centrality his mission.³⁶ The paradox is set within the context of Isaiah's vision of the Lord (vv. 1-7). He "sees" (רָאוּ) with his 'eyes' the Lord Almighty (v. 1). He "hears" (שָׁמַע) with his 'ears' the proclamation of God's "holiness" and "divine

³²"Hearing-seeing-understanding-knowing" -- the words are part of a motif that runs through the book from 1:3 to 42:20. K. T. Aitken has done an extensive analysis of this motif and has come up with four possible relations between the terms (cf. "Hearing and Seeing: Metamorphoses of a Motif in Isaiah 1-39," *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. Philip R. Davies and David J. A. Clines [JSOTS 144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993] 12-41). See also Craig A. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive* (JSOTS 64; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989) esp. 48-50 for a detailed interpretation of vv. 9-10 against the background of the occurrence of the other related obduracy texts of the Old Testament.

³³*To See and Not Perceive*, 50.

³⁴"Their Hearts Were Hardened: The Use of Isaiah 6:9-10 in the Book of Isaiah," *Biblica* 75 (1994) 1-25, esp. 24-25.

³⁵Evans, *To See and Not Perceive*, 52.

³⁶"Their Hearts Were Hardened," 24-25.

glory" (v. 3), and he 'perceives' his impurity and the guilt of his people. To a perceptive and skilful (keen in 'seeing,' 'hearing' and 'perceiving') prophet like Isaiah, he is fully aware of what it means to dull the faculties of the people so that they become incapable of 'hearing,' 'seeing' and 'understanding.' It is an awful task -- one that is very unreasonable to be commissioned by God. 'To make certain God's complete destruction of the land and its people' -- is a complete 'reversal' of what a prophet's mission should be! In order to fulfil his task, he will have to put aside his perceptive skills -- i.e. to deny himself his own capabilities which give him the true identify as a prophet.

Against this perplexed feeling, Isaiah says: "For how long, O Lord?" (v. 11). This is simply not a request to know how long the situation will last. It is rather a deep-rooted plea that arises out of intense and complex emotions -- frustrated, confused, yet being restrained by God. Before the Lord Almighty, no room is left for him to argue with God or demand an explanation. In this sense, the expression is a lamenting-petition as often used in the Psalms of Lament,³⁷ pleading God to put all this to an end. The Chinese Union Version (CUV) offers the most dynamic translation of this verse as it captures the mood and complexity of the emotions felt by Isaiah: [主啊、這到幾時為止呢?]³⁸ It expresses 'a sigh of sadness,' 'a

³⁷E.g. Ps 89:46; 74:10; 79:5; 90:13; 94:3.

³⁸The inclusion of the word [呢!] followed with the exclamation mark (!) at the end of the verse usually gives the impression of a 'sigh' (in the weaker sense) or 'lament' (more intense). It often expresses the notion of sadness, of regret. The most update Chinese version - The New Bible Translation [

lament of grief.' "For how long, O Lord!" -- succinct, yet the most in-depth emotion is represented here.

The drama ends with God's answer which comes in verses 11-13. To Isaiah's plea, God replies -- until a complete destruction which brings the people and the land to a final end. In other words, Isaiah's plea is not granted at the end.³⁹ From the audience perspective, I see Isaiah on the stage, with intense emotions of frustration, fear and grief -- a symbol of one who is under divine constraint.

Summary: My drama-reading of this chapter presents a rich portrayal of Isaian pathos in the aspects of overwhelming fear, guilt, frustration, grief and constraint. The portrait itself is very remarkable in terms of its intensity, depth and succinctness. Isaiah's self-representation of his inner self in verse 5 indicates a remarkable degree of self-consciousness.

4.2.3 "The Lord Spoke to Me with A Strong Hand" (8:1-18)

As a piece of the whole (i.e. the 'I'-Passages), chapter 8 is unique in a number of ways. It is the second of the two first

聖經新譯本] which came out in 1992 as the team project of Chinese scholars based in Hong Kong, the new version maintains the same translation of this verse.

³⁹Yet a remote sign of 'hope' for the survival of the holy seed is alluded to in verse 13. Attention has been drawn to the relation of this last verse to the rest of chapter 6 from the textual, linguistic and exegetical perspectives (cf. esp. J. A. Emerton, "The Translation and Interpretation of Isaiah 6:13," *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honour of E. I. J. Rosenthal*, ed. J. A. Emerton and Stefan C. Reif [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982] 85-118, esp. 115). As part of God's answer to Isaiah's plea, v. 13 plays an insignificant role in the immediate context.

person narratives of the book⁴⁰ and is to be read as such -- Isaiah's personal report on the words of God addressed directly to him and of the deeds that he is instructed to perform.⁴¹ The autobiographical features of this chapter give the impression of the experiential aspect of these reports. This is also a chapter with a variety of literary features represented: figurative language such as metaphors (vv. 6-8, 11, 14-15), summon to act (vv. 1, 16), symbolic names and acts (vv. 1, 3, 16), and monologue (v. 11). Particularly, the symbolic acts are introduced for the first time in the 'I'-Passages which necessitate an inquiry into their significance in the present context. Religious language which denotes intense emotion is also represented (vv. 8, 10, 17). These observations serve as the criteria for identifying the Isaian pathos depicted in this passage.

The two speakers are God and Isaiah. To a certain extent, the speeches can be precisely marked: God (vv. 1, 3b-4, 6-8, 12-16); and Isaiah (vv. 1a-2, 3a, 5, 11, 9-10, 17-18). This precision facilitates reading with a confined focus: the emotive

⁴⁰Chs. 6 and 8 are the two first person narratives within the narrative section of the book (chs. 6-8, 20, 36-39). Chs. 6-8 is strategic in terms of the depiction of Isaian pathos. While chs. 6 and 8 are included in this study, it is to be noted that an inference of emotive language is found in ch. 7 (in which Isaiah appears as a character). In 7:13, Isaiah breaks out in the first person voice by referring God to "my God" (note the narration shifts from "your God" in v. 11 to Isaian "my God" in v. 13) -- "Hear now, O House of David! Is it too little that you weary men? But will you weary my God also?" An inference of the notion of impatience is reflected in this Isaian 'I'-voice.

⁴¹Note that the formula "the Lord spoke to me/me again" occurs 4 times in this passage (vv. 1, 3, 5, 11). This provides the general framework of the chapter as Isaiah's personal report of the word of God addressed to him.

elements in the Isaian responses to God's words and instructions.⁴² To allow this theme to dictate my reading, three areas of Isaian pathos have been identified: (1) under divine constraint (vv. 1-4, 11, 18); (2) fear (vv. 1-10, 12-13); and (3) in the realm of the Isaian expressions of his religious faith, the notions of frustration (vv. 14-16), faith in conflict/tension (v. 17), and expectation/hope (vv. 8, 10, 17) are implied. I shall spell out my findings in the following discussion.

The first is the notion of *divine constraint*. In a single verse (v. 1), Isaiah reports the instruction of God in a most precise⁴³ and drastic fashion.⁴⁴ The inscription forms the crux of the message in this first person report. It is a message concerning (ל)⁴⁵ disaster -- "swift-plunder, hastening-booty." From verse 2 on, the first person narration infers that Isaiah is being driven to perform the deeds that he is instructed to do. One crucial textual indicator is the 'consecutive waw' (vv. 2-3). Whether it functions to express a temporal sequence or

⁴²Since this is a first person narration, the experiential aspect of these reports highlights the Isaian emotive responses.

⁴³The *intensive construction* (לְשׁוֹרְטָא) together with the two parallel word-pairs (לָלַשׁ "plunder" and לָבַי "booty"; נָהַר "swift" and מְהֵרָא "hastening") express both the nearness and certainty of the coming events.

⁴⁴I.e. they concern disaster. Note that ל is placed in front of the inscription. It has been suggested that it is a ל of possession or a ל meaning "concerning". Hans Wildberger favours the latter meaning (*Isaiah 1-12*, 335).

⁴⁵It has been suggested that it is a ל of possession or a ל meaning "concerning". Wildberger favours the latter meaning (*Isaiah 1-12*, 335).

purpose/result sheds light on the degree of restraint that Isaiah experiences in following God's command.

Verse 2 begins with "Then I took witnesses (וְעָרַבְתִּי) for myself."⁴⁶ Isaiah has chosen two faithful witnesses, Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah in accordance with the common practice and yet by his own choice. The narrative then follows with a series of 'consecutive waws' in verse 3. After the inscribing and calling of witnesses (vv. 1-2), the narrative goes on with "Then I drew near (וְאָקְרַבְתִּי)"⁴⁷ to the prophetess (וְנָבִיאָה)."⁴⁸ Two more 'consecutive waws' then followed in a sequential fashion -- "and she conceived and gave birth to a son." Then comes God's second instruction (with another 'consecutive waw') concerning naming the child: "Then God said to me, call his name נֹחַ שְׁלֵל חַטָּא." In a reported speech, the symbolic meaning of the child's name is revealed (v. 4).

Grammatically, the series of 'consecutive waws' are in a temporal sequence, connecting the events together in a coherent fashion. God's specific instructions apply only to the message

⁴⁶For the discussion of the translation of this clause, cf. Wildburger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 332-3; Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 111. I take this 'I' as Isaiah's initiation, following the 'taking witnesses' practice of those days (Deut 17:6; 19:15).

⁴⁷וְאָקְרַבְתִּי is often used to describe sexual relations (cf. Gen 20:4; Lev 18:6, 14, 19; 20:16; Deut 22:14; Ezek 18:6).

⁴⁸Most scholars today take the וְנָבִיאָה as referring to Isaiah's wife who is a prophetess herself. She is not given this title because she is the wife of a נָבִיא (Wildburger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 318 and Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 113). For a most detailed treatment of this issue, cf. C. B. Reynolds, "Isaiah's Wife," *JTS* XXXVI (1935) 182-85. Reynolds also concludes that Isaiah's wife is herself a prophetess. His treatment is significant in that he deals with both the linguistic and contextual aspects of this designation which provides further implication to my discussion here.

to be inscribed on the tablet and the meaning of the son. However, contextually the structure of this episode (vv. 1-4, divided by God speaking to Isaiah two times), the succinct description of the events, and the way that this coherence is attained (by connecting the events with 'consecutive waws') give the impression that the entire process follows God's instruction and serves his purpose. In other words, Isaiah is being driven to perform all his acts: inscribing, calling witness, approaching his wife, having and naming his child. His prophetic mission, therefore involves also his whole family -- his wife⁴⁹ and children.⁵⁰ His second son has to live daily as sign and symbol by carrying an awkward and terrible name (Maher-shalal-hash-baz, v. 18), which has been on display for a while before his birth (v. 1). When this notion is put in the perspective of the privacy and intimacy of family life, the whole family has to pay the price. Following this logic, I find an inference of divine restraint on Isaiah and his family life in this episode. There is no boundary drawn between his prophetic mission and his family life; between his/her actions (inscribing, approaching his wife, conceiving, bearing and naming the child) and the intimacy of spousal relation.

This notion of divine constraint is more explicitly brought to the foreground in the monologue of verse 11. In a first person voice, Isaiah gives a precise description of the manner in which the word of God comes to him. Verse 11 begins with a

⁴⁹Herself being a prophetess, conceiving and giving birth to a son are her prophetic mission in this context.

⁵⁰Cf. 7:3 and 8:18.

double particle: ׀] ׀] "For thus" which connects the previous context (vv. 1-10) with the episode following (vv. 11-16).⁵¹ The manner is so described as "the hand (ל'י) (of God) taking hold (of me)/seizing (me) with strength (חֲזָקָה)." ⁵² Elsewhere in the Old Testament, whenever the hand of God is mentioned as upon the prophet, basically three ideas are conveyed: sustain (e.g. Isa 42:6; 45:1); empower (e.g. I Kg 18:46; 2 Kg 3:15f); and overpower (Ezek 3:14; 1:13; Jer 15:16, 17). By the use of the root חֲזָקָה, the emphasis here is on the heavy pressure (or power) of God's hand which comes upon the prophet (also Ezek 3:14 in a similar context). Therefore, the issue is whether it should be read in the context of 'empowering' or 'overpowering.'

W. Zimmerli's observation may shed light on the issue here. The whole idea in this precise description is that "the fearful strength of the divine grip (shakes) the prophet."⁵³ Reading in this context, the meaning of verse 11 becomes clear. First, being seized by the hand of God and the disclosure of God's word are closely connected together (the verse begins with: "For thus God spoke to me"; cf. Jer 15:16). Secondly, the present context also suggests that being held by the powerful grip of God's hand demands (rather than empowers) the prophet to be in isolation from the way of other men (vv. 11-13; cf. also Jer 15:16).⁵⁴

⁵¹For ׀] and ׀], cf. BDB, 471-4, 462.

⁵²The root meaning of חֲזָקָה is "be firm, be strong, and be strengthen" (BDB, 304). In both Isa 8:11 and Ezek 3:14, the heavy pressure of God's hand is emphasised by the use of this root.

⁵³*Ezekiel I* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1979).

⁵⁴Note that under the theme of divine constraint, this feeling of being isolated from his own people is implied here.

Thirdly, the fearfulness of God's power as depicted in the imagery of God's accusation (v. 6) and destruction (vv. 7-8), together with the notion of fearful urgency in Isaiah's call to all nations⁵⁵ are all in line with the 'overpowering-fearful' experience as described in v. 11. Therefore, the notion of overpowering instead of empowering stands out here. What Isaiah describes to us in his own voice is that the manner of God's word coming to him is like (note the 'ו' at the beginning of this verse) an overpowering experience which puts him in divine restraint. Wildberger has also noted that the uncommon expressions used here speak about "the deeper reality connected with being a prophet; he (has) been seized by Yahweh."⁵⁶ This notion of divine fear (being restrained by God) also provides a background to the meaning of the following two verses (vv. 12-13).

The second emotive motif in this passage is fear. In the context of a first person account of his own prophetic experience, Isaiah is conveying to his readers/audience his fear in its three dimensions: (1) for the fate of Judah under God's judgment (vv. 4-8; 9-10); (2) identified with the fear of the people (vv. 9-10, 12b); and (3) under the divine constraint (vv. 11, 13).

(1) His fear for the fate of Judah under God's judgment (vv. 5-8; 9-10): After a brief introduction (v. 5), Isaiah gives his report of what he has received from the Lord -- the reason and

⁵⁵Note that v. 9a reads: "O peoples, ... all from the far places of the earth."

⁵⁶Isaiah 1-12, 356.

outcome of God's judgment in terms of 'cause' (וְיָגֵן, v. 6) and 'effect' (וְיִשְׁפֹּט, v. 7). Rich in figurative language, Isaiah presents the reason and result of God's judgment in an implicit yet emphatic manner.⁵⁷ Reading God's accusation figuratively, Isaiah presents a sharp contrast of the people's reliance on the visible human powers (as represented in the personhood of Rezin and Pekah, v. 6b; cf. 7:1) instead of on the gentle and constant providence of God (as symbolised by the gently flowing of the water of Shiloah which supplies Judah's need on a continuous basis (v. 6a). הִנֵּה הִנֵּה ("Therefore, behold!" v. 7a) gives a dramatic accent to the announcement of God's judgment here. Isaiah summons the people to behold God's acts of judgment -- as though they are already in the midst of disaster. Against the background of the gently flowing water imagery, the contrast is heavy. Instead of the constant never-ceasing protection and providence of God (the slowly flowing 'stream' of Shiloah), he is about to bring upon them the mighty floodwater ('torrent') of the river -- symbolising Assyria and its power (v. 7a). From verse 7b onwards, Isaiah projects an impending, disastrous and fearful scene to his readers/audience in a crescendo fashion.⁵⁸ With the aid of the metaphorical description, the fearful outcome

⁵⁷As I have commented in 3.5.3, figurative language such as metaphors usually presents a more intense depiction.

⁵⁸Yehoshua Gitay, while approaching this episode with the emphasis on the rhetoric and communicative e/affect of the speaker to his audience, comments that Isaiah is navigating between two bodies of waters; the waters of Shiloah (v. 6) and the waters of the river (v. 7) in order to heighten the effect (*Isaiah and His Audience: The Structure and Meaning of Isaiah 1-12* [Studia Semitica Neerlandica 30; The Netherlands: Van Gorcum and Comp., 1992] 154).

of the Assyrian destruction is emphatically portrayed. The splendor of Assyria's external appearance and the intensity of its inner power are depicted as mighty waters overflowing all its channels, running over all its banks and weeping on through Judah until it reaches the climax -- the neck. The crescendo stops here at verse 8 which leaves the reader/audience with a strong feeling of suspense -- the destruction of Judah is not final, the head is still intact. It then ends with an expander -- the description of the extent of the Assyrian destruction as outspreading wings (צַפְּרַיִם הַטֹּרֵף) of a bird⁵⁹ filling the entire breadth of the land. Overwhelmed by this threatening announcement of God's judgment, Isaiah bursts forth a deep cry

⁵⁹The same floodwater metaphor may have continued here: the branches of the river which has flooded its banks are like the outspread wings of a big bird. The interpretation of this phrase צַפְּרַיִם הַטֹּרֵף ("outspread wings") is the crux for the interpretation of אִתְּנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ ("with us God") that follows (v. 8). Based on the evidence that the wings of a bird are often used figuratively as referring to God's protection (e.g. Exod 19:4; Isa 10:14), and the apparent abrupt change of metaphor from the floodwater to that of a bird's wings (if verse 8b continues the description of the destruction), scholars have taken the interpretation of the depiction of God's protection here (cf. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 346-48; Miscall, *Isaiah*, 39). However, there is no doubt that the change of metaphor is abrupt. The issue lies in whether we interpret this 'outspreading wings of a bird' as a bird of prey (e.g. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 226-7; Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 117-8; and Frank Delitzsch, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, vol. I [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1965] 233-34) or a bird of protection. I take this as a bird of prey on two grounds. First, it is in accordance with the coherence of the description of destruction here. Particularly, when this is read in the context of the description that follows: "filling the breadth (מִלְּאָרְצָה) of your land." It would make more sense here if the fullness, entirety of the destruction (rather than protection as the 'mitigation' of God's judgment -- "up to its neck") upon the land is stressed here. Secondly, scholars like Wildberger (*Isaiah 1-12*, 346-7) have overlooked the fact that a big bird/eagle with outspread wings is often used figuratively as an invader (e.g. Jer 48:40; 49:22; Ezek 17:3, 7). Once we accept the abrupt change of metaphor in the text, the 'bird of prey' interpretation is more favourable contextually.

of help -- "Be with us God!" (לֹא יִנְדָּע, v. 8b). An interpretation of the 'bird' metaphor as a bird of prey supports this reading of לֹא יִנְדָּע as a desperate cry in dread against the usual view that it is a proper name of God.⁶⁰ The notion of fear over the fate of Judah is explicitly implied here.

(2) Identified with the fear of the people (vv. 9-10, 12b): In the context of a challenge to all nations (v. 9a), Isaiah explicates the dreadful state of his people. The episode (vv. 9-10) contains a series of verbs in the imperative. They call for something to be done yet the initiative is cancelled, the effort is in vain: "Raise the war cry and be shattered; gird yourself (for battle) and be shattered (twice); take counsel and be ineffectual;⁶¹ speak a word and it shall not stand." Isaiah ends this series of imperatives with a negative כִּי־אֵין. In a way, this negation emphatically defines the conclusion -- all the external powers (war and battle) and the inner strength (counsel and plan) of the nations will be 'nothing' before God. When verse 12b ("and do not fear its [the people's] fear, nor dread") is read against the presentation in verses 9-10, I find a clear reference to the prophetic pathos -- Isaiah is afraid (as the people are).

(3) Under Divine Constraint: The notion of fearful divine constraint (v. 11) is again picked up in verse 13. Under the

⁶⁰Cf. the preceding note.

⁶¹It is interesting to observe that יִנְדָּע when used together with יִנְדָּע ('counsel') carries the meaning of 'make ineffectual' or 'frustrate' (cf. Isa 14:27; 2 Sam 15:34; 17:14; Ezr 4:5; Neh 4:9; Ps 33:10). The meaning here is that Isaiah is challenging all nations to go ahead and take counsel, but their efforts will eventually prove to be in vain.

divine constraint, Isaiah is warned not to walk in the way of his fellow Judaeans. He is to be separated from them in what they regard as conspiracy (רשק); as the object of reverence (מורא); and as the thing to be treated with awe (הערִיץ). This idea of reverence and awe is again conveyed to Isaiah in God's admonition: "The Lord of Hosts himself you should sanctify." With the use of three synonyms: חירא, מורא, חירא (v. 12) and their repetitions in verse 13 וְהוּא מוֹרְאֲכֶם וְהוּא מֵעֲרִיצְכֶם ("and he shall be your fear and he shall be your object of awe"), the emphasis on the contrast between the people's 'way' and Isaiah's 'restrained path' is intended. An indication of prophetic pathos in the realm of awe is implied in this episode (vv. 11-13).

Thirdly, in the realm of the Isaian expressions of his religious faith, the notions of (1) *frustration* (vv. 14-16); (2) *faith in conflict/tension* (v. 17); and (3) *hope* (vv. 7, 10, 17) are depicted.

(1) *Frustration* (vv. 14-16): "And he shall become a sanctuary (שְׁדָד)"⁶² serves both as the conclusion for verses 12-13 and in sharp contrast to what follows in verses 14-15. In other words, if Isaiah treats God as the sole object of his reverence and awe, God will become a sanctuary to him. For a prophet who has personally experienced what it is like to stand before God in his sanctuary (as self-represented in 6:1-6), this admonition is at the same time a comforting promise. The dual

⁶²שְׁדָד means both "sanctuary/holy place" and "refuge" (cf. 2 Kg 10:18-27; 11:15-15; Isa 4:5, 6; Ps 27:5). In the present context, a dual purpose is served here. God will be a sanctuary for Isaiah if he treats him as the sole object of reverence and awe (v. 13). On the other hand, God will become his refuge while to others ("this people"), God will be their stumbling stone, falling rock, a trap and a snare (v. 14).

meaning of וְקִדְמָה presents another side of the picture. God will also become a "refuge" to him when others ("this people", v. 12) stumble (כָּשְׁלוּ), fall (נָפְלוּ); and are broken (רָשְׁעוּ), snared (שָׁקֵט), and taken (לָכְדוּ) (vv. 14-15).

When verse 14 is put in the context of contrast, the irony is heavy. The same God who promises his divine presence to Isaiah (as his sanctuary and refuge) will at the same time, become "a stumbling stone", "a falling rock" to the two houses of Israel; and as "a trap" and "a snare" to the inhabitants of Jerusalem -- his fellow Judaeans. To a prophet who has self-represented his great love and intense feeling toward the misfortune of his people,⁶³ The judgment of God falls heavily upon him. The hardness of this judgment is very much in accord with the word of God that comes to him at the time of his call (6:9-13). To make people blind, deaf, non-receptive (i.e. incapable of seeing, hearing and understanding) is a complete reversal of what a prophetic mission should be. Yet to become a stumbling rock, a trap and a snare to the people is in contrast to what the God of Israel should become. I find an inference of the feeling of frustration indicated here.

(2) *Faith in Conflict/Tension*: In verse 16, Isaiah is instructed to "bind up" and "seal"⁶⁴ the frustrated message (vv. 14-15) among a particular group only -- his disciples (v. 16b). The ironic nature of the message, and the fact that he is a restrained recipient of it puts him in intense tension. His

⁶³Cf. 6:9-13; 21:3-4; 22:4.

⁶⁴Note that because of the two imperatives בָּדְדוּ and סָתְרוּ , the majority of commentators take this as a message of God to Isaiah.

inner conflict is explicitly expressed in the rather paradoxical monologue: "I will wait (יִחַן) for the Lord who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob" (v. 17). Reading against the background of Ps 33:20 (Psalm of thanksgiving) and in the context of the songs of lament (Hab 2:3 and Zeph 3:8), there is no doubt that the notion of hope is expressed.⁶⁵ However, the fact that this confession of hope is addressed toward the one whom he is referring to as "hiding his face from his people"⁶⁶, the notion of 'tension' is implicit in this type of hope (cf. also Zeph 3:8 and Hab 2:3). It is even more paradoxical when this verse ends with a strong declaration of trust: "I will trust confidently (יִלְךְ) ⁶⁷ in him."

(3) *Hope*: I have argued in 3.5.3 the relationship between the language of religious faith and the language of emotion. When the Isaian expressions of his hope and trust (vv. 8, 10)⁶⁸ are read against this background, they are at the same time implications to his feelings and emotions. Unique to chapter 8

⁶⁵It is interesting to observe that even though the divine constraint is heavy and the frustrations are deep, yet Isaiah reacts with a confession of faith and affirmation of trust. In this aspect, it is quite distinct from the intense emotions depicted in 21:3 and 22:4 (which arise from similar context as ch. 8).

⁶⁶Cf. Pss 10:11; 13:2; 27:9; 44:25 et al, all indicating God's withdrawal of his saving presence from his people.

⁶⁷The term יִלְךְ 'trust confidently' is rooted in the Psalms of lament (e.g. Pss 25:3, 5, 21; 27:14; 69:7-21; 130:5, et al.,; cf. also Jer 14:22). Both this term as well as יִחַן indicate the tension implicit in this kind of hope.

⁶⁸The abruptness of לֵאלֹהֵינוּ (v. 8b) has caused a good deal of discussion over possible interpretation. Together with the affirmation of trust in v.10b -- לֵאלֹהֵינוּ יִלְךְ, both the meaning and implication of לֵאלֹהֵינוּ as a proper name for God are indicated (cf. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 227).

is the element of hope and trust amidst the notions of faith in conflict and frustration (vv. 14-15, 17). Moreover, the absence of lament in the language expressed makes this element of hope stand out even more distinctively.

Summary: Both inferences and references of the Isaian language of emotion are depicted in this passage. It is a rich portrayal of the depth (i.e. complex emotions associated with inner conflicts and tensions; restraint) and extent (i.e. emotions expressed in the realm of faith) of the Isaian pathos. Isaiah 8 is also a distinctive piece within the monologue-passages in that three observations stand out. First, it is the first time that the involvement of the prophet's family (in his prophetic tasks) is portrayed. Secondly, the emotions of Isaiah are depicted as arising out of the realm of faith. Thirdly, and most distinctively, the notion of lament is apparently absent in this splendid portrait of prophetic pathos.

4.2.4 "My Heart Cries Out for Moab" (15:1-16:14)⁶⁹

The major speaking voice in this oracle against Moab is Isaian.⁷⁰ Focusing on the identification of the 'I'-voice in

⁶⁹The obscurity of these two chapters in language and style makes any interpretation and identification of the speaking voices difficult. E.g. cf. the contrast views on the identification of the speaking voice in 15:5 in J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Leicester: IVP, 1993) 150-51 [as the Lord]; E. J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 458-59 [as Isaiah]; Wildberger, *Jesaja 13-27* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978) 617 [as Isaiah]; Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 338 [unidentified speaker]; Miscall, *Isaiah*, 53 [can be Isaiah, the Lord or Zion].

⁷⁰Except for 16:14 where God's speech is precisely marked.

the passage, I note that God's voice is rather unmarked,⁷¹ with Isaiah speaking on behalf of God in the first person in 15:9 and 16:10.⁷² With context as my guide, I take the other 'I'-voices as Isaian: 15:5; 16:4; 9 and 11.

The heavy tone of the chapters is that of mourning and lament. As Miscall has pointed out, the fervent force of the depiction here is achieved by the strategy of repetition and piling up words and images: weeping and wailing; baldness, shaving and sackcloth; highplaces, streets, roofs and squares.⁷³ The employment of similes (16:2; 11) and metaphors (15:6-7; 16:9-10) also adds intensity to the description.⁷⁴ Against this setting, one Isaian emotive theme stands out distinctively: Isaiah mourns and laments for this foreign nation Moab. Since the speaking voice in the passage is essentially Isaian, a close look at his pathos as reflected in the four 'outbreaks' of his 'I'-voice in the immediate contexts is vital. In other words, my reading focus is on Isaiah's *self-representation* through the outbreking of his first person voice within his own speech. I note the following significance:

First, Isaiah is *empathetic* (15:5; 16:9). Against the setting of sudden destruction ("in a night", 15:1) and national

⁷¹Except in 16:14a which begins with "But now the Lord says..."

⁷²Contextually, the 'I'-voice in 15:9 has to be God. He determines to bring more things to ensure the 'no escape' and 'complete destruction' for Moab and her remnant. The causative force of נָשַׁב "I have made to cease" also indicates it is the Lord who speaks.

⁷³Miscall, *Isaiah*, 53.

⁷⁴Cf. 3.5.3 where I have noted the intensifying effect of the use of metaphors (and similes).

lamentation which spreads through every town (15:2-4), Isaiah expresses his feelings for Moab in verse 5. It transcends that of sympathy towards a foreign nation but of empathy: "My heart cries out for Moab" (15:5). With the specific usage of לֵב as the seat of emotions and passions,⁷⁵ the expression here signifies Isaiah's intense grief over Moab's sad situation.⁷⁶ The construction in 16:9 explicates his theme of empathy even more emphatically. Literally it reads: "Therefore, I shall weep with the weeping of Jazer for the vine of Sibmah; I shall wet you with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh..." In essence, Isaiah breaks out with this emphatic 'I', saying that he actually shares and participates in Jazer's sorrow. His wailing will be in the same manner of bitterness and for the same reason. Moreover, the magnitude of his weeping is such that his tears wet the fields of Heshbon and Elealeh.

Second, his mourning and lament over Moab is of great *intensity* and *depth* (16:11). In the immediate context of 16:11, Edward J. Young has noted a gradation in thought as expressed in verse 9.⁷⁷ After announcing God will make all shouting for joy to cease, he responds in the first person by employing an unusual expression:⁷⁸ "Therefore, my bowels (קִדְּוֵי) shall sound like a harp for Moab, and my inward parts (לֵבִי) for Kir-haresh." The

⁷⁵BDB, 524.

⁷⁶Note a series of seven explanatory כִּי runs through verses 5-9 which provides a dreadful description of the fate of Moab, as reasons for the upsurge of Isaiah's deepest passion -- empathy.

⁷⁷*The Book of Isaiah*, vol. 1, 466.

⁷⁸Note the לֵבִי at the beginning of v. 11.

figurative use of the two synonyms $\square'v\Delta$ and $\beth\eta$ (as the seat of emotions)⁷⁹ points to the deeper side of this expression as highly emotive. As the harp gives forth its sound through the vibration of its strings, so is Isaiah's mourning cry for Moab as the result of the vibrating disturbance of his bowels and inward parts. The bringing together of both the physical/external with the emotional/internal,⁸⁰ together with the employment of simile in this expression give the notion of both the *intensity* and *depth* of the Isaian pathos here.

Third, he *identifies* himself with the fugitives of Moab and *pleads* to God for refuge (16:1-4). I concur with Miscall's observation here that since verses 3-4a are apparently addressed to Zion,⁸¹ a reading from the perspective of her reaction is relevant.⁸² In the context of petition, Isaiah first speaks in the corporate voice of the citizens of Zion (v. 3). He then identifies himself with the fugitives of Moab (note he refers to them as "my outcasts") and pleads to God for shelter from the destroyer. The distressed situation as depicted in verses 1-3 together with Isaiah's plea to God (viewed as strong emotive language)⁸³ on behalf of the outcasts suggest an inference of Isaian emotion in the realm of *empathy*.

⁷⁹BDB, 589, 899.

⁸⁰Note that $\square'v\Delta$ and $\beth\eta$ carry both the physical and emotional meanings/aspects.

⁸¹With imperatives and pronouns in feminine singular.

⁸²Isaiah, 53.

⁸³Cf. 3.5.3 on my discussion of language of religious faith as emotive language.

Summary: My reading of this passage indicates an outstanding theme of mourning and lamentation -- both in its *intensity* and *depth*.

4.2.5 "A Harsh Vision Is Revealed to Me" (21: 1-12)

Characteristic to the *KVD* in this chapter is its designation as a "harsh (*ḥVḥ*)⁸⁴ vision" (v. 2). The visionary character, the atmospheric elements and the rather fearful watching for calamity in the midst of partying and hilarity (vv. 1-5) set the background of the Isaian emotive response.

Two distinctive aspects stand out in the expression of the Isaian pathos here: (1) the *extent* and *intensity* which the impact of the grievous vision has upon the prophet (vv. 3-4; 10); and (2) the ways that the more hidden, embedded Isaian emotions are expressed (vv. 6-9, 11-12).

(1) Several factors contribute to the 'hardness' of Isaiah's vision. Verse 2 opens with the Isaian 'I' voice declaring that a harsh vision has been revealed to him. Isaiah has to witness with his own eyes the *severity* of the destruction ("like storm sweeping through ... from a land of terror." v. 1) and the nearness and certainty of the invasion (vv. 7-8). The emphatic description of the continued acts of deceiving and spoiling of the attackers also functions to heighten the harshness of the

⁸⁴*ḥVḥ* is used elsewhere in the Old Testament to denote the idea of severity (Isa 27:8; 2 Sam 2:17); fierceness (Gen 49:9); cruelty (Exod 6:()); hardship (Exod 1:14; Deut 26:6); and great difficulty (Gen 35:17). The notion of severity and intensity is dominant.

situation (v. 2b).⁸⁵ Moreover, he has to hear with his own ears God's call to Elam and Media to lay seige (v. 2c)⁸⁶, God has "caused all groaning to cease" (v. 2d),⁸⁷ and the announcement of the fall of mighty Babylon ("Babylon has fallen. has fallen!" v. 9). This recurring theme of seeing and hearing⁸⁸ highlights the fact that Isaiah has experienced this 'hardness' both sensibly and emotionally.

In the form of a monologue, Isaiah describes in a highly expressive way the extent and intensity of the impact upon him - - profound physical pain and disabilities (v. 3); and emotional turmoil (v. 4).⁸⁹ Using the travailing woman simile,⁹⁰ the

⁸⁵Note the emphatic expression here: "the deceiver continues to deceive, and the spoiler goes on spoiling" (v.2b). This best fits the descripton of the attackers as it is followed immediately by the call for Elam and Media to lay siege.

⁸⁶The fact that Isaiah is the recipient of the vision excludes him from being identified with the calling voice in v. 2c and d.

⁸⁷For a critical review of the translation and meaning of v. 2d here: כַּל-אֲנַחְתָּהּ הַשְּׂכַחִי, cf. A. A. MacIntosh, *Isaiah XXI: A Palimpsest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 16-19.

⁸⁸Or blindness-deafness as occurs immediately in v. 3. Cf the same motif as discussed in my analysis in ch. 6. For an extensive analysis of this motif, cf. K. T. Aitken, "Hearing and Seeing," 12-41.

⁸⁹D. R. Hillers argues that Isa 21:3-4 represents a widespread literary convention depicting the reaction of bad news in biblical literature. After identifying the principal elements of the convention and comparing them with other biblical parallels, he concludes that "these passages (Isa 21:3-4 and others) must be used much more cautiously in discussing prophetic psychology. The poet's use of traditional literary formulae prevents us from drawing any conclusions as to his individual psychological reaction. We can only say that he was concerned to describe himself as reacting in a typical, normal way. ...The parallels show that the disturbing thing is not the approach of the divine word or vision, but the fact that the word is bad news, a 'hard vision' (Isa 21:2), the approach of 'the evil day' (Hab 3:16)." D. R. Hillers, "A Convention in Hebrew Literature: The Reaction to Bad News," *ZAW* 77 (1965) 86-99; quotation from

severity of the pain and the extent of its effect is brought to the foreground -- so intense that he is unable to hear ("I am

89; ital ics mine.

Other scholars such as R. B. Y. Scott ("Isaiah XXI 1-10: The Inside of a Prophet's Mind," VT 11 [1952] 278-79) and J. Lindblom (*Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 129) explain these verses (Isa 21:3-4) as a typical description of prophecy ecstasy in that the prophets experienced 'emotional disturbance' and 'abnormal psychological phenomena'.

In response to the above conclusions, I shall argue that Isa 21: 3-4 is a unique description of the depth and intensity (in terms of its extent) of the Isaian emotive response to the 'hard' vision. First, Hillers fails to realize that among the passages cited (Ezek 21:11-12; Her 6:22-23; Jer 4:9; Jer 50:43; 49:23; Isa 13:7-8; Jer 30:5-6; Exod 15:14-16; Dan 10:16; 2 Sam 4:1; Hab 3:16; and Isa 21:3-4 etc.), only Isa 21:3-4 and Hab 3:16 are in the first person 'I'-voice -- 'monologue'. I have discussed in considerable length the function of monologues as a refined form of depiction of a literary character's self-awareness and self-reflection (3.3.3). It seems rather unusual for Isaiah to break out in his 'I'-voice and spontaneously adopt a literary formula (of reaction to 'bad new') as a channel for his own emotional response.

Secondly, the use of conventional literary formula is not necessarily devoid of emotional elements. This is true in the Chinese culture. The term [痛定思痛] 'reflective-griefing' which is a well-known literary convention signifying an intense yet reflective mode/process of grief appears in many dirge-discourses. This literary formula has been used by generations of Chinese in appropriating to the occasions of deep sorrow (with lasting effects; e.g. commemorating the dead in the June 4th Massacre).

Thirdly, my analysis of the movement from vv. 1-4 has ruled out the notion of ecstasy as proposed by Scott and Lindblom.

⁹⁰As K. Darr has stated, this simile (13:6-8 and 21:3-4) functions to convey the extremities of despair. She further observes that the description used in 21:3-4 has moved inward from Israel's external enemies (13:6-8) to the prophet Isaiah himself without any change in meaning (though the prophet's use in 21:3-4 incorporates the recurring themes of deafness and blindness). See K. Darr, *Isaiah's Vision and the Family of God*, 103.

The "loins" are regarded as the seat of the intimate affections, of keenest pain (Nah 2:11; Ps 66:11); and as the seat of strength (Deut 33:11; I Kg 12:10). The labour pain analogy is used elsewhere to describe people struck by disasters (Isa 13:8; Jer 4:24; 30:6; Ezek 30:4, 9 Nah 2:11).

bent [יָלַע]⁹¹ from hearing"), being too disturbed to see ("I am troubled/disturbed from seeing"). His heart wanders about (יָלַע)⁹² so that he is incapable of being perceptive. The crux of Isaiah's self-presentation here is that the severity of his suffering turns a skilful and perceptive prophet like himself to a disabled person who is incapable of hearing, seeing and perceiving. His present condition (being blind and deaf) signifies a complete 'reversal' of his ability to carry out the prophetic functions (of hearing, seeing and perceiving) as implied in verses 1-2. Overwhelmed by terror, the twilight pleasure⁹³ that he used to long for has become yet another complete reversal (יָלַע, v. 4b) -- uncontrollable trembling.

Verse 5 echoes the mood and movement in verse 2 and it also sets the stage for the imaginary dialogues in verses 6-12. The urgency of the situation (vv. 1-2) is contrasted with the carefree attitude and unpreparedness of the people of Babylon (v.5a, cf. v. 9). In form of *emphatic commands*, he calls the leaders

⁹¹Literally, "I am bent, bowed down, twisted." The proposition "from" merits two different interpretations. I favour taking the "from" as privative (so Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 393) meaning that the pain is so severe that he is incapable of hearing and seeing. The other interpretation takes the causal meaning of "from": i.e. because of what he has heard and seen he experiences this pain (Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, II: 64-5, esp. n. 13).

⁹²The word יָלַע means "to err", "physically wander about". The imagery behind this word in our present context is that Isaiah is incapable of having 20/20 vision.

⁹³In the literary world of this chapter, the twilight in Palestine is normally appreciated as a time of leisure and for the enjoyment of family life. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, יָלַע is often used figuratively (e.g. Job 3:9; 7:4; Ps 119:147; Isa 59:10; and Jer 13:16 etc.). The significance of the contrast here lies in the strong notion of a complete 'reversal' -- the much appreciated pleasure has become terror.

(princes) to rise up and get ready for battle ("anointing the shields", v. 5b). Considering the agitated condition (both emotional and physical) of the prophet, I find a clear reference to the feeling of intense frustration -- there is urgency to redeem the situation yet the situation (the people's attitude, his own disability) remains hopeless.

The climax of Isaiah's emotion is found in verses 9 and 10 in the form of two lamenting cries. The construction "Babylon has fallen, has fallen!" (פלה נפלה ננל) finds its parallel both in form (dirge) and in content (lamenting for the dead/fate) to 2 Sam 1:19 and Amos 5:2. In other words, the anxiety and anguish associated with the all-night watching are accumulated at this point before the announcement finally comes in the form of a dirge (v. 9).⁹⁴ In a lamenting spirit, the prophet now turns to his people. With the deepest pain and agony, he cries "O my threshed people!".⁹⁵ If verses 3 and 4 depict the intensity of

⁹⁴Isaiah's reaction over the fall of Babylon in the form of a lament creates a puzzle here. Some try to move the setting of the chapter from the clear historical reference in Ch. 20 to a 6th cent. setting and others try to argue for the depiction of a normal, *unemotional* reaction to a distressing vision as represented here. (Cf. n. 89 and my reading in vv. 2-3). Along the same line of argument with D. R. Hillers, Julian Obermann, in "Yahweh's Victory over the Babylonian Pantheon," *JBL* 48 (1929) 313-16, applies his findings to the perplexing issue of the display of lament instead of joy on the part of the prophet over the fall of Babylon here. He concludes that "the writer of these verses simply depicts the normal reaction to a distressing vision. Recast in *unemotional* terms, his words mean: 'Yahweh's word is very bad news indeed'" (316, *italic mine*).

⁹⁵Literally, it reads "O my threshed, the son of my threshing floor!". Threshing is a form of trampling (Isa 10:6; 14:19; 16:10). It is interesting to observe that here as well as elsewhere in the Old Testament, 'threshing' is used exclusively and in a figurative way as referring to the judgment of God (cf. Isa 41:15; Jer 51:33; Micah 4:12f; Hab 3:12). This may shed light on the relation between the two laments in v. 9 (over Babylon) and 10 (over Judah). In both cases, the lament

Isaian emotions, then verse 9 is a portrayal of the depth of his grief over the fate of his people under God's judgment.⁹⁶

(2) The more hidden, embedded side of the Isaian pathos is presented within the literary framework of imaginary dialogues (vv. 6-9; 11-12) or monologue within dialogue (v. 8).⁹⁷ To view the episode here as a visionary experience⁹⁸ enables me to set aside the peripheral issues⁹⁹ and to focus on the Isaian emotions. The opening word 'ו' connects the vision to God's command to Isaiah to station a watchman (vv. 6-7) and the watchman's report (vv. 8-9). With the majority of commentators,¹⁰⁰ I favour a contextual reading¹⁰¹ with Isaiah identifying himself with the watchman in verses 6-9.¹⁰² The episode (vv. 6-9) is so structured with: (i) God's command to the prophet retold as a first person report (vv. 6-7); and (ii) the watchman's dialogue with God in the first person with news of the

is over the fate of the people under God's judgment. Cf. also Isa 28:27, 28; 41:15, 16; Amos 1:3; Mic 4:13.

⁹⁶See n. 103.

⁹⁷Cf. my discussion in 3.3.3 (a). My reading of the Isaian 'I'-voice in v. 8b is as a monologue within a dialogic framework.

⁹⁸As noted by commentators Oswalt, Young, and Miscall (cf. ad loc.).

⁹⁹Such as the identification of the watchman in vv. 6-9, the translation issue of v. 8 -- "And he cried, A lion (וְלֵאָנָס)!"

¹⁰⁰Watts, however, identifies the watchman with Shebna (Isa 22:15). Cf. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 272.

¹⁰¹Note that in vv. 11-12, Isaiah specifically presents himself as the watchman. Also, the portrayal of the prophetic function as watchman is firmly established in the larger context of prophetic literature (e.g. Ezek 33:1-9; Hab 2:1, 9).

¹⁰²It is obvious that the watchman in vv. 11-12 is Isaiah -- "He calls to me out of Seir, Watchman, ..."

fall of Babylon reported in the third person (vv. 8-9). Reading the pronominal shifts within the immediate context of a vision (v. 2), the inner feelings of Isaiah are being expressed without the constraint of time and space -- through imaginary dialogues.¹⁰³ Within this framework, Isaiah gives his reports as the watchman in the third person singular voice (vv. 7, 8a, 9). In doing so, he is distancing himself from the immediacy of the impact felt as a result of the watching. By identifying himself with the experiences of the watchman (in his 'I'-voice, v. 8), he is self-representing aspects of his inner life: the feelings associated with the duties; and his consciousness of the qualities that are required of him. While fulfilling his duties with diligence ("all the night", v. 9) and persistent watchfulness ("let him pay attention, full attention"¹⁰⁴, v.7b), he expresses a deep groan of impatience in his cry to God -- "O Lord, I stand on my watchtower always, and I am stationed at my post all the night"; cf. Ezek 33:7). This rich portrayal of the more hidden aspects of the Isaian pathos are brought forth through the literary device of imaginary dialogue and monologue (v. 8) within the general framework of a dialogue.¹⁰⁵

As a continuation of the watchman motif, verses 11-12 features yet another imaginary dialogue between an unidentified

¹⁰³Cf. 3.3.3 (a) and (b) for the relationship between dialogue and monologue.

¹⁰⁴Note the emphatic construction here $\text{וְיִשְׁמַעְךָ יְיָ}$ $\text{וְיִשְׁמַעְךָ יְיָ}$.

¹⁰⁵Since the dialogue in vv. 6-9 is imagerary, the 'I'-voice in v. 8 could be read as an Isaian monologue with embedded emotion(s), particularly when v. 8 is interpreted in the light of vv. 10-11.

voice calling from Seir and Isaiah (v. 11). Two features characterised the 'hiddenness' of this dialogue: (i) it is presented in the third person -- thus there exists a distance and an objectiveness of whatever message that is intended to convey; and (ii) it is structured with a subtle question (repeated twice, v. 11) with a corresponding silent answer (v. 12). The question -- "What of the night?" is asked twice and both times Isaiah is addressed as "watchman". The repetition points to the questioner's sense of the interminability of the night,¹⁰⁶ the feeling of anxious waiting. It also implies that it is the watchman's duty to attend to such inquiry -- to be on guard through the night till morning comes. It is against this background that the 'embedded' aspect of the Isaian emotion is revealed.

In attending to the inquiry, Isaiah replies, "morning is coming, but also the night." Against the background of the feelings associated with his watchman duties (impatience, v. 8; anxiety over an endless wait, v. 9; the constant demand for diligence and perseverance, vv. 7-9), I find here a direct reference to a 'hidden' emotion -- a deep sigh over the fact that the dawn shall certainly come, but before it arrives, there will still be a long period of darkness.¹⁰⁷ The second part of the answer "if you earnestly inquire, inquire, come! Return!" (v.12b)

¹⁰⁶Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 399.

¹⁰⁷Oswalt has pointed out here that the watchman's answer is enigmatic and is capable of at least three interpretations: (1) while morning is coming, another night will follow; (2) morning for some will be night for others; and (3) while morning will come, it is still dark (*The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 399). Together with Isaiah's invitation for the people to inquire again, I have adopted the last interpretation in my reading.

is puzzling to many.¹⁰⁸ Apparently it gives no specific reply. However, if it is cast in the context of an anxious and earnest quest for knowing as implied in the question, then it means a lot to those who ask. In other words, when Isaiah is asked what is going to happen in the night before morning finally comes, he replies: 'I don't really know. But don't give up, I invite you to keep asking.'

This episode is introduced as a 'burden' and it is taken as such by Isaiah. When he has nothing specific to offer to people's inquiries, and when his role as the watchman demands him to keep watching and attending to people's on-going quests (vv. 7-9; 11-12), he is truly in a burdensome spirit. In this context, I find an inference of emotive language in verse 12b -- helpless, frustrated.

Summary: This chapter is a rich portrayal of the Isaian pathos. Emotive language such as fear, pain, agony, anxiety are depicted both in their explicitness, intensity and extent. Unique to the passage is the representation of the physical impact of emotional pain upon the prophet. The way that the more hidden emotions are depicted through the subtle/silent question and answer is yet another characteristic feature.

4.2.6 "Turn Away from Me" (22: 1-14)

This passage is introduced with the title as a "XVD concerning the Valley of Vision." With XVD taken in a technical

¹⁰⁸Miscall has commented that as the word Dumah is Hebrew means 'silence', so are the question and answer -- a type of silence (Isaiah, 60). The Hebrew construction in v. 12b is rather puzzling: אֲנִי-נֹכַחְךָ נְעִיךָ שָׁנָה אֲחִיךָ. I take this as an encouragement or invitation for enquiry.

sense as the heading of a prophetic announcement, it suggests the idea of judgment and catastrophe.¹⁰⁹ It is against this context of 'a burden (כִּוְד) imposed on the Valley of Vision' -- Jerusalem (vv. 8a, 10) that the Isaian emotions are to be understood.

(1) Unique to this passage is the depiction of the Isaian reaction to extreme emotional pain and grief (v. 4) -- a crucial aspect in his persona. In verses 1b-3, Isaiah assumes the role of a perceptive spectator. The gloomy, disgraceful situation of the people (vv. 2b-3)¹¹⁰ is put in sharp contrast with the blustering and festive celebration in the city (vv. 1b-2a).¹¹¹ Against this scene, the notion of 'astonishment' is implied in Isaiah's question: "What is the matter with you?" (v. 1b).

The opening phrase לֹא־אֶעֱזָב connects the monologue (v. 4) with the preceding verses. In his own words, Isaiah expresses his bitterness in response to his observation (vv. 1-3). Four crucial elements stand out in this Isaian inner speech:

First, he wants to be left alone, separated from people -- $\text{אֶעֱזָב אֶת־עַמִּי}$. The same expression is found in Job 7:19 in a similar

¹⁰⁹Cf. R. B. Y. Scott, "The Meaning of *massa*' as An Oracle Title," *JBL* 67 (1948) V-VI; P. A. H. de Boer, "An Inquiry into the Meaning of the Term כִּוְד," *OTS* 5 (1948) 197-214; and Seth Erlandsson, *The Burden of Babylon - A Study of Isaiah 13:2-14:23* (CB-OT 4; Gleerup, 1970) 64-67.

¹¹⁰The depiction here is a picture of gloom and desolation, of disgrace and shame. The slain men were not killed in battle (2b). The rulers were captured not in heroic defence of the city but in flight for their lives long before the battle began (v.3b).

¹¹¹House tops are elsewhere referred to as places of concourse at festivals (Judg 16:27; Neh 8:16). For a discussion of the specific reference to this event, cf. Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 13-39* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974) 138-39; A. S. Herbert, *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah Chapters 1-39* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973) 133-6; and Young, *The Book of Isaiah, Vol II*, 87-9.

context where Job is begging God to look away from him ("Will you never look away from me, or let me alone even for an instant?"). $\bar{\eta}\bar{y}\bar{v}$ also carries the notion of 'to regard with favour' (cf. Ps 119:117; 39:14; Isa 17:7). While people may hasten to comfort him with good will and regard, he still wants to be left alone, undisturbed in his bitter sorrow.

Secondly, he needs to weep bitterly ($\bar{\eta}\bar{y}\bar{v}$ $\bar{\eta}\bar{y}\bar{v}$, literally, "I will be bitter in weeping"). He wants to be left alone in order that he can cry his heart out, that he can let out his bitterness to the full extent through uncontrolled and undisturbed weeping. A parallel example in Isaiah 33:7 (where $\bar{\eta}\bar{y}\bar{v}$ and $\bar{\eta}\bar{y}\bar{v}$ are used together) may shed light on the emotional state of a person in bitter weeping. Isaiah 33:7 reads: "Look, their brave men cry aloud in the streets; the envoys of peace weep bitterly."¹¹² Drawing on the parallel here, 'weeping bitterly' is like being able to 'cry aloud' without any restraint in spite of being in the public place -- the streets. It is like weeping to its fullness as the bitterness within a person necessitates such need.

Thirdly, he refuses to be comforted ($\bar{\eta}\bar{y}\bar{v}$ $\bar{\eta}\bar{y}\bar{v}$). Under what circumstances would a person refuse to be consoled? Two parallel passages in the Old Testament precisely answer this question. In Jer 31:15, it mentions about Rachel weeping ($\bar{\eta}\bar{y}\bar{v}$) for her children and "refusing to be comforted" because her

¹¹²What these brave men and envoys are referring to is still an issue of discussion. Both David Stacey (*Isaiah 1-39* [Epworth Commentaries; London: Epworth Press, 1993] 202) and Young (*The Book of Isaiah, Vol. 2, 411*) favour the interpretation that they refer to the messengers or ambassadors of Jerusalem who seek peace from the Assyrians. After failing to accomplish their end, they cry out bitterly over their failure.

children are no more. The other example is found in Gen 37:34-35 where it reads: "Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days. And his sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. "'No,' he said, 'in mourning will I go down to the grave to my son.' So his father wept for him." In both contexts, two common elements are found: (a) the mourning/weeping of a person over her/his child/ren; and (b) the one who mourns/weeps refuses to be comforted. In this light, when this pain over the death/loss of a child is so great, a person will react in such a way as refusing to receive any consolation. This kind of refusal implies the hopeless, unreversable outcome of a situation -- such as when a loved one is dead, a life is lost for ever!

In our present context (v.4), the reason for Isaiah's refusal to be comforted is expressed as "do not try to comfort me over the destruction of the *daughters* of my people." His fellow Judeans are referred to collectively as "the daughters of my people." This is very much in accordance with my analogy of Gen 37:34-35 and Jer 31:15. The grief and pain over the loss of Judah ('the daughters of his people') is so intense that he sees absolutely no hope in the situation (cf. vv. 8a, 12). This feeling of hopelessness drives him to a refusal to accept all genuine efforts of consolation. Verses 5-8a,¹¹³ presents a

¹¹³The visionary character of this passage allows me to interpret the depiction here atmospherically. The verbs are in the perfect and syntactically they can be taken as 'Prophetic Perfects' or 'Perfect of Certainty' which function to express facts which are undoubtedly imminent. Therefore, in the imagination of the speaker, already accomplished. Cf. Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar*, 312, par. 'n'; and Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967) 33, par. '165'. A. B. Davidson also comments that this usage

lively depiction of war (vv. 5-7), of total destruction and shame (vv. 5b, 8a) upon the valley of vision which is identified as Jerusalem, the city of David (vv. 9-10). In other words, when Isaiah perceives the present hopeless situation of his people -- his grief is so immense that it is beyond consolation by any means. The notion of shame (v. 8a)¹¹⁴ also adds to the intensity of Isaiah's emotional pain.

Fourthly, his love for his people is immense and deep. As a father mourns for the death of his daughter, Isaiah here weeps bitterly over the destruction of his fellow Judeans.

(2) Three sets of contrast are used in the depiction of Judah's actions which occasion Isaiah's emotive response. (a) The merriment of the people is in contrast to their real miserable situation (vv. 1-3). Isaiah responds with 'astonishment' at the beginning of this passage (v. 1b). (b) The reliance on human effort and resources in time of crisis is put in sharp contrast with their attitude towards the Maker God (vv. 8b-11). (c) Verses 12-13 are the epitome of a harsh contrast between what God calls for and how the people of Jerusalem respond. As mourning, weeping, tearing of hair and putting on sackcloth signify (cf. Jonah 3), God calls for repentance but gets feasting. Instead of mourning over their offences against God, Jerusalem responds with an outburst of hilarity and

receives an extension in the Prophets. The vision they see projects so vividly before them as if the events have been realized (*Hebrew Syntax* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1942] 61-2).

¹¹⁴The scene of the final destruction of Judah is depicted as that of shame and desolation (v. 8a). The Lord has taken away the shelter (^{10/2}) of Judah which signifies that all means of her protection (cf. 1:8; 4:6) have been removed.

indulgence (v. 13).¹¹⁵It is against the scene of (b) and (c) that Isaiah responds with the phrase וַיִּבְרַח "And Behold!" (v. 13a). It is Isaiah's lament over the rebellion and sin of the people. A strong notion of reproach and shock is represented here.

(3) As a continuation of the 'seeing-hearing' theme, Isaiah states in his 'I'-voice: "The Lord Almighty has revealed this in my hearing" (v. 14a). The content of this announcement is also alarming: "Till your dying day this sin will not be atoned for" (v. 14b). I have elaborated on the impact of this 'seeing/perceiving-hearing' theme upon the prophet in my analysis of the preceding passages. Here however, the announcement has a more profound impact on the prophet. God's announcement indicates that there will never be repentance, nor forgiveness of sins. In his call Isaiah has personally experienced a gracious cleansing of his sin without meeting death (6:5). This passage has depicted a people who are the fulfilment of 6:9, 10. In the light of the intense and complex emotions as expressed in Isaiah's deep-rooted plea: "For how long, O Lord?" (6:11), Isaiah knows very well that 22:14 is meant as a fulfilment of God's previous announcement at the time of his call (6:9-10). If pain and frustration are felt while receiving the initial answer from God (6:11-12), there will be a much more profound impact upon him when this answer is finally realized -- in terms of final destruction and death (22: 5-81; 14). This is a painful feeling especially when Isaiah has to see the vision, to hear God's revelation, to proclaim the judgment and to feel the impact. All

¹¹⁵As Miscall has pointed out, the irony presented here is heavy (*Isaiah*, 61-2).

this accounts for the severity of his reaction of withdrawal in verse 4.

Summary: Several important aspects in the prophetic pathos are represented here. The intense emotions (i.e. grief, bitterness, shame, despair, astonishment) are depicted in fulfilling his role in 'seeing-perceiving-hearing'. Most distinctively of all, an important aspect in his inner life is represented here -- i.e. how he reacts to extreme emotional pain and grief. As a prophet whose important message is that of 'consolation' (נחם),¹¹⁶ how could he react in such a way as to refuse comfort from his fellow Judeans? Could the emotional state of a prophet be separated from his prophetic consciousness (in this aspect, as the messenger of 'consolation')? Would this reaction account for his frustration in handling the conflict between his pathos (how he *feels*, i.e. his *being*) and his role (how he should *function*, i.e. his *doings*)? In essence, both 6:8-12 and 22:4 present the same degree of 'irony'. "To make certain God's complete destruction of the land and its people' is a complete 'reversal' of what a prophet's mission should be (6: 9-11). In like manner, 'refusing to be comforted' is 'in conflict' with how 'a messenger of consolation' should behave. This notion of 'irony' as represented in the monologic speeches of Isaiah (6:11a; 22:4) reflects a significant aspect in the persona of Isaiah.

¹¹⁶The word נחם occurs in the book 10 times: 12:1; 22:4; 40:1; 49:13; 51:3, 12, 19; 52:9; 61:2; 66:13.

4.2.7 "I Waste Away, I Waste Away! Woe to Me!" (24:1-23)¹¹⁷

My reading of the prophetic pathos represented in this passage will focus on two aspects: (1) the inference of emotion as implied in the metaphors in verses 4 and 7; (2) the breaking-out of the Isaian 'I'-voice in verse 16 (in a passage which the speaking voice is predominantly Isaian) and its implication within the paradoxical context of verses 14-16. (I.e. the sharp contrast between the two voices: the corporate voice of praise [vv. 14-16a] and the cry of lament [v. 16b]).

(1) Chapter 24 depicts a general picture of worldwide destruction (of all the earth and its inhabitants) as God's judgment (v. 6a) for the sins of the people (vv. 5-6). While the 'city' under complete desolation remains unidentified in the present context (vv. 10, 12), the emphasis is on the universality (note the numerous references to 'the earth' [אֶרֶץ] in vv. 3-6, 11, 13, 16-21) and the entire city-life (vv. 7-12) rather than the experience of a specific city.¹¹⁸ Against this background, the metaphor¹¹⁹ in verse 4 ("The earth mourns [and] languishes; the world withers [and] languishes; the highest of the people of

¹¹⁷Ch. 24 has been regarded as a transition between chs. 13-23 and 25-27 (cf. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 441-43). The difference in style and content (e.g. focus upon the worldwide triumph of God; the call is for praise instead of mourning) of chs. 24-27 from their context account for their traditional title as the Apocalypse of Isaiah (or as suggested by G. W. Anderson, more correctly defined as 'eschatological'. Cf. "Isaiah XXIV-XXVII Reconsidered," *VTS* 9 [1963] 123; Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 440). For a brief review of this issue, see D. G. Johnson, *From Chaos to Restoration: An Integrative Reading of Isaiah 24-27* (JSOTS 61; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988) 11-17.

¹¹⁸So Seitz, *Isaiah 1-39*, 174-76.

¹¹⁹Cf. 3.4.2 on my discussion of metaphors (and figurative language) as the more hidden but forceful language of emotion.

the earth withers.") with its parallel in verse 7 ("The new wine mourn, the vine withers; all the merry-hearted sigh.") capture both the atmosphere of the situation and the mood of the speaker Isaiah. In the spirit of groaning and grief, Isaiah announces God's devastation of the earth. An inference of the feeling of 'sadness' is indicated in the metaphoric language employed here.

(2) In a passage with the speaking voice predominantly Isaian, another voice emerges in verse 16a -- "From the wing of the earth, we have heard songs (singing): 'Glory to the righteous one'."¹²⁰ The two phrases "as shaking of the olive tree" and "as the gleanings when the vintage is ended" (v. 13) indicate a reference to the remnant of this worldwide destruction. They are to be identified with those who raise their voice to sing for God's majesty in verses 14-15. The fact that Isaiah uses the corporate 'we' ("We have heard songs singing", v. 16a), he has included himself and expresses his own feeling -- "Glory to the righteous one".¹²¹ In other words, he joins the corporate voice in singing praises to God for his glory and majesty -- in a truly worshipful spirit. When one reads with a view to his emotional state at this point, the paradox surfaces as he changes his mood and breaks out in his 'I'-voice¹²² by using a 'waw of contrast' -- "But I said, 'I waste away, I waste away! Woe to me!" (v. 16b). With *וְיִשְׁתָּוֶה לִּי* literally meaning "leanness is mine" (cf.

¹²⁰With parallels in v. 15 and 4:2, the 'righteous one' here refers to the righteous God. Cf. discussion in Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 203.

¹²¹So Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol. II, 171.

¹²²Note the waw in the beginning of v. 16b ("But I said,") brings forth a sharp contrast between the mood of singing and praising and that of lament and sighing.

17:4; Zeph 2:11), the idea of contrast becomes more explicit as one compares the construction in verse 16a -- "Glory/splendour (תִּכְלָל) is to the righteous one." As תִּכְלָל suggests all that is beautiful and to be glorified in,¹²³ by using תִּכְלָל twice in his expression, Isaiah emphatically points to the opposite state of his emotive response: 'to me is the devouring and weakening force that eats away my strength.'¹²⁴ This contrast is even more highlighted with another 'woe to me!' which follows. This Isaian self-representation indicates a drastic change of his emotional state: from songs and praises to laments and grief.

Scholars have successfully established the literary and contextual relationship of verse 16 to Chapter 6. While Motyer observes the parallel between 6:5 and the self-imposed 'woe' in verse 16 here, his emphasis is on Isaiah's feeling associated with the *condemnation* of the people (ch. 24) and his own (6:5 in context).¹²⁵ Particularly when 24:16 is followed with yet another emphatic depiction: "The treacherous betray! With treachery the treacherous betray" (v. 16c), the emphasis is on the severity of the situation which also finds its parallel in 21:2. From a different perspective, Seitz perceives that the realisation of the announcement in chapter 24 as a fulfilment of 6:11 ("Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is utterly desolate.") accounts for

¹²³BDB, 840.

¹²⁴Young has offered a satisfactory, dynamic translation of the expression: תִּכְלָל (The Book of Isaiah. vol. II, 173).

¹²⁵The Prophecy of Isaiah, 203.

the prophet's usual response in v. 16b.¹²⁶ In other words, instead of rejoicing and praising with the corporate remnant voice (vv. 14-16a), he sighs and laments over the desolation of the people as the fulfilment of 6:11 has been realised. He is overwhelmed with sorrow and grief even when he has heard the songs and praises toward God. His lamenting spirit overshadows that of joy.

My own reading offers a new perspective to the above observations. Chapter 24 depicts a picture of universal, worldwide destruction upon the surface of the earth and all its inhabitants. There is no specific reference to Judah or the city of Jerusalem.¹²⁷ Therefore in drawing parallels between 24:16 and 6:5, 11, one essential element is missing: i.e. the precise reference to Judah/Jerusalem in the immediate context of 24:16. While the emotion of lament and grief is evident in 24:16b, what actually occasions this Isaian emotive response (or the change of his emotional state) is still open for question. Particularly the element of sharp contrast is present in its immediate context (v. 16a and b). What necessitates the out-break of his 'I'-voice within the 'corporate remnant voice' (v. 16a)?¹²⁸ With these questions as my criteria, I observe another dimension in addition to Seitz's analysis of the parallel between 24:16 and 6:5. First, my analysis of 6:5¹²⁹ indicates that Isaiah's response is

¹²⁶Isaiah 1-39, 184.

¹²⁷Until v. 23 where Mount Zion and Jerusalem is referred to as God reigning place after his final victory.

¹²⁸Which Isaiah shares a part.

¹²⁹Cf. 4.2.2.

primarily the direct result of being the sole witness of the vision of God -- his eyes have seen the glory and holiness of God (through the audio-visual elements in the vision). Secondly, he is conscious of the fact that he is a man of unclean lips, and he lives among a people of unclean lips. I find the same contextual parallels in 24:16a where the corporate voice sings "Glory to the righteous one" -- in the same spirit of worship and adoration (e.g. 6:2-3, the actions of the seraphim). Also, 24:16b (in its immediate context of vv. 18-23, esp. v. 23) shares the same atmospheric features of divine fear (with 6:3-5). Moreover, it is immediately followed by an emphatic description: "The treacherous betray! With treachery the treacherous betray!" -- which depicts a picture of sinfulness as is the case in 6:5b. When divine 'holiness/splendour' is met with human 'guilt', Isaiah responds similarly in both occasions (6:5 and 24:16b). In essence, "I waste away, I waste away! Woe to me!" (24:16b) echoes "Woe to me! I am finished!" in 6:5a. Therefore, it is the hearing of the corporate praises toward the majesty and glory of God¹³⁰ and the consciousness of his own/his people's sinfulness that occasions an outbreak of his 'I'-voice. To respond accordingly, he expresses his sorrow and grief in the form of a self-lamenting cry.¹³¹

Summary: A strong reference to grief in the form of lament (v.16b) and an inference of sadness in terms of groaning (vv. 4, 7) are indicated in this passage. While grief dominates in his

¹³⁰with himself also participating in the singing, as implied in the corporate 'we' (v. 16a).

¹³¹Note that both 24:16b and 6:5 are in the form of a soliloquy.

pathos, Isaiah is depicted as having a keen sense of his own sinfulness before the holy and majestic God. This element is quite unique in his prophetic consciousness.

4.2.8 "O Lord, You Are My God" (25: 1-12)

In the literary world of the book, the individuality of the Isaian persona is quite hidden other than in those cases where his 'I'-voice emerges.¹³² Unique to this chapter is the intensely personal tone which begins this song of thanksgiving (v. 1). In the overall framework of an 'I-Thou' relationship,¹³³ verse 1 spells out the intimate relationship between Isaiah and Jehovah -- as his *personal* God: "O Lord, You are *my* God." The Isaian self-representation of this 'personal' relationship indicates a strong sense of intimacy and belonging.

As an operational tool, I adopt the thesis that the language of religious faith is the language of emotion.¹³⁴ This song of thanksgiving is rich in religious language. While Isaiah speaks in the first person voice in verse 1, the same religious passions are expressed in its corresponding corporate praise in verse 9 (where Isaiah speaks in the corporate 'we'-voice). With these two verses as my focus, I shall look at three verbs with strong religious connotation with a view to their emotive implications (in the same context of praise and thanksgiving). Reading the

¹³²Cf. my discussion in 1.1 in general, and 1.1.2 in particular. I have also devoted considerable attention to texts where the Isaian 'I'-voice breaks out in the immediate context.

¹³³Note the personal pronouns in this verse are all in the first person and second person singular.

¹³⁴Cf. 3.5.

'I'-Passages sequentially, this chapter can be taken as a proper response to the call for praise in 24:14.¹³⁵ Isaiah responds with two affirmations. "I will exalt you" and "I will praise your name". Religious language such as exalting God and praising his name denotes personal feelings (especially in the context of a worshipper addressing his/her God). First, "I will exalt (עָלֶיךָ)¹³⁶ you," implies a submissiveness on the part of the worshipper/the one who utters praises to God. The second notion of the Isaian feeling is implied in the verb "praise/give thanks" (תְּהַלֵּל). The reason for being thankful is elaborated in two succinct phrases: (1) for God has done wonderful things; and (2) for God's perfect faithfulness (אֱמֻנָה אֱלֹהִים).¹³⁷ The following verses (vv. 2-8) spell out in details: the high is brought low (v. 2, 5); the strong glorify the God who protects the weak and lowly (vv. 3-4). In his 'I'-voice, Isaiah speaks of God's faithfulness and wonderful acts upon all nations. In essence, behind this act of thanksgiving, I perceive a clear notion of recognition of God's might and graciousness in this Isaian affirmation.

The third religious word is in verse 9, again in a context of corporate praise and thanksgiving. וַיִּשְׁבַּח "to wait for/to trust in" implies the notion of hope and trust. In verse 9, וַיִּשְׁבַּח is

¹³⁵So Seitz, *Isaiah 1-39*, 185 where he describes chapter 25 as 'An Appropriate Response' to 24:14.

¹³⁶CUV renders as [尊崇] with the connotations of reverence, utmost respect and submission.

¹³⁷Note that אֱמֻנָה is repeated and it has been suggested 'perfect faithfulness' is an appropriate translation (Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-36*, 456 and Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol II, 186, n. 6).

repeated twice and so is the word *YV* "to deliver/to save". Reading verse 9's corporate praise in the context of verse 6-8, an implicit reference to the Mount Zion (cf. 24: 23; 25: 6, 7, 11) and to the people of Jerusalem/Judah¹³⁸ ('the removal of shame' in v.8; cf. 22:8) is indicated.¹³⁹ When the notions of salvation, removal of shame are put together with the idea of hope and trust; and when the Isaian 'I'-voice (v. 1) now joins in¹⁴⁰ with the corporate 'We'-voice (v. 9)¹⁴¹ in praising and rejoicing for God's salvation -- a vivid depiction of the Isaian pathos emerges. The feeling of joy, of hope, of trust and appreciativeness are indicated here.

The attention is turned to Moab in the last three verses. Reading with the intense mourning felt by the prophet concerning Moab's judgment in chapters 15 and 16 as our background, I find the unrelenting mood depicted here quite paradoxical. Strong language is used to describe Moab's punishment (e.g. trampling, v. 10). As speaker of this judgment message, Isaiah seems to be

¹³⁸Seitz's observation may account for the implicit reference here. He states that the fall of Jerusalem is only an implicit motif in the book of Isaiah. It never forms the centre of explicit attention. Cf. *Isaiah 1-39*, 188.

¹³⁹The song of praise immediately following (26:1-21) refers specifically to the city of Judah.

¹⁴⁰An appropriate translation of *לכל* in the beginning of v.9 as "Every one shall say" provides a smooth transition of the Isaian 'I'-voice to the corporate 'We'-voice here.

¹⁴¹Note the parallels in both verses: declaring the God-man relationship ('my God'/'our God'); affirmations ('exhalt, praise/trust, and rejoice in God's salvation).

quite inconsistent in his response -- here responds with an implacable attitude, as if Moab is a much hated enemy.¹⁴²

While these verses do not depict any significant notion of the pathos of Isaiah, this apparent inconsistency in his emotive response to Moab's punishment does indicate another aspect of his emotion. It points to his ability to be unfeeling over the destruction of a people.

Summary: Three aspects in the Isaian pathos are explored. *First*, the intimacy, the sense of belonging in the relationship between the prophet and his personal God. *Secondly*, in the area of the use of religious language, the notions of hope, trust, joy and appreciativeness are depicted through the use of religious language. *Thirdly*, an observation of the inconsistency in the Isaian emotive response towards the destruction of Moab points to the prophetic ability to be unfeeling.

4.2.9 "I Yearn for You with My Soul" (26:1-21)

Chapter 26 begins with a song of praise with specific reference to the city of Judah (v. 1). The Isaian 'I'-voice emerges two times (vv. 9, 20) among the corporate voice 'We' (the saved and the protected who speak as a group). The song is highly declarative, with God's saving acts upon Judah (vv. 1-4) and his judgment on the high and mighty, in order to protect the lowly and weak (vv. 5-6), as the main thrust. As Miscall has observed, the second part of the hymn (vv. 7-21) consists of a

¹⁴²Oswalt tries to explain this apparent inconsistency from the perspective of the use of language among the Semites. Cf. *The Book of Isaiah 1-39*, 467.

'complicated' song of prayer¹⁴³ with verses 19-21 as Isaiah's final appeal to the people of Judah. Within the movement of the song, I note the shift from thanksgiving to lament and supplication in verses 11-19. This shift has caused a great deal of discussion among interpreters.¹⁴⁴

In the larger context of a song of praise (vv. 1-7) and prayer (vv. 8-18), my reading of the Isaian pathos depicted in this chapter will converge from two pivotal features and the recurring child-bearing imagery. The *First* is the description of the two God-man relationships ('I'-Thou and 'We'-Thou) with focus on the Isaian self-representation in his 'I'-voice amidst the corporate 'we'. *Secondly*, religious language (words/phrases) which exhibits rich emotive connotations will be analysed in their respective contexts. *Thirdly*, since figurative language often time conveys emotive notions, I shall focus on the kind of emotion as implied in the travelling woman simile (vv. 17-18).

After a section on declarative thanksgiving with several pronominal changes in referring to God (Jehovah-He-Thou, vv. 1, 3, 4, 5, 7) and to the people (we-him-you, vv. 1, 3, 4), the speaker uses two verses to express the kind of affection between God and his people on the one hand, and God and himself on the other. Isaiah first speaks in the corporate 'we'-voice (v. 8) before his personal feeling emerges (v. 9). The obvious

¹⁴³Isaiah, 69.

¹⁴⁴Among them, Seitz has offered the most satisfactory reading -- with focus on the proper temporal perspective. He has pointed out with examples from the psalms that it is quite common for the elements of lament and complaint to coexist with the notions of thanksgiving and trust (esp. Pss 3-5; 7; 9-10). As the psalms of lament reflect a mixed genre of lament and trust, so is the case for Isa 26:11-19. Cf. *Isaiah* 1-39, 93-195.

parallels in both verses (vv. 8-9)¹⁴⁵ underscore the feeling of Isaiah toward his God both as an individual and as representative member of the corporate whole. The two-fold depiction of the God-man relationship provides the context for the Isaian self-representation of his feelings. I shall now turn to the emotive language employed in this depiction.

In the present context of God-man relationship (vv. 8-9), I have identified four religious expressions (language of religious faith) which are at the same time, emotive. They are namely: 'waiting' (וַיִּקַּח); '(soul)-desiring' (וַיִּחַד); 'remembering' (וַיִּזְכֹּר); and 'seeking-deligently' (וַיִּשְׁחַד). In a corporate voice, Isaiah joins in declaring that they await (וַיִּקַּח)¹⁴⁶ with hope God's מְשֻׁמֵּם to be realised upon the earth. Out of the seat of their affections (i.e. 'their soul' נַפְשָׁם), they desire/yearn (וַיִּחַד)¹⁴⁷ for God himself -- his name and remember (וַיִּזְכֹּר)¹⁴⁸ his gracious acts. The gradation of this affection is seen in verse 9 when Isaiah's breaks out in his 'I'-voice -- by repeating "with my soul I yearn for you in the night." This Isaian self-

¹⁴⁵I.e. the occurrence of מְשֻׁמֵּם and וַיִּחַד in both verses and that וַיִּשְׁחַד underscores the meaning of וַיִּחַד.

¹⁴⁶It denotes the idea of longing for with expectancy (R. E. Clement, *Isaiah 1-39* (NCB; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980) 214.

¹⁴⁷With the meaning of 'desire, long for, incline' (BDB). Cf. Pss 10:17; 38:10; Job 23:13; Mic 7:1; Prov 11:23; 19:22.

¹⁴⁸וַיִּזְכֹּר when used with God as the object conveys the idea of recalling, call to mind the gracious acts of God in one's past experiences, usually as affecting present feeling, thought, or action (BDB). Cf. Deut 8:18; Jer51:50; Isa 64:4; Pss 42:7; 63:7; 77:4; Neh 4:8.

representation is supplemented with the notion of constancy: "with my spirit within me, I seek you early (רננ) ¹⁴⁹."

This corporate-personal declaration of God-man relationship presents an explicit depiction of the affection of longing for togetherness. A strong notion of hope and the sense of belonging are also indicated in my analysis.

The desperate petition in verse 16¹⁵⁰ introduces the notion of anguish. The prayers of those suppliants are still left unanswered. It is followed by the childbirth simile (vv. 17-19) which is used here to express distress and anguish deeply felt by the people in spite of the hope for joy that childbirth will bring.¹⁵¹ The people writhe in pain like a woman in childbirth, but never give birth. The world judgment seems to have touched only them -- those who utter desperate cry for help (v. 16) and there is yet no sign of final deliverance (v. 18). At this point, R. E. Clements has noted that the (speaker) "gives vent to his feeling of complete and utter frustration."¹⁵² K. Darr also remarks that verse 17 here illumines the speakers' (the

¹⁴⁹רננ means 'to look early, deligently for' (cf. Ps 63:2; Prov 11:27; 13:24; Job 7:21; 24:5; Hos 5:15; 6:3). The idea of the construction in v. 9 therefore conveys constancy -- night and day longing.

¹⁵⁰Note that Seitz finds that v. 16 is the key break in this chapter and divides it into two sections: vv. 1-15 and 16-21 (*Isaiah 1-39*, 195-96).

¹⁵¹Note that here, as in contrast to 21:3, the simile conveys the feeling of distress and anguish instead of the intensity of emotional pain (21:3).

¹⁵²*Isaiah 1-39*, 216.

lamenting community's) anguish and dismay.¹⁵³ Reading figurative language such as the simile here as emotive language, and considering this chapter as a characteristic representation of the merging of the communal and individual (Isaian) voices (v.9 blends into v. 8 and the 'I'-voice in v. 20 follows the simile in vv. 17-18), I find very strong emotive language implied here.

Summary: Two operational tools are at work in my reading of the Isaian pathos: (1) religious language as emotive language; and (2) figurative language as emotive language. Following these paths. I have identified both the direct reference of Isaian emotion (hope, longing, sense of belonging in terms of the God-man relationship) and the indirect reference¹⁵⁴ (anguish and utter frustration). Another notion of the prophet's love and concern toward the people of Judah is indicated in his referring them to "my people" in verse 20.

4.2.10 "What Shall I Cry?" (40:1-8)

As one of my reading premises, poetry is considered as a vehicle of spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings and emotions.¹⁵⁵ In this sense, Isaiah 40-66 (which is purely

¹⁵³*Isaiah's Vision and the Family of God*, 220. K. Darr further notes that this travailing woman simile differs from the other examples in Isaiah (e.g. 21:3) in that it moves from a vivid description of maternal pain to delivery's outcome -- in this case: nothingness. By describing itself as a woman in labour, the lamenting community "intends to appear pitiful, incapacitated, desperately needing divine help" (220).

¹⁵⁴It is indirect, but not an 'inference' due to the strong notions of emotion as expressed in the childbirth simile.

¹⁵⁵See my discussion in 4.1.

poetry) provide the 'legitimate'¹⁵⁶ literary medium for readers to look into the emotions and feelings of the poetic persona as reflected in the 'I'-voice. Reading the Isaian text as a unified whole adopts the literary interdependency of the two major parts of the book: chapters 1-39 and 40-66.¹⁵⁷ Against this background, the two foci of my reading are: (1) the interplay of the speaking voices (vv. 3-8)¹⁵⁸ with a view to the poetic

¹⁵⁶In the words of Stephen A. Geller, "By 'legitimate' is meant 'allowed by language'" ("Were the Prophets Poets?," *Prooftexts* 3 [1983] 211-21; reprinted in *The Place is Too Small for Us*, 154-165,; quotation from 157).

¹⁵⁷Cf. my discussion in 3.1.

¹⁵⁸In the case of vv. 6-8 it can be read as an interaction of narration and poetry and the interplay of narrative voices (cf. also Conrad, *Reading Isaiah*, 30).

persona in verse 6 as Isaian¹⁵⁹; and (2) The metaphor employed in verses 6-8 and its implication on the Isaian pathos.

(1) Isaiah as depicted in the narrative section of the book (chs. 36-39) plays a background yet crucial¹⁶⁰ role. The Isaian speaking voice is rather silent and his 'I'-voice is totally absent in those chapters. From chapter 40 onwards, speaking

¹⁵⁹Seitz has already remarked on the difficulty in looking for the prophetic persona in Isaiah, especially after ch. 39 ("Isaiah 1-66," esp. 116-123). Attempts have been made in drawing parallels between the scene of the heavenly council of Isaiah's call and commissioning in ch.6 and in ch.40 (cf. in particular, Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 30-56; F. M. Cross, "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," *JNES* 12 [1953] 274-77; N. Habel, "The Form and Significance of the Call Narratives," *ZAW* 77 [1965] 297-323; Seitz, "The Divine Council,"; and Melugin, "The Servant,"). Though these scholarly endeavours are primarily aimed at the issue of unity and concern the redactional development of the book (whereas my concern is in the development of the Isaian persona within the book), their results may shed light on the identity of the solo voices in 40:1-8 on the one hand, and on reading the 'I'-voice in chs. 40-66 on the other.

As to the identity issue, both Seitz and Melugin regard 40:1-8 as a reactivation of YHWH's word for a new age rather than an individual prophetic commission (Seitz, "The Divine Council," 243-47; Melugin, "The Servant," 30). Seitz reads 40:1-11 as God's call for messengers to pronounce his words, it is not until in 48:16 that an individual steps forward. An individual's voice also emerges in 49:1-6 (246). While Seitz suggests that "the question of prophetic agency is possible as a legitimate interpretation of 40:1-11 and chaps. 40-48," ("The Divine Council," 247), Melugin goes a step further in concluding with the statement: "one must ... consider the possibility that the portrayal of an 'individual' prophetic voice is somehow a part of the concern of Isaiah 40ff" ("The Servant," 30). As to the 'I'-voice in 40:6b, Melugin holds that it is intentionally equivocal, as the prophet "is portrayed as both individual and as Israel" ("The Servant," 30; cf. also *The Formation of Isaiah* 40-55 [BZAW 141; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976] 84, 86). These suggestions are significant in my literary-synchronic approach. Reading with a sensitivity to the development of the poetic persona in chs. 40-66 is in accord with my reading strategies as discussed in 4.1. It is in this context that I regard the 'I'-voice in chs. 40-66 as Isaian.

¹⁶⁰Considering his appearance during the crisis situation of King Hezekiah is crucial (cf. 37:2-7; 38:1-8, 21-22; 39:3-9).

voices emerge again. Most of the time God is speaking (or Isaiah speaks on God's behalf) with the community's own voice speaking in the corporate 'we' or in the voice of Zion (e.g. 49:14). Within the confines of my scope, special attention will be drawn to the passages where Isaiah speaks in his 'I'-voice. My discussion of 40:1-8 has to begin with the issue of the two unidentified solo voices in verse 6. According to the reading in MT, Verse 6 introduces first 'an' anonymous voice which said "cry!"¹⁶¹ (v. 6a). This call is responded with a 'second' unidentified voice: "And he said (וַיֹּאמֶר) ¹⁶², What shall I cry?" (v. 6b). To identify this 'I' (in v. 6b) as Isaian, I can proceed from two lines of argument: the hermeneutical link between chapter 6 and 40:1-8; and reading verses 3-6 with respect to the possibility of 'a dialogue within the framework of a monologue' by the poetic persona -- Isaiah.

First, common consensus has been gained among interpreters as to the remarkable similarities between chapter 6 and 40:1-8 set in the context of the divine council.¹⁶³ Using I Kings 22:19-23 as a background reference, Williamson has analysed five areas of parallels between the two passages:¹⁶⁴ (a) 'a voice calling' (6:4; 40:3); (b) 'a voice speaking' (6:8; 40:6); (c) the prophet responds with initial despair (6:5; 40:6); (d) reference

¹⁶¹in singular imperative.

¹⁶²Some interpreters read with the LXX (καὶ εἶπα) and renders "And I said".

¹⁶³See n. 159.

¹⁶⁴He has also noted elements that are different within this criteria of similarities. Cf. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 38.

to the removal of sin and iniquity (6:7; 40:2); and (e) an emphasis on the 'glory' of God (6:3; 40:5). The suggestion of the prophecy agency in 40:1-8, especially in verse 6 is explicitly indicated along this line of interpretation. My own adaptation of this interpretative link provides a contextual continuity in my reading of the development of the Isaian persona.

Secondly, reading verses 3-6 as 'a dialogue within the framework of monologue' is both exegetical and literary. The passage begins with an emphatic¹⁶⁵ but yet vague¹⁶⁶ call: "Comfort (□□), Comfort my people", addressed to a group in the second person plural. Who is to administer this □□ is left unspecified. However, the manner that this comfort should be administered ("speak tenderly ... cry to her" v. 2a); the content ("her [Jerusalem] warfare is done", "her iniquity is pardoned" v. 2b) and the reason ("for she has received ... double for all her sins" v. 2c) of this consolation are clearly spelled out. With Isaiah's commissioning in chapter 6 as the hermeneutical background, the fact the identity of the one who is to administer this 'call' (in vv. 1-5) remains unspecified, points to two crucial facts: (a) that it is an open¹⁶⁷ yet urgent¹⁶⁸ call

¹⁶⁵With □□ repeats twice and in the imperative (as well as the verbs ׀׀ and ׀׀ in vv. 1-2).

¹⁶⁶I see that this vagueness is 'intentional'. Since the readers are left in suspense, it adds more force to the result of the interplay of speaking voices in vv. 3-8. The emotional state of the 'I'-voive in v. 6b is thus highlighted.

¹⁶⁷Note they are addressed to the audience in the second person plural.

¹⁶⁸Note that the verbs are all in the imperative.

originated from God.¹⁶⁹; and (b) that it is the message (□□] and the 'revelation of God's 711]) but not the messenger(s) that is in the foreground of the passage. In other words, I find the ambiguity of the unidentified voice (v. 3a) and of the unspecified addressee (vv. 1-2) intentional.¹⁷⁰ As the speaking voice (on God's behalf) in verses 1-5, the poetic persona, Isaiah doubles up himself in verses 6 in a dialogue between 'a calling voice' ("A voice said, 'cry!'," v. 6a) and a 'responding voice' ("And he said, 'What shall I cry?'," v. 6b). The fact that this 'responding voice' replies in the first person 'I' suggests an allowable reading of this dialogue within the framework of the Isaian monologue. As a literary device, I have discussed the functions of the monologue in Chapter Three.¹⁷¹ One of its functions is the foregrounding of a character's inner feelings in the realm of tension, struggle and debate. When this literary function is applied to the context here in verse 6, I find the appropriateness remarkable, particularly reading in the hermeneutical context of chapter 6. Isaiah is faced with God's call for messengers of consolation -- of the removal of Judah's iniquity after she has received from God double for all her sins

¹⁶⁹Cf. vv. 1b ("says your God") and 5b ("for the mouth of YHWH has spoken").

¹⁷⁰Basing his theory on the function of parallelisms, Stephen A. Geller has remarked on the use of parallelisms in vv. 1-2. He notes that "parallelism interacts with a cunning use of ambiguity." Each line of vv. 1-2 contains some "deliberate uncertainty which, in varying degrees and in different ways, channels the force of the device" ("Notes and Observations: A Poetic Analysis of Isaiah 40:1-2," *HTR* 77 (1984) 413-20; quotation from 414, italics mine). Note that my own analysis of these two verses is in accord with Geller's, particularly in the area of the intentionality of the non-specifications.

¹⁷¹Cf. 3.3.3.

(v. 2). When this message is received against the background of 6:11-13, this is truly a message of consolation to those who have experienced judgment from God's hand but survived. But as Stephen A. Geller has observed, when verse 2b ("for she has received from YHWH's hand double for all her sins") is placed immediately after verse 1 ("Comfort, comfort my people, says your God"), it sounds almost like a lament, or the sufferer's complaint -- "Too much!"¹⁷² It does suggest an occasion for lament rather than joy. On the other hand, Isaiah is being challenged to prepare the way of God (which in itself is an extraordinarily difficult task -- 'make straight a highway in the desert' [v. 3]; 'lifting up valleys'; 'making low mountains hills'; 'leveling steep grounds and smoothing rough places to plains' [v. 4] -- so that God's 'glory' shall be realised among all flesh [v. 5]). With his audio-visual experience of God's glory in chapter 6, this mission to him is a fearful, *mission-impossible*.¹⁷³ In this context, Isaiah expresses his inner feeling by doubling up himself in an imaginary dialogue between a crying voice and a responding voice. In so doing, he is able to bring to the foreground his inner tension and doubt.¹⁷⁴ The fact that his 'I'-voice emerges in the reply: "What shall I cry?"

¹⁷²"Notes and Observations," 419.

¹⁷³This provide an appropriate context for the sharp contrast as depicted in verses 9-10: the joy, strength, and boldness of the messenger of good tidings which leads naturally to the focus on the description of God's might and majesty in the rest of the chapter.

¹⁷⁴I shall elaborate on this element of doubt and tension further in my treatment of the metaphor in vv. 6-8 following.

places this dialogue within a larger framework of a disguised monologic speech in verse 6.

(2) Isaiah's doubtful reply (v. 6b) introduces the metaphor in verses 6c-8. A correct understanding of this reply provides contextual clues to the interpretation of the metaphor on the one hand, and to the rest of chapter 40 on the other. I shall first look closely at the kind of emotion embedded in verses 6b-7. Scholars generally agree in regarding verse 6b as a voice of objection.¹⁷⁵ Seitz takes it as the subsequent charge from the heavenly court (v. 6a) which occasions the prophet's objection.¹⁷⁶ This objection is essentially taken as a reflection of turmoil within the prophetic consciousness.¹⁷⁷ In the same line of argument, Claus Westermann points out that in saying 'all flesh is grass!', the prophet believes that nothing could be done to halt the extinction of his people.¹⁷⁸ Reading with such a focus, the objection is essentially a silent, yet deep-rooted lament over a people's fate in the face of God's judgment. In an attempt to pinpoint precisely the kind of emotion depicted in verse 6b, Watts describes it as 'a skeptical protest in the form of a lament'. In the reply, the speaker not only complains of human weakness, or is skeptical of the integrity of human kind. He questions the contents of the

¹⁷⁵Contra Cross, who interprets 40:1-8 after the Gattung 'divine directives to angelic heralds', regards the imperatives are directed to a plural audience of divine attendants. Therefore, vv. 6b-7 is not the objection of an individual prophet ("Council," 276).

¹⁷⁶"The Divine Council," 235.

¹⁷⁷"The Divine Council," 239.

¹⁷⁸Isaiah 1-66, 41.

announcement as well as the base.¹⁷⁹ While the notion of 'lament' stands out in the interpretation of Seitz, Watts, Westermann and Melugin favour the idea of 'complaint-doubt' by linking the verses 6b-8 with the remaining of the chapter and with chapters 41-49. In verse 6b, the one who is commanded to "cry!" objects, complaining that "all flesh is grass" which withers when God's breath blows upon it. The complaint is essentially: "How can one utter a cry when Yahweh has blown upon a people who are like grass?"¹⁸⁰ The answer in verse 8 overrides the complaint. With the $\text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ of God as the emphasis here, verse 8 points to the fundamental fact that hope is not in the power of the people; hope is in the $\text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ of God which "rises up forever".¹⁸¹ Melugin has also noted that the text proceeds immediately with disputation (after the proclamation of good tidings in verses 9-11) which functions "to persuade doubters that Yahweh is both able and willing to save (40:12-31)."¹⁸² With my literary analysis of this reply: "What shall I cry!," I find the reference to an in-depth reflection leading to a

¹⁷⁹*Isaiah 34-66* (Word 25; Waco, Texas: Word Books) 79.

¹⁸⁰Cf. esp. "The Servant," 24-25; quotation from 24.

¹⁸¹Melugin, "The Servant," 24.

¹⁸²"The Servant," 24. Moreover, Melugin remarks that the disputation of Israel's complaint (40:27-31) reminds us of the objection and its overcoming in 40:6-8. The language of 40:27-31 prepares for the responses of the individual figures in 48:16b and 49:1-6 (24-25).

silent¹⁸³ lament indicated here. The notion of despair is present in this kind of lament.

As my reading strategy, I regard metaphors as a powerful literary device to convey emotive language, particularly in the context of religious language.¹⁸⁴ Basing on his thesis of 'legitimate ambiguity' as a formal clue in linking meaning and emotion, Geller's insightful essay "Were the Prophets Poets?"¹⁸⁵ sheds light on the employment of the metaphor in vv. 6b-8 in the context of emotion.¹⁸⁶ By paying special attention to the problems and ambiguities in the metaphor,¹⁸⁷ he provides fresh insight on my understanding of verse 6b and on the meaning and function of this metaphor. Taking the meaning of verse 6b as "how can I proclaim?"¹⁸⁸, the reply itself is a protest or demurral instead of a request.¹⁸⁹ Verse 7 is to be understood as the reason for his refusal -- his human frailty. The notion

¹⁸³I don't see it as a protest as the cry itself conveys no emphatic force or emotion. It is more an in depth inflection which leads to a silent lament.

¹⁸⁴Cf. my discussion 3.5.3.

¹⁸⁵*Prooftexts* 3 (1983): 211-21; esp. 214; reprinted in *The Place Is Too Small*, 154-65.

¹⁸⁶Though I find Geller's essay abundant with theological overtones: E.g. his treatment of לֹא־אֶחָד and לֹא־אֶחָד .

¹⁸⁷To Geller, the problems and ambiguities are a device, strategy and tactic to steer us toward a goal ("Were the Prophets Poets?" 161).

¹⁸⁸I.e. reading כִּי־אֶחָד as "how" after *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar*, 148a-b; noted in "Were the Prophets Poets?" 162, n.13

¹⁸⁹"Were the Prophets Poets?," 162.

of a positive reassurance to the prophet is indicated in verse 8.¹⁹⁰ Using 40:3-8 as an illustration of the poetic employment of a metaphor, Geller concludes that the structure of verses 3-8 is rich in meaning and forceful in emotion. The polyvalence of the metaphor¹⁹¹, the double meanings of ׀׀׀ ("wind", "spirit" v. 7b) and ׀׀׀ ("word", "deed" v. 8b) all add to the richness of its meaning and they lead to the climatic emotional effect in verse 8b -- "But the word of our God lasts forever!" It is in this aspect of a worked-out example of the poetic functions of the metaphor that Geller's contribution is significant.

Summary: While *intensity* dominates in most of the 'I'-passages I have analysed, the notion of *depth* stands out in this difficult, ambiguous yet provoking passage. The Isaian emotions of doubt and despair are indicated within the imaginary dialogue. The feeling of being commanded to be on the giving (v. 1) and yet at the same time on the receiving end (v. 8) of the ׀׀׀ is implicitly implied. As an operational tool, once again, reading metaphors as powerful emotive language is at work in this analysis. My reading here indicates a more focused reading perspective -- the development of the Isaian-poetic persona is of necessity from chapters 40 onwards.

¹⁹⁰In the sense that flesh is, like grass, may be withered by the wind. But the prophet, filled by the spirit of God, will deliver his eternal word (cf. Geller, "Were the Prophets Poets?." 162).

¹⁹¹E.g. "all flesh," "grass, flowers".

4.2.11 "The Lord Called Me from the Womb" (49:1-6)¹⁹²

After the appearance of the implied Isaian 'I'-voice in 40:6, another first person voice (presumably Isaian) breaks out silently in 48:16 in the context of 'commissioning' -- "and now the Lord Jehovah had sent me and his spirit." Chapter 49:1-6 follows the same theme of call and commission. Unique to this passage is the 'open'-affirmation (yet 'personal') of God's call upon the prophet and the highly individualistic nature¹⁹³ of the Isaian 'I'-speech. With this observation, the foci of my reading are: (1) the disclosure of the Isaian 'self' through the individualistic expressions in the 'I'-voice; (2) the indications of his prophetic consciousness -- i.e. the Isaian self-perception of what a prophet is; and (3) the Isaian emotions and feelings identified through (1) and (2).

(1) The chapter begins with an imperative ("Listen, O isles, unto me") Isaian 'I'-voice addresses to the isles and the nations. It is thus an open address but the content of which is rather *personal* and *affirmative*. This personal affirmation when set in the context of a public address highlights a sharp contrast here. As Motyer has noted, "there are psychological

¹⁹²Claus Westermann has noted the two main points in 42:1-4 which are taken up again in 49:1-6: (1) the prophet's installation as God's servant; and (2) the commission that embraces the gentiles (*Isaiah 40-66* [OTL; London: SCM Press, ET 1969] 207).

¹⁹³This provides clues to my reading of the servant-Israel (v. 3) as an individual figure (Isaian) rather than a nation. R. N. Whybray also remarks on the identification of the servant here as an individual figure -- the prophet himself. He has pointed out that "the vividness of the detail of the presentation of the servant as an individual is extremely marked, and goes beyond the possibilities of a metaphor" (*Isaiah 40-66* [NCB; London: Oliphants, 1975] 135-36; quotation from 136).

difficulties in imagining Isaiah publicizing verses 1-6."¹⁹⁴ Though the prophets are extremely sparing in world-wide address (cf. 40:1; Jer 31:10), neither Jeremiah or any other prophet ever demands a hearing ("Listen to me")¹⁹⁵ in such a personal way -- as if it is "his right to demand a hearing."¹⁹⁶ Reading in this perspective, the unique form of the address highlights the importance of its content. In a first person voice, Isaiah gives his personal testimony¹⁹⁷ -- i.e. his understanding of his own 'being' and 'doing' which are the integral parts of his 'self'. With the parallel construction in verse 1 (Jehovah called [אָרָא] me from the womb [בְּטֶן]; he mentioned [שִׁמְעָה] my name from my mother's belly [בְּבֶטֶן]), Isaiah is affirming to the public that he is especially chosen as God's servant -- Israel¹⁹⁸ (v. 3a) even

¹⁹⁴*The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 384.

¹⁹⁵Motyer has further pointed out that though 'listen' is a common prophetic summon, "Listen to me" is not used by any prophet other than Isaiah. Even in Isaiah, it is used only of the Lord (46:3, 12; 48:12; 51:1, 7; 55:2). See *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 385.

¹⁹⁶Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 384, quotation citing F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on Isaiah*, vol. 2 (T. & T. Clark, 1873) 259.

¹⁹⁷Motyer has classified this passage into two personal testimonies: vv. 1-3 and vv. 4-6. (*The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 384).

¹⁹⁸The enigma concerning the designation of the servant as 'Israel' has occasioned some scholarly debates here. For a summary of the views represented, cf. Miscall, *Isaiah*, 117-8. Miscall favours a multiple reading, with 'servant-Israel' here referring to any individual or group who fits into the experience described here. Admitting the difficulties in this designation toward an individual (Isaian) reading and in the light of v. 5b which rules out the idea of 'servant-Israel' as the nation-Israel, I opt for the 2-fold understanding of this designation: "You are my servant, Israel" -- i.e. it applies to both the individual-Isaiah and the corporate Isarel in whom Isaiah finds his own identity as a member of the corporate whole-- the servant of God.

before he was born and for an ultimate purpose: that God shall be glorified in him (v. 3b). God's call is accompanied with specific tasks: (a) to restore Israel (vv. 5a & 6a) and (b) to be God's agent in world-wide salvation (v. 6b).

Related to his call is God's equipping and care. The parallel pairs: "sharp sword" and "polished arrow" denotes effectiveness in carrying out his tasks (v. 2a) while 'hiding in the shadow of God's hand' and 'hiding in his quiver' signifies God's personal preparation and care in the intimacy between God and his servant (v. 2b). Quite unique to the Isaian self-representation of his inner self is the expression in verse 5b - "yet I am honoured in the eyes of Jehovah and my God is my strength." Scholars have noted the apparent broken construction in this verse,¹⁹⁹ When "And now (וְעַתָּה)" (v. 5a) is followed by "yet I am honoured (וְעַתָּה)" (v. 5b), the emphatic notion of 'sudden realisation/bring to remembrance' is implied. While reporting God's call and his commissioning, Isaiah comes to the sudden self-realisation of his dignity and honoured status before God and that God himself is his strength. When verse 4 is interpreted as the servant's lament over the lack of success in his mission, then verse 5b is significant in terms of the representation of the Isaian inner-self. Although disappointed

¹⁹⁹See Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 206 with the translation of this half of the verse in bracket. Motyer points out the NIV's accurate translation reflecting the force behind the broken construction of this verse. He notes that in v. 5b the servant finds himself suddenly reminded of his dignity and strength in the Lord (*The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 387). CUV offers a dynamic translation with connecting words [原来] between v. 5a and b which captures the mood of a sudden, self-realisation, and the whole of v. 5b is in bracket denoting an 'after-thought'.

and in despair, yet he comes to the sudden realisation of his worth before God who is the source of his strength.

(2) To apply the conclusion above to the Isaian prophetic consciousness, the implications are significant. In his personal affirmation, Isaiah is at the same time presenting to the public his experiential understanding²⁰⁰ of what a prophet is. First, a prophet is the servant of God (v. 2b). This notion of 'servanthood' appears the first time among the 'I'-passages I have analysed thus far. Secondly, a prophet is chosen by God (even before he/she is born) and is commissioned to fulfil general (v.3b) and also specific tasks (vv. 5a & 6). Thirdly, God equips and cares for his servant (v. 2). The expression "he has made my mouth like a sharp sword" in the context of God's equipping and protection brings forth the notion that being God's 'mouthpiece' is an essential prophetic function. The demand for effectiveness, proper preparation and accuracy (v.2) also suggests the degree of difficulty in carrying out the prophetic tasks. Fourthly and most emphatically represented here is the notion of unpleasant feelings: the disappointment, despondency, frustration and sufferings confronted by a prophet in fulfilling his mission (v. 4).²⁰¹ Lastly, the two-fold self-realisation of a prophet's true status before God -- i.e. that he is honoured in the eyes of God and that God is his strength, becomes the essence of God's sustenance.

²⁰⁰The fact that this affirmation is presented in the first person voice as a personal account points to the experiential aspect of the report.

²⁰¹I shall elaborate on this in the section immediately following.

(3) In the course of the above analyses, I have noted references of the Isaian emotions, both direct and indirect. Most outstanding of all are represented in the monologic speech of verses 4 and 5b.²⁰² Reading verse 4 in the immediate context of verses 3 and 5a, the contrast is striking. After reporting to the public his call as God's servant in whom God will be glorified, by using an imaginary reply in his 'I'-voice, Isaiah presents his inner reaction in form of a lament. The content of which is not grieving but in utmost despair. The collective force of the words of emptiness (קִרְוָה), vanity (לִּהְיוֹת) and meaningless (לִּהְיוֹת) suggests that the servant-prophet is at the verge of 'giving up' his labour and 'loosing' his faith. This lamenting complaint towards God takes a sudden turn with וְיָדַע "Yet surely" in verse 4b which introduces yet another contrast with verse 4a. To read language of religious faith as emotive language, verse 4b presents such an example: "Yet surely my judgment (is) with the Lord and my work/reward with my God." He is confronted with despair and frustration, yet the regaining of his faith as the result of this self-realisation (v. 4b) is implied here. Along the same line, the self-realisation in verse 5b points to another occasion of faith being renewed and his status before God being reassured. It is in the language of religious faith that the emotions of despair, of loosing and renewing faith; the feelings of 'giving up' as well as being reassured are indicated here.

²⁰²Note that I take both vv. 4 and 5b as monologues and vv. 1-3, 5a-6 as parts of an open address to a public audience.

The metaphoric expressions employed in verse 2 in the Isaian 'I'-voice also implied emotive language in the realm of appreciation of God's loving care and protection. The feeling of having been well equipped and cared by God implies a loving and intimate relationship between the servant-Isaiah and his God.

Summary: This passage is a succinct yet remarkable portrayal of the Isaian-self in aspects that are integral to the prophetic role and selfhood. This outstanding self-representation provides yet another perspective from which to look into his prophetic consciousness -- the most comprehensive Isaian self-perception among all the 'I'-Passages I have analysed thus far. Along these two lines of observation, direct and indirect reference to the Isaian emotions are indicated.

4.2.12 "The Lord Jehovah Has Given Me..." (50: 4-9)

Common features are found in both 'I'-Passages (49:1-6 and 50:4-9). First, the depiction is highly individualistic and it focuses on the intimate relationship between God and the prophet. Secondly, Crucial aspects of the Isaian-self are represented. Thirdly, both passages provide a new perspective²⁰³ to look into the Isaian prophetic consciousness through his self-representation in the 'I'-voice. Chapter 50:4-9 is distinct in two important aspects. Instead of portraying the image of a servant-figure, the Isaiah as represented here is a 'suffering'-figure. For the first time in the passages analysed, 50:4-9 gives an explicit

²⁰³'New perspective' in the sense that both passages are quite exclusively the Isaian first person response to his prophetic experience. While 49:1-6 centres on his call and commission, 50:4-9 represents his actual experiences in carrying out the prophetic tasks.

picture of prophetic sufferings -- an integral aspect to the understanding of prophetic pathos.²⁰⁴ Secondly, while the servant-prophet figure dominates in 49:1-6, the 'pupil'-prophet image stands out in this passage.²⁰⁵

The above observations provide essential directions for my reading of the Isaian pathos here. As an operational tool,²⁰⁶ my reading will focus on the Isaian first person responses to his prophetic experience. Taking religious language as the language of emotion,²⁰⁷ the Isaian expression of his religious faith in the contexts of (1) the God-Isaian relationship and (2) his prophetic experience will be the centre of my attention here.

(1) The God-Isaian relationship depicted is that of intimacy and giving-receiving (with God always on the giving-end and Isaiah on the receiving-end²⁰⁸). Reading in this context, I have identified the following emotions or feelings. First, is the *confident and assuring feeling*. In his 'I'-voice, Isaiah is assuring himself that the Lord Jehovah has given him a ready, expert tongue²⁰⁹ and that he knows how to help the weary with

²⁰⁴Given the common understanding of the term 'pathos' carries the connotation of 'suffering'.

²⁰⁵In spite of the traditional designation of this passage as a 'Servant Song'.

²⁰⁶Cf. 3.5 and 4.1.

²⁰⁷Cf. especially 3.5.3.

²⁰⁸Cf. vv. 4-5 -- I.e. the Lord Jehovah has given Isaiah 'an expert tongue', 'the ear to hear' ... so that Isaiah knows 'to help the weary' and 'to listen like one being taught'.

²⁰⁹לְמַרְרֵי לְשׁוֹן literally means "the tongue of taught ones". Young brings out the notion of 'readiness' (*The Book of Isaiah*, vol. III, 298) while Miscall favours the idea of a 'disciple's tongue' (cf. 8:16), with both 'teacher' and 'one taught' contained in לְמַרְרֵי (Miscall, *Isaiah*, 120). Whybray concurs with

God's word (v. 4a). With the verbs in the imperfect in verse 4b, God's constant and continuous wakening upon Isaiah is implied. This wakening is for a specific purpose: so that he has the 'pupil's ear'-- i.e. the readiness and deligency to be taught ("to hear as the taught" [לְשָׁמַע כְּלִמְרָרִים]). Secondly, Isaiah is speaking to himself in full confidence that by opening his ear to God's constant teaching (v. 5a), he will remain obedient (v. 5b). Young has noted that the description here points to the prophet's complete obedience to God's preparation.²¹⁰ The self-confession of remaining faithful to the Lord is also implied in "I did not draw backward" (v. 5c).

(2) After the self-assuring and confessional 'I'-speech, Isaiah turns to his actual prophetic experiences. Verse 6 is an explicit, highly descriptive self-depiction of his sufferings in terms of humiliation and physical persecution. Most striking of all is the idea of his 'voluntary' actions ("I gave my back to the strikers, and my cheek to those who plucked; I did not hide my face from shame and spitting") which make him vulnerable to all the physical pains and insults -- beating, pulling the beard, mocking and spitting. However difficult to comprehend, I find an explicit notion of *endurance in the face of persecution and humiliation* indicated here.

G. R. Driver (*JTS* 36 [1935] 406) in noting that the phrase occurs twice in this verse as play on words, with the one meaning 'teaching(s)' and thus 'an expert tongue'. The second occurrence bears the meaning of 'pupils' (*Isaiah* 40-66, 151). CUV renders [受教者的舌頭] which specifies 'pupil's tongue' but carries the meaning of trainable, readiness and willingness on the part of the pupil.

²¹⁰*The Book of Isaiah*, vol. III, 299.

The scene changes drastically in verses 7-9. The voluntary victim of suffering emerges again in his 'I'-voice as a challenging victor claiming that with God's help (v. 7a; 9a) he will not be disgraced nor put to shame (vv. 7b; 9b). Verse 8 is set in the judicial setting (with characteristic forensic language such as קָרָא, יָבִין, and טַפְסָה). In *boldness*, Isaiah declares that he has set his face like flint (7b) and that no one can condemn him (9a). In full assurance of God's help (v. 9a), he presents a challenge to all his adversaries (v. 8) to gather together against him, for victory will always be on his side. The two occurrences of הִנֵּה "behold!" in verse 9 present a sharp contrast between the sovereign God who is his help (v. 9a) and his accusers who are like a worn out and moth-eaten garment are doomed to perish (v. 9b).

Summary: This passage provides a brand new portrait of a 'pupil-sufferer' figure. In the context of the Isaian first person response to his prophetic experience, my reading suggests a rich portrayal of his prophetic consciousness and pathos -- particularly in the realm of voluntary suffering. This analysis is also a worked-out example of my operational tool: i.e. reading the language of religious faith as emotive language. With this reading strategy, the following realms of emotions are implied: (a) the feeling of confidence and assurance; (b) endurance in the face of persecution and insult; and (c) boldness.

4.2.13 "How Shall I Comfort You?" (51:17-23)

God speaks primarily in his 'I'-voice in this chapter (vv. 1-8; 12-16; 22b-23) and with the Isaian voice speaks twice in verses 9-11 and 17-21a. The Isaian first person voice breaks out only once in verse 19 in the context of mourning and lamentation.

To focus my reading on verses 17-23 (the immediate context in which the 'I'-voice emerges) in the larger setting of the chapter, I have noted an outstanding theme of □□ "comfort", connecting God's speeches and the Isaian. This emotive theme will serve as an entry point for my reading of the Isaian pathos in verses 17-23.

The chapter opens with God's address to the righteous, the seekers of Jehovah (v. 1). Zion and her inhabitants are the addressee (v. 3). In the setting of the city's desolation, God announces that he will comfort (□□) her and that God's compassion extends to even her ruins -- "he comforts all her desolations". The effect of God's consolation is spelled out in verse 3b in terms of a complete reversal both of the desolate state of the city and sorrow and sighing among the people (v. 11) to joy and singing (vv. 3b and 11). The Lord's 'I'-speech opens with the emphatic affirmation -- "I, I (am) he who comforts (□□) you" (v. 12a) and ends with another comforting note -- "and to say to Zion, you are my people" (v. 16b). In between the two notions of God's comfort to Zion, is an elaborated (full of metaphoric descriptions) contrast between the wrath/destruction of mortal men (vv. 12b-14) and the power and majesty of their creator (vv. 15-16). It is against this context that the Isaian 'I'-voice breaks out in his speech in verses 17-22a.

Using the drinking motif, Isaiah urges Jerusalem to awake to the reality of her miserable situation -- she has drunk deeply from the cup of God's wrath (v. 17a). Despite all her children, there is no one to lead her (v. 18) because God's wrath is upon them (v. 20). Verse 19 highlights the city's need for consolation even more emphatically. Zion has been struck by double calamities: ruin and destruction; famine and sword.²¹¹ In a state of disaster, their own children cannot even give them a hand (v. 18) for they themselves are under the wrath of God (v. 20). In this sense, $\text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ "who shall bewail for you?" implied a deep sigh -- she has to grieve alone by herself. The whole setting points to the setting of lamentation.²¹² It is in this context of community lament that the Isaian 'I'-voice breaks out in verse 19b -- "how shall I comfort you?"²¹³ To Isaiah, Zion has received God's comfort in the past (v. 3). God affirms that he, only he will continue to be their comfort in times of need (v. 12). Therefore, in verse 19 Isaiah is saying to himself: "How can I, Isaiah, comfort Zion, who is in complete

²¹¹Young has proposed two possible interpretations here: (1) wasting and famine; ruin and sword as two classes of calamity; and (2) wasting and ruin as produced by famine and sword (*The Book of Isaiah*, vol. III, 321). I opt for the first interpretation.

²¹²Commentators in general favour the notion of community lament in this verse (cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 245; Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, 162).

²¹³Young has suggested three possible translations here: (1) how shall I comfort thee?; (2) who am I that I should comfort thee?; and (3) who (but) I may comfort thee? (*The Book of Isaiah*, vol. III, 321). Reading with a focus on the development of the 'comfort' theme, God's assuring comfort is in contrast to Isaiah's. Young's first two proposed translations are therefore, favourable.

desolation and grief -- only God is and can be her comforter." The feeling of grief, of inadequacy is implied here.

Summary: Focusing on the 'comfort' motif in this passage, the Isaian emotion of grief and feelings associated with his inadequacy in administering the comfort to Zion are indicated.

4.2.14 "I Will Greatly Rejoice in the Lord" (61:1-11)

This chapter shares two common features with the preceding two 'I'-Passages: the 'equipping' (50:4-9) and the 'comfort' (51:17-23) themes. The 'I'-voice carries the notion of a first person monologic speech, with no public addressee implied. As a characteristic feature of the 'I'-Passages, 61:1-11 is full of metaphoric descriptions which are emotive in nature (e.g. vv. 3, 10).

Most outstanding of all, the passage depicts a perceptive prophet who has a clear idea of the direction of his mission (esp. vv. 1-3). Having full assurance of God's equipping him with his spirit and of his anointment, he rejoices in the Lord in spite of the high degree of difficulty in carrying out his mission. It is within this framework that the Isaian emotions are to be identified.

Whybray has noted, the assuring claim of the 'I'-voice in verse 1 is remarkable.²¹⁴ It is a rather genuine and personal conviction that he is well equipped with God's spirit and annointment²¹⁵ for a specific task -- he is sent (שלח) to bring

²¹⁴Isaiah 40-66, 240.

²¹⁵This is to be taken metaphorically, as God's 'chosen one' (cf. 45:1). Since only high priests and kings were anointed (with an exception in I Kg 19:16, where Elijah was commanded to

God's word of healing and restoration to a mourning community.²¹⁶ In this personal claim, the language itself is very figurative. "Binding up the broken-hearted" implies the mission of consolation (cf. v. 2). "Proclaiming liberty to the captives and complete opening (literal translation of פקדון-פקדון) to the bound ones" denote a ministry of deliverance, of release. The prophet's ministry of consolation is further emphasised in verses 2 and 3. "The Year of the Lord's favour" is paralleled to "the day of vengeance of our God" (v. 2) in two possible ways. First, by way of contrast, God's mercy is manifested in a year and his vengeance in a day.²¹⁷ Secondly, both phrases convey the same idea of God's mercy in terms of deliverance. God's day of vengeance upon Zion's enemies is the year (contrasting the length of time with a day) for her liberty.²¹⁸ Verses 2b-3 provide a further emphasis of Isaiah's ministry of consolation which is another recurrence of the mourning-comforting motif. Isaiah's ministry of פקדון is geared toward the "mourners of Zion" (v. 2b) who are granted a complete reversal of their miserable, lamenting state (v. 3). Verse 3 is replete with figurative language: Head-dress will take the place of

annoint Elisha), the idea in this expression is the appointment and commission of the prophet by God. This interpretation is further substantiated by "he has sent me" in v. 1a. See Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, 240-41.

²¹⁶The expressions here resemble the language of call and commission (cf. 42:1; 48:16; 49:6).

²¹⁷Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol. III, 460. Likewise, cf. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 500.

²¹⁸Cf. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, 242.

ashes;²¹⁹ the oil of joy (Ps 23:5; 45:8) instead of mourning; and the garment of praise replaces depression and low-spiritedness.²²⁰ With this three-fold transformation, they will be called oaks of righteousness -- the planting of the Lord to display his splendor.

What does this exactly mean to Isaiah as he makes these claims in his 'I'-voice? The thrust of verses 1-3 is a personal testimony in the sense that he is personally convinced that he is called and equipped to carry out such high missions -- to bring about the three-fold complete reversal of the present state of Zion. There is no direct nor indirect historical reference in the immediate text to provide any concrete ideas as to how and when the Isaian missions would be realized. What we have in verses 4-9 is an elaboration of the reversed state of Zion and these verses, as well as the whole chapter, abound with imageries and figurative language. As far as the time-frame is concerned, this chapter points to the future -- against the present setting of a community in bondage, in mourning and despair. Reading this Isaian self-representation in this perspective, I note two emotive notions in his testimony. First, there is the notion of *hope*. His conviction that he has been given God's spirit and anointment is his assurance, the high point of his personal testimony. Secondly, the feelings of *directiveness*, of assurance

²¹⁹Removal of the head-dress as well as sprinkling of ashes are signs of mourning (e.g. Ezek 24:17, 23).

²²⁰ךָחָח carries the meaning of dim, dull, faint (cf. the imagery in Isa 42:3, the dimming of a burning wick and I Sam 3:2). Mine is a dynamic translation after Motyer (*The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 501). Since v. 3 is rather figurative, the idea of depressed, despair is behind the force in this contrast.

and *empathy* associated with the metaphoric description of his mission are implicitly implied.

After announcing God's promise to his people in terms of a restoration of their rights (v. 9), the Isaian 'I'-voice breaks out again in form of an individual thanksgiving (v. 10). In verses 1-3, Isaiah is self-represented as both on the receiving (v. 1a) and giving (vv. 2-3) end in carrying out his mission. In this personal thanksgiving, Isaiah is focusing on the great work of God upon him -- his status before the Lord. Beginning with an emphatic expression ("I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall exult in my God" v. 10a), Isaiah is having an inside look at his real status before the Lord. Verse 11b is both figurative and religious -- like a bridegroom who adorns himself with the head-dress (turban) and the bride who adorns herself with her jewels, he is clothed with the garments of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness. In the immediate context, both yV^{v} and $\text{p}^{\text{v}}\text{y}$ point to the effect of the Isaian mission (vv. 1b-3, 10, 11). The simile here signifies that as the groom and bride are equipped with the appropriate ornaments for the special occasion and attain their special status, Isaiah,²²¹ as represented here, is adorned with salvation and righteousness. The full extent of this is emphasised again in verse 11 by God's final assurance that he will indeed keep his promise. In this Isaian individual

²²¹As the representation of Zion, cf. v. 11 with the repetition of $\text{p}^{\text{v}}\text{y}$. In 62:1-3, where the subject is Zion, both yV^{v} and $\text{p}^{\text{v}}\text{y}$ occur in a similar context of God's promise to the city.

thanksgiving, the emotive notions of joy and appreciation toward God are explicitly indicated.

Summary: My reading indicates the explicit reference to the Isaian emotions of hope, joy and appreciation. The feelings in the realm of directiveness, assurance and empathy are implicitly implied in verses 1-3. The themes of 'equipping-commissioning' and 'comfort' reoccur here and they occupy a crucial place in this Isaian personal testimony. Likewise, reading the passage from the perspective of his prophetic consciousness, the depiction here is yet another remarkable representation.

4.2.15 "I Will Remember the Mercies of the Lord" (63:7-19)²²²

In this last 'I'-Passage, the Isaian first person voice introduces the pericope (v. 7). It is then followed by remarkable pronominal shifts: 'they' (vv. 8-14); 'I' (v. 15); and 'we' (vv. 7b, 16-19).²²³ The Isaian 'I' breaks out again in verse 15 in the context of lament and petition. Reading the Isaian pathos in this passage requires an extension of the Isaian 'I' into the corporate 'we', with whom Isaiah identifies himself. In other words, the Isaian 'I' is in the 'we/us'. This observation can be substantiated in the text first by the coherence in the

²²²Most commentators agree in both the extent (63:7-19 as part of a major section: 63:7-64:11) and the nature (a community lament in psalm form) of this passage. Cf. Westermann, Motyer, Whybray, Young, Miscall, ad.loc. See also A. Aljmelaeus, "The Prophet As Poet of Lament - On the Function of the So-Called Psalms-of-Intercession (Isa 63:7-64:11) in 3rd Isaiah," ZAW 107 (1, 1995) 31-50.

²²³Conrad's own reading has devoted special attention to these pronominal shifts. He remarks that though this passage does not specify who the 'I' is, the 'I' as part of the 'us' is clearly indicated (cf. *Reading Isaiah*, 107-08).

development of the themes inspite of the pronominal changes; and secondly by the recurrence of the 'I'-voice (v. 15) in the midst of the community lament and petition (15-19). The second operational tool to be employed here is to identify the Isaian emotions in the language describing Israel's past within the God-Israel relationship (as expressed in the 'they' and 'we'). The description is highly religious and faith oriented, and thus emotive in nature.

While 49:1-6 and 50:4-9 are highly individualistic, verse 7 begins with the individual 'I' and moves towards the corporate 'us' and then 'them'. In his 'I'-voice, Isaiah is giving a descriptive praise to God whose $\square\square\square$ "Mercies" and $\surd\square\square$ "loving-kindness"²²⁴ are the basis for all the praiseworthy deeds ($\square\square\square$) and the great goodness ($\surd\square\square$) that he has done for the house of Israel. This Isaian praise is also declarative and convictional. The causative form of the verb $\surd\square$ "to remember/to recall" highlights the idea, as the verb itself frequently connotes -- the affection of the mind (in terms of thought and feelings) and the action which accompanies recollection.²²⁵ Recalling is then much more than a mental process of bringing to mind. As Motyer has remarked, by recalling God's gracious deeds in the past, Isaiah is caused to excite responsive praises.²²⁶

²²⁴As Miscall has noted, the 'gracious deeds' and 'steadfast love' bracket the list of divine goodness in the verse (*Isaiah*, 141).

²²⁵BDB. The Book of Deuteronomy has abundant reference pointing to this idea of by recalling the past brings about affectual actions to the present (e.g. Deut 5:15; 7:18; 8:2, 18; 15:15; 16:3; 17:12; 24:18, 22).

²²⁶*The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 513.

Using this observation as a point of entry into the affectual feelings implied in the 'I'-voice here ("I will mention"), the notion of *overwhelming gratefulness*²²⁷ is explicitly indicated. The *urge to confess his trust to God* is implicitly implied. It is on this ground that verse 7 can be taken as a declarative praise and personal conviction of Isaiah. In this light, it is also the basis for his or the corporate community's petition to God (vv. 15-19).

The contents of the recollection are elaborated in verses 8-14 where Isaiah seems to have distanced himself by referring to the God-Israel relationship as 'he-they'. It is not until verse 14 that this relationship is described in more intimate terms as 'you-your people', leading to his personal lament in verse 15. From these pronominal changes, I observe another movement from the days past (אֲנִי־יְהוָה לָלוּ, vv. 9b, 11) to the present, when Isaiah pleads God to "look and see" his miserable ("God's mercies being withheld from him") situation (v. 15). It is in this sense that this recollection is the basis for a communal petition and confession to the Lord in verses 15-19.

If the Isaian 'I' is in the corporate 'we,' then reading the 'I' in the 'they' and 'your people' in verses 8-14²²⁸ is also legitimate. What sort(s) of Isaian emotion is implied in this historical psalm? In essence, the recollection is a summary of God's election (v. 8a), of God's saving acts at the times of Exodus (vv. 8b-9, 11), wandering (vv. 12-14) and conquest (v.

²²⁷Note the highly descriptive expressions centring on the gracious deeds that God has done for the people of Israel.

²²⁸On the basis of the modes of development as explained in the previous paragraph.

10).²²⁹ While the depiction sums up the history of Israel's beginning, with the mention of Moses in verses 11-12, the emphasis is on the freedom God granted to the people of Israel at the time of Moses and on his divine care. Reading with this focus, verse 9 is a remarkable representation of the kind of responsive actions that should be expected from whoever is excited to respond through remembering the days of old. Three vital ideas prevail.²³⁰ First, "in all their affliction, there was affliction to him."²³¹ In other words, God feels the sufferings of his people as his own sufferings -- a great comfort to those who bring to mind this promise. Secondly, on the basis of his love (אהבה) and his compassion (רחמים), God redeemed them from their affliction. Thirdly, as a mother carries a child throughout life in terms of loving care and guidance, God bore and carried them in all the days past. As Young has noted, the force here points to the fact that Israel's entire life was entirely in the hands of God.²³² Viewing verse 9 as the highlighted summary of the recollection in verses 8-14; and reading from the perspective of the proper affectual emotive responses, the notions of *deep-felt appreciation* towards God, of *comfort* and *trust* are implied.

²²⁹The background of such events are found in the historical references in the book of Exodus.

²³⁰Cf. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol. III, 481-82.

²³¹Cf. the basis of Young's translation and interpretation of this verse in *The Book of Isaiah*, vol III, 481 where he adopts a slight change in the text with the reading of the Qere lô ("to him") instead of the negative lô'.

²³²*The Book of Isaiah*, vol. III, 482.

The two occurrences of the question ׀X "where (is)" in verse 11²³³ convey a strong notion of lament by the people, which may be summed up in one sentence: "Where is the saving and guiding God of Israel at this present time of our troubles?" Interestingly, verse 14 ends this historical recollection with a convictional simile, attesting especially God's guiding grace - - "As the cattle go down into the valley, ... so you lead your people. ..." In this sense, the notions of *despair*, of *doubt* are interwoven with that of *trust* and *conviction*. The observations here pave the way for the Isaian personal lament in verse 15.

With the pronominal shift from 'I-you' (v. 15) to 'we-you' (vv. 16-19), the personal complaint of Isaiah in verse 15 develops into a corporate lament in verses 16-19. In verse 15, the Isaian 'I'-voice breaks out again in the context of a complaint. Isaiah is pleading God to "look down from heaven and see" his miseries. It is, then, a request for God to take action. The interrogative ׀X "where (is)?" introduces the question which appeals to God's being indifferent in attending to his needs -- "Where is your zeal (׀X ׀?)²³⁴ and your might (׀׀׀׀׀)²³⁵?" The God known to Isaiah in his nation's past is one who is zealous for his people and mighty. When this question is followed by his personal statement -- "the roaring of your

²³³The questions also extend to vv. 12-13 by means of the two participles ׀׀ (without the definite article) at the beginning of verses 12, and 13. The NIV and Chinese UNIV also reflect such a reading.

²³⁴which refers to the ardour of zeal of God for his people, especially in battle (BDB). Cf. Isa 42:12; Zech 1:4; 8:2/

²³⁵Referring especially to the mighty deeds of God in deliverance (cf. Deut 3:24; Ps 20:7; 71:16; 106:2; 145:4, 12; 150:2).

affections and your mercies are withheld from me", it "reflects a feeling of *disillusionment* and *abandonment* by God."²³⁶ However, Isaiah changes his tone to a confession by addressing God directly -- "For you are our father" (v. 16a). The mention of Abraham and Israel in verse 16b implies that even their knowledge and recognition of Abraham and Israel cannot guarantee them help in times of need,²³⁷ but Jehovah, their God remains forever their father and redeemer (v. 16b). A strong notion of *confession* and *trust* interweaves with the feeling of *abandonment* and *doubt*.

The force of this corporate lament is indicated with the introduction of the second question -- "Why (למה)?" (v. 17a). Incorporating himself in the 'we', Isaiah is directing his appeal to God -- "why do you make us wander (ללעול) from your ways; you harden (לשקם) our heart from your fear?" (v. 17b).²³⁸ The ironic thought conveyed emphatically here is that God causes them to wander from his paths and hardens their hearts so that they will not fear him.²³⁹ This question thus implies a strong feeling of *perplexity*, similar to the frustrated and confused feelings indicated in the Isaian personal account of his call

²³⁶Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, 255; italics mine.

²³⁷Cf. Young, *The Book of Isaiah 40-66*, 488.

²³⁸Both verbs are strongly causative, especially ללעול in the hiphil form occurs only once in Job 39:16. Cf. McLaughlin, "Their Hearts Were Hardened," (15-17) where he takes this verse as a reflection of the Isaian commission at 6:9-10.

²³⁹Cf. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol. III, 488-89.

(6:9-10).²⁴⁰ The tone of this deep-felt lament takes a twist as Isaiah in the 'we'-voice pleads God to return (יָשׁוּב) for the sake of his servants -- Israel (v. 17c). In other words, amidst the feeling of *perplexity*, the notion of *trust* surfaces which points to the third occurrence of an interweaving feeling of *perplexity* and *faith*. As Whybray has noted, in spite of the sorrowful perplexity "why?", the speaker here appeals to God "with some degree of confidence" to return for the sake of his servants.²⁴¹ Though continuing with the same tone of lament for the non-existence of their blessings in verses 18 and 19a, this passage ends with yet another notion of *confidence* that God will attend to his/their needs. With much passion (עִזְזָה), Isaiah appeals to God again to come down with blessings to his people, as he has done in the days past (v. 19).

Summary: The two occurrences of the 'I'-voice in this passage best sum up my findings here. Basically, the Isaian emotions of *appreciativeness* and *trust* (v. 1) are found alongside the notions of *lament* and *doubt* (v. 15). However, these are not necessarily contrasting notions in this 'I'-Passage, as they exist side by side in verses 8-12; 13-16; and 17-19 in an interweaving fashion through the pronominal shifts, interrogative and key particles.

²⁴⁰Cf. McLaughlin, "Their Hearts Were Hardened," 15-17 where he takes v. 17 as a reflection of the Isaian commission at 6:9-10. He points out that in 6:10, the verb יָשׁוּב is used instead of יָשׁוּבָה but both verbs share the same meaning and force -- in hiphil, highlighting the causative element (16).

²⁴¹Isaiah 40-66, 261.

4.3 A Portrait of Prophetic Pathos in the 'I'-Passages: Summary and Conclusion

My synchronic-literary reading of the fifteen 'I'-Passages here points to one crucial conclusion -- the operational tools set out at the beginning of this chapter are in full operation at all levels of my analysis (i.e. employed as reading strategy, reading foci, points of entry, identification of the Isaian pathos, etc.). This observation is quite a relief for whoever engages in heuristic attempts like myself. The four entry-points²⁴² not only are promising paths but indeed fruitful in providing a focused criterion for the literary construal of Isaian pathos -- in a book where the persona is known to be silent and/or hidden.²⁴³

As my study proceeds, a fuller picture of Isaian pathos emerges. By employing the reading tools specific to this study, I have succeeded in constructing a rich portrait of the Isaian emotions and feelings. To sum up, I shall highlight the following in my findings.

First, the Isaian emotions identified fall into two interrelated realms: (1) the Isaian emotions and feelings associated with his vision, especially with regard to the recurring theme of 'seeing-hearing-perceiving'; and (2) The Isaian response to his prophetic/religious experience, especially in terms of his self-representation as he experiences pleasant and unpleasant emotions. Within these two general scopes, both

²⁴²See 4.1.

²⁴³See 1.1.2.

direct references and indirect inferences of the Isaian pathos have been identified. More outstanding are the unpleasant emotive notions of lament and grief (21:3-4; 22:1-14; 51:17-20); doubt and despair (40:6; 49:1-7); frustration and perplexity (6:8-13; 8:14-16); complaint and sighing (6:11; 40:6; 63:15b); helplessness (21:11-12) and sinfulness (6:1-7; 51:17-20; 24:16); fear and anxiety (6:1-7; 8:12-13; 21:1-5, 10)); endurance in suffering (50:4-9) and divine constraint (6:11; 8:11). On the positive side, pleasant feelings of appreciativeness (26:1-21; 63:7-9); sense of belonging (25:1; 26:8-9); love (5:1-3); hope, trust and joy (25:1-12; 26:8-9; 50:7-9; 61:1-11) are represented. Contrasting emotive notions such as lament and joy; doubt and trust (8:17, 8, 10; 63:7-19) also exist side by side in an interweaving fashion. The fact that to various degrees, both the intensity (e.g. impact of emotional pains in 21:3-4; 22:4) and depth (e.g. sighing in 6:11a) of these emotions are depicted through the Isaian self-representations (primarily 'monologues' in their immediate context) contributes yet another dimension to the splendor of the portrait.

Secondly, the development of four emotive themes stand out in the 'I'-Passages. The Isaian emotive response to the paradox of the 'hardening of the heart' motif is found in both 6:1-13 and 63:7-19 which gives the upbeat of the Isaian perplexed feelings associated with his mission. Emotional impact upon the prophet along the recurring theme of 'seeing-hearing-perceiving' has proven to be an integral part of the Isaian response. While 'comfort' is central to the message of chapter 40 and onward, this theme also runs through three 'I'-Passages: 22:4; 40:1-8;

51:17-20 and has become a point of entry for identifying the Isaian emotions. Emotive themes centring on the prophet's appreciation of God in the context of the God-Isaiah relationship stand out in the later part of the book (chs. 40-63). They provide an additional feature to the positive dimension of the Isaian pathos in the realm of pleasant feelings.

Thirdly, the inner life of the Isaian persona is one of my two-fold interpretative interests. This objective is being fulfilled in my synchronic-literary study in this chapter. The summary above points to the 'inwardness' of the Isaian 'self' in its various aspects -- (1) the Isaian response to pleasant and unpleasant emotions; and (2) his self-consciousness toward his prophetic mission. The nature of my text (prophetic literature and poetic in style) and the confine of my scope (the 'I'-Passages) delimit my attempt to look into the inner-life of Isaiah primarily through his own self-representations (i.e. the monologic speeches, his 'I'-voice). In essence, this Isaian inner self would not have been able to be expressed in terms of narration (i.e. as a character being depicted through a narrator). Both the Isaian 'being' and 'doings' are portrayed through his self-presentation in his own 'I'-voice. In this sense, no matter how my synchronic-literary approach of the 'I'-Passage may seem heuristic,²⁴⁴ it is a legitimate attempt and my study here has attested to the feasibility and justification of such endeavour.

²⁴⁴'Heuristic' in the sense that I have to hammer out my own operational tools and strategy at almost all levels of my reading as a tailor-made design to serve my objective. Cf. also Chs. Two and Three of this thesis.

Fourthly, my reading has come up with a remarkable depiction of the Isaian prophetic consciousness -- an inseparable area of his inner life. Pivotal aspects of this consciousness are disclosed in the course of my study. A summary of the implications has been included in my reading of each 'I'-Passage. I shall highlight two important findings here. (1) To the Isaian prophetic consciousness, I have observed direct reference to the notion that his prophetic vision has to be beheld, heard, perceived and *felt*. (2) In addition to his role as the prophet, a multiple-role pointing to his call and mission are depicted in the 'I'-Passages. They are namely: (a) as God's mouthpiece (50:4-9); (b) as watchman (21:6-9; 40:1-8); (c) as servant (49:1-7); and (d) as pupil-sufferer (61:1-11). Together with each role are God's equipping and Isaiah's commitment; and out of which comes the Isaian emotive response -- both pleasant and unpleasant, positive and negative -- yet are all constitutive to his prophetic consciousness.

At the outset of this thesis, Seitz's remark on the difficulty and (almost) impossibility of pulling a prophetic figure out of second (difficult) and third Isaiah (nearly impossible) has been a real challenge to me.²⁴⁵ A synchronic-literary reading of the 'I'-Passages has been proved to be a legitimate reading strategy -- by treating the book as a unified whole and interpreting it in its own right. Reading the Isaian text afresh without holding to the 3-Isaiah distinction, and when an appropriate 'point-of-entry' is established (i.e. the 'I'-

²⁴⁵"Isaiah 1-66," 120.

Passages), a rather opposite result is attained through my study here.

CHAPTER FIVE

CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF EMOTION: TOWARD A CHINESE
CULTURE-SPECIFIC CONSTRUCTION OF EMOTION

The study of emotion infiltrates the contents of a rather broad field of disciplines.¹ While cognitive theories of emotion² laid the ground work for current research, studies on this subject in the recent past have been focused on the empirical dimension on the one hand,³ and on its socio-cultural

¹Such as social psychology, anthropology, sociology, cultural and gender studies/criticism, philosophy and science (e.g., in the context of 'emotion and self', cf. *The Times* [England], Monday, August 5, 1996). For an update, issue-oriented discussion of the nature of emotion, cf. Paul Ekman and Richard J. Davidson (eds.), *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

²These theories share in common an emphasis on the role of cognitive activity in the experience of emotion. The role of cognition has been advanced by modern 'cognitive appraisal' theories which have largely dominated the field of emotion studies in the 1980s and early 1990s. (Cf. Vernon Hamilton, Gordon H. Bower, and Nico H. Frijda [eds.], *Cognitive Perspectives on Emotion and Motivation* [Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988]). The recent development of cognitive theories witnesses the increasing recognition and focus on cultural factors in human emotion. For an example of this new emphasis among cognitive theorists, cf. R. S. Lazarus, *Emotion and Adaptation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

³Some of the representative works undertaking the empirically-oriented approach are: Klaus R. Scherer (ed.), *Facets of Emotion: Recent Research* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 1988); Joel R. Davitz, *The Language of Emotion* (New York and London: Academic Press, 1969); June Crawford (et al.), *Emotion and Gender: Constructing Meaning from Memory* (London: Sage Publications, 1992); and Rom Harré (ed.), *The Social Construction of Emotions* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) esp. Part II: "Case Studies in Contemporary Emotions," 120-219.

and cross-cultural aspects on the other.⁴ In particular, this 'cross-cultural' emphasis reflects a wide variety of goal-oriented approaches.⁵ With gender taken as a cultural construct,⁶ the examination of the interface of gender and

⁴Cf. Shinobu Kitayama and Hazel Rose Markus (eds.), *Emotion and Culture: Empirical Studies of Mutual Influence* (Washington: American Psychological Association, 1994); Norman K. Denzin, "On Understanding Emotion: The Interpretive-Cultural Agenda," *Research Agenda in the Sociology of Emotions*, ed. Theodore D. Kemper (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990) 85-115; R. A. Shweder, "The Cultural Psychology of the Emotions," *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. M. Lewis and J. M. Haviland (New York: Guilford Press, 1993) 417-31; Shweder, *Thinking Through Cultures: Expeditions in Cultural Psychology* (Cambridge, Mass; London: Harvard University Press, 1991) esp. 241-268; Philip R. Shaver, Shelly Wu, and Judith C. Schwartz, "Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences in Emotion and Its Representation: A Prototype Approach," *Emotion*, ed. Margaret S. Clark (Review of Personality and Social Psychology 13; London: Sage Publications, 1992) 175-212; Scherer, H. G. Wallott and A. B. Summerfield (eds.), *Experiencing Emotion: A Cross-Cultural Study* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1986); and Paul Heelas, "Emotion Talk Across Cultures," *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) 234-66.

⁵For example, in an attempt to examine how the experiences of grief and joy function in Israelite religion, Gary A. Anderson devotes a chapter in his monograph on "The Expression of Emotion in Cross-cultural Perspective". This examination supports his thesis that there is no universal understanding of emotional states (e.g. joy and grief) that is common to all regardless of cultural context. He then challenges modern interpreters of biblical texts with the necessity to revise our thinking on the relationship between behavioral expression and emotion in the Bible (*A Time to Mourn, A Time to Dance: The Expression of Grief and Joy in Israelite Religion* [University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991] 1-18).

⁶In the sense that one is born as a female (biologically based) but becomes a woman (culturally based) through the gender-role which her culture/society assigns to her -- i.e. as a shaping force in this 'becoming.' Cf. Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986) 238, cited in Exum, "Feminist Criticism: Whose Interests Are Being Served?" *Judges and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, ed. Gale A. Yee (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) 68, n. 5.

emotion is high on the agenda in the research conducted most recently.⁷

The three important components (Chinese-culture; North American situatedness; and woman's viewpoint) of my reader-perspective play a crucial role in shaping my approach in this chapter. Focusing on the cultural shaping of emotion, my approach to Chinese emotions is (1) both 'emic' and 'etic'; (2) cross-cultural; and (3) empirical.

Firstly, adopting a combined 'emic' (an insider's perspective, culture-specific) and 'etic' (an investigator's perspective, universal and culture-invariant) approach⁸, I aim

⁷Speaking from their own culture, Leslie R. Brody and Judith A. Hall have pointed out that "emotional functioning cannot be generalized across the two sexes, and that research on emotion should always incorporate gender as a consideration" ("Emotion and Gender," *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland (New York: Guilford Press, 1993) 447-60, quotation from 447.

For representative works on gender and emotion, cf. Marianne LaFrance and Mahzarin Banaji, "Toward a Reconsideration of the Gender-Emotion Relationship," *Emotion and Social Behavior*, ed. Margaret S. Clark (Review of Personality and Social Psychology 14; London: Sage Publications, 1992) 178-201; Suzanne Skevington, "A Place for Emotion in Social Identity Theory," *The Social Identity of Women*, ed. Suzanne Skevington and Deborah Baker (London: Sage Publications, 1989) 40-58; Crawford (et al.), *Emotion and Gender*; Leslie R. Brody, "On Understanding Gender Differences in the Expression of Emotion: Gender Roles, Socialization, and Language," *Human Feelings: Explorations in Affect Development and Meaning*, ed. Steven L. Ablon, Daniel Brown, Edward J. Khantzian, and John E. Mack (New York: The Analytic Press, 1993) 87-121.

⁸The 'etic' approach here refers to the study of a culture from outside (the investigator's perspective), i.e. using theories/concepts derived from other cultures and making cross-cultural comparisons. The 'emic' approach adopts an insider's perspective. It is an attempt to understand a culture from within -- i.e. using indigenous concepts and paradigms derived from the cultural experiences themselves. There is no uniformity in the application of this etic-emic distinction in cultural studies. I support the metatheory of combined emic-etic approach as advocated by D. Y. F. Ho as a better alternative to either the 'emic' or 'etic' approach (cf. D. Y. F. Ho, "A Metatheory of

to construct a profile of 'Chinese culture and emotion by (i) looking into the indigenous Chinese cultural concepts pertinent to emotion and emotion-coping ('emic' approach); and (ii) by comparing these Chinese-specific concepts with their Western counterparts (focusing on the 'etic' constructs which may have significant implications on emotion).⁹

Secondly, my attempt is situated in the cross-cultural dimension of emotion study. The Chinese perception, expression and coping of emotion will be examined and contrasted specifically with the Canadian/North American emotional experience. I anticipate that a Chinese perspective will contribute both to the universality (through the similarities) and variability (through the culture-specific variables) of emotion study.¹⁰ It thus provides a broader basis for my bi-cultural (Chinese-Canadian) context and horizon -- a *priori* for my response as a reader.

Cross-cultural Comparisons: Confronting Culturocentrism," *Psychology in International Perspective*, ed. U. P. Grilan, L. L. Adler and N. A. Milgram (Amsterdam: Swets and Leithinger, 1992). For a comprehensive discussion of the 'etic-emic' debate, cf. Thomas N. Headland, Kenneth L. Pike and Marvin Harris (eds.), *Emics and Etics: The Insider/Outsider Debate* (London: Sage Publications, 1990).

⁹Addressing the issue of cross-cultural comparability, Lars H. Ekstrand and Gudrun B. Ekstrand have stated the importance of 'cross-cultural comparisons' as a practical research tool. I concur with them that "hidden cultural traits in one's own culture become visible first when this culture is contrasted with another" (*Cross-Cultural Research in Human Development*, ed. Leonore L. Adler [New York: Praeger, 1989] 259-68, quotation from 261).

¹⁰It has been remarked that if we set out to explore the differences between cultural groups, we risk to ignore the groups' similarities which may far outweigh their differences (Kay Deaux, Francis C. Dane, and Lawrence S. Wrightsman, *Social Psychology in the 90s*, 6th ed. [Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1993] 350).

Thirdly, in accordance with the cross-cultural and comparative nature of my examination, special attention is given to the data derived from my self-designed empirical studies. As practical research tools, a small-scale reader-response survey (a total of 47 participated) and interview study (with two interviewees) were conducted over a period of two years.¹¹

My overall approach here is primarily socio-cultural yet oriented in the rich resources of social sciences -- the research site for most emotion studies. The first section outlines my conceptual framework of emotion which is based on my adopted emotion-theories and the empirical research results that are pertinent to my study (5.1). This will be followed by my discussion of the interplay between emotion and culture on the one hand (5.2); and emotion and gender on the other (5.3). My discussions in (5.2) and (5.3) are not intended to be comprehensive but illustrative -- leading toward a construction of 'Chinese culture and emotion' (5.4) in its two pivotal aspects: (1) the Chinese idea of the self (5.4.3); and (2) the Chinese response to pleasant and unpleasant emotions (5.4.4). Primarily, the indigenous Chinese cultural constructs will be my frame of reference. The woman's perspective will be highlighted in my discussion on 'Emotion and Gender' (5.3) and in the concluding section -- 'Toward A Chinese Woman's Understanding of Self and Emotion' (5.5). The collective results will then serve as the theoretical and contextual basis for my response in Chapter Six.

¹¹Cf. Appendices A and B.

5.1. Emotion: My Conceptual Framework

In accordance with the tailor-made approach in the preceding chapters, I shall appropriate my adopted emotion-theories to my culture- and gender-specific perspectives here and in Chapter Six. The following axioms outline my conceptual framework of emotion. Together they serve as a theoretical basis for the interplay of (1) emotion and culture; (2) emotion and gender; and (3) emotion and selfhood.¹²

First, emotions are socio-cultural constructs. Not only are emotions most vibrant in our socio-cultural interactions, they are also mostly appropriated from the socio-cultural realm and expressed in socio-cultural terms.¹³ To a certain extent,

¹²Note that N. K. Denzin also highlights the interface of emotion and culture, self and gender in his proposed research agenda in the sociology of emotions. He calls for due attention to (1) cultural constraints on emotionality (which is, for him, the *Ding an Sich*); (2) the relation of emotions to self and biography; and (3) differences in emotionality according to gender (Theodore D. Kemper, "Themes and Variations in the Sociology of Emotion," *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotion*, ed. Theodore D. Kemper (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1990) 12-13).

¹³Cf. Crawford, et al., *Emotion and Gender*, in which the group has concluded that "(e)motions are constituted in the ways in which we interpret and make sense of happenings and events in our environment, particularly our actions and the actions of others, and in the ways we communicate those understandings to others" (111). Rom Harré, David Clarke and Nicola De Carlo also observed that "many emotions are manifested by typical behaviours especially facial displays. Such displays may be strongly influenced by cultural conventions ..." (*Motives and Mechanisms: An Introduction to the Psychology of Action* [London: Methuen, 1985]; quotation from 133). Along the same line of argument, Errol Bedford concludes that "emotion concepts presuppose concepts of social relationships and institutions, ... In using emotion words we are able ... to relate behaviour to the complex background in which it is enacted" ("Emotions and Statements about Them," *The Social Construction of Emotions*, 15-31; quotation from 30). Cf. also the most comprehensive treatment of the subject in Kitayama and Markus, *Emotion and Culture*.

emotions are culture-bound though they are not culturally imposed.¹⁴

Second, while my realm of concern is emotion and culture-gender, the question of how members of a particular culture experience emotions should yield a variety of answers: physiological, cognitive, and socio-cultural.¹⁵

Third, emotions are often 'gendered' in terms of the gender differences in expression and in the emotional responses to situations and events.¹⁶ In any specific culture, emotional functioning cannot be generalised across the two sexes.¹⁷

Fourth, emotions are major manifestations of one's self. They are "the markers of the construction of the self."¹⁸ In this sense, emotions are constitutive to a person.

¹⁴In adopting this statement, I am also aware of the risk that while the emphasis is laid on cultural differences in the expressions of emotion, we risk to ignore areas/elements that are similar across cultures. Cf. Deaux, et al., *Social Psychology in the 90s*, 350.

¹⁵Note that the authors of *Emotion and Culture* (ed. Kitayama and Markus) explicitly supported this notion (cf. Markus and Kitayama's concluding chapter, "The Cultural Shaping of Emotion: A Conceptual Framework," *Emotion and Culture*, esp. 340).

¹⁶Cf. the conclusion of the group effort in Crawford, et al., *Emotion and Gender*, ch. 7, esp. 117-19. Empirical studies on emotion and gender (especially in 'gender differences in the expressiveness of emotions') affirms the same observations. Cf. Joel R. Davitz, *The Language of Emotion* (New York and London: Academic Press, 1969) 164-70; and Ross Buck, *The Communication of Emotion* (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 1984) esp. ch. 1. Interestingly, Suzanne Skevington has also pointed out that emotions have been explored mainly by women researchers in the field (*The Social Identity of Women*, 51).

¹⁷L. R. Brody and J. A. Hall, "Gender and Emotion," *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. M. Lewis and J. M. Haviland (New York: The Guilford Press, 1993) 458.

¹⁸Cf. Markus and Kitayama, "The Cultural Construction of Self and Emotion: Implications for Social Behavior," *Emotion and Culture*, 89-130; and Crawford, et al., *Emotion and Gender*, 126.

Correspondingly, an examination of the Chinese idea of self provides a cultural point of reference for my response as an individual, Chinese 'self.'

Fifth, while results of empirical studies generally point to the existence of cross-cultural and gender differences in emotion, the aspect of 'individual' (personality) differences within the same culture tends to be overlooked.¹⁹ Therefore, the 'individual' aspect of this study is well represented in Chapter Six where I shall present my personal response to the Isaian pathos as a Chinese-Canadian woman reader.

5.2 Emotion and Culture

Culture has been defined in a variety of ways with emphasis on its different aspects. Instead of presenting my preferred definition of culture, I shall highlight some aspects of culture which are pertinent to an understanding of the interface between culture and emotion.

First, culture is a dynamic process of social interaction. It is neither static nor monolithic.²⁰ This dynamic aspect of culture is emphasised in J. H. Jenkins and M. Karno's definition:

Culture can be defined as a generalized, coherent context of shared symbols and meanings that persons dynamically create and recreate for themselves in the process of social

¹⁹Cf. Appendix B, where Dr. Choy emphasises the importance of recognising individual differences in emotional response within the same culture. Cf. also James D. Laird and Charles Bresler, "The Process of Emotional Experience: A Self-Perception Theory," *Emotion*, 213-34; esp. 224-25; Deaux, *Social Psychology in the 90s*, 349-50.

²⁰"Culture, Emotion, and Psychopathology," *Emotion and Culture*, 308.

interaction. In everyday life, culture is something people come to take for granted -- their way of feeling, thinking and being in the world -- the unselfconscious medium of experience, interpretation, and action.²¹

Culture is therefore a complex context through which all human experience and action (including emotions) are interpreted.²²

Second, culture is the total accumulation of many beliefs, customs, activities, institutions, and linguistic and behaviour patterns of an identifiable group of people. Culture also reinforces basic values of good and evil, custom, and ritual.²³

Third, gender-roles are primarily shaped by one's culture. It is an identifiable element of culture which is common to all cultures.²⁴

Fourth, culture and emotion are interdependent. On the one hand, emotion is socially constructed within specific cultural contexts. They are inherently cultural. On the other hand, these cultural constructs (or habitual emotional tendencies) are themselves part of the vast repertoire of individual and collective social practices that make up a culture.²⁵ Emotions

²¹"The Meaning of 'Expressed Emotion': Theoretical Issues Raised by Cross-cultural Research," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 149 (1992) 9-21, quotation from 10.

²²Cf. C. Geertz, *The Interpretations of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

²³These are the important aspects highlighted in Carley H. Dodd's discussion of "What is Culture?" (*Dynamics of Intercultural Communication* [Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown, 1982] 26-28).

²⁴Other identifiable elements of culture are: cultural roots, cultural personality, material culture, economic organisation, kingship relationships, political organisation, social control, art, language, stability, cultural belief systems, etc. (Dodd, *Dynamics of Intercultural Communication*, 28).

²⁵Markus and Kitayama, "Cultural Shaping of Emotion," 340.

are therefore, aspects of cultural systems. How does culture shape emotional experience?²⁶ According to Kitayama and Markus,²⁷ every cultural group has some key ideas that are traditionally and collectively held in place. These 'core cultural ideas' can influence the nature of the group's habitual emotional tendencies through constraining and affording everyday life realities, in which members of the cultural group are socialised or 'trained' to think, to act, and to feel in a more or less adaptive fashion. Along the same line of argument, Philip R. Shaver et al.²⁸ have suggested that it is possible that "different cultures invent specialized emotion concepts, focus heavily on certain emotions, and enhance, distort, or suppress the expression of certain emotions. Such cultural influences may lead to significant cross-cultural variation in the representation of emotion."²⁹

²⁶A current study addressing the same question was undertaken by Karl G. Heider (*Landscapes of Emotion: Mapping Three Cultures of Emotion in Indonesia* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991]). He came to the conclusion: "To the extent that we have tied these differences (culture-specific features of emotion) to other cultural features we can claim with some confidence to have identified culturally influenced emotion behavior" (121).

²⁷"The Cultural Shaping of Emotion," 343-45.

²⁸Shaver, Shirley Wu, and Judith C. Schwartz, "Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences in Emotion and Its Representation: A Prototype Approach," *Emotion*, ed. Margaret S. Clark (Review of Personality and Social Psychology 13; London: Sage Publications, 1992) 175-212.

²⁹Shaver et al., "Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences in Emotion," 179.

Similarly, the cultural shaping of emotion can be explained with the notion of 'cultural frame.'³⁰ The latter refers to an interpretative grid, or meaning system. It consists of language and a set of tacit social understandings, as well as the social representations and practices that reflect and enact these understandings in social life. A 'cultural frame' therefore includes a cultural group's perception and attitudes toward emotions -- i.e. what emotions/feelings are, why they are experienced, and what their significance is in social life.³¹

Because of the complex cultural context that emotion is rooted in, Kitayama and Markus have suggested that one should expect diverse understandings of emotion across cultures.³² Empirical studies of emotion provide compelling evidence in support of the above statement. Emotional experience differs cross-culturally, particularly in the area of expression.³³ Together with the data derived from my own heuristic studies, I shall present the findings in a synthesised fashion, aiming at portraying a general picture of cross-cultural differences as well as similarities in emotional experience. An inquiry of this kind embraces one fundamental question: To what extent are the

³⁰Cf. R. A. Shweder, "The Cultural Psychology of the Emotions," *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. M. Lewis and J. M. Haviland (New York: Guilford Press, 1993) 417-31.

³¹Kitayama and Markus, "The Cultural Shaping of Emotion," 346-50.

³²"The Cultural Shaping of Emotion,"

³³Janis H. Jenkins, "Culture, Emotion, and Psychopathology," *Emotion and Culture*, 309. Cf. Appendix B, item (1) in my 'Findings.'

variations of emotion universal across cultures or to what extent are they culture-specific in nature?

On the global scene, major cross-cultural studies of emotion have been undertaken by Klaus R. Scherer (et al.)³⁴ and Harald G. Wallbott and Scherer³⁵ since the 80s, which involve 27 countries in five continents. More recently, B. Mesquita and N. H. Frijda³⁶ did an extensive review of the previous findings and suggest that universality exists in several aspects of emotion.

(1) There exists a universally human set of emotional reaction modes in terms of 'action readiness' and 'specific responses' (i.e. facial expressions, voice intonation, activation patterns, and physiological response modes). (2) There are universal issues of emotional concern. (3) There are certain event types that universally arouse emotions. (4) There is some evidence for similarity in appraisal dimensions. Across cultures, the same appraisal dimensions appear to distinguish the different types of emotions.

³⁴Scherer, Harald G. Wallbott, and Angela B. Summerfield, *Experiencing Emotion: A Cross-Cultural Study* (European Monographs in Social Psychology; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

³⁵Cf. Scherer, "Emotions as A Multi-Component Process: A Model and Some Cross-Cultural Data," *Review of Personality and Social Psychology: Emotions, Relationships, and Health*, ed. P. Shaver (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1984) 37-63; Wallbott & Scherer, "How Universal and Specific is Emotional Experience? Evidence from 27 Countries," *Facets of Emotions: Recent Research*, ed. Scherer (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Erlbaum, 1988) 31-56; and Scherer (et al.) "Emotional Experience in Cultural Context: A Comparison between Europe, Japan, and the United States," *Facets of Emotion*, 7-30.

³⁶"Cultural Variations in Emotion: A Review," *Psychological Bulletin* 112 (1992) 179-204.

As for cultural variations,³⁷ Mesquita and Frijda have pointed out two major sources of differences: (1) regulation process (i.e. restrictive and prescriptive 'display rules' and 'feeling rules'); and (2) behavior generation (i.e. patterns of expressive behavior). Firstly, cultures differ in 'display rules' and 'feeling rules'. These rules apply to emotional spontaneity and expressive demonstration in general and to the feeling and display of emotions in particular situations (or with respect to certain kinds of emotion). Thus, particular appraisals may be suppressed because they are depreciated by the culture and may be replaced by the more acceptable ones. Secondly, culture-specific behavior modes exist in many cultures. They are derived from culture-specific models and from culturally-based expectations regarding behavior that is considered appropriate under particular circumstances.

Here, I shall add the third major area in which cultural variations would certainly be found -- i.e. the connotation of emotion words. Scholars who have engaged in cross-cultural empirical research have highlighted the fact that emotion words in different cultures are seldom truly equivalent.³⁸ There is a lack of criteria to judge the equivalence of the emotion words used in different cultures. The notion of emotion itself may

³⁷Most recently, Shaver et al. have remarked that research differences in emotion are harder to find than evidence of cross-cultural similarities. In fact, there are more theoretical discussions of possible differences than there are studies that document them ("Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences in Emotion," 182).

³⁸In fact, Mesquita and Frijda admit that the issue of emotion taxonomies is a thorny issue of its own ("Cultural Variations in Emotion,").

have different connotations and cultural models affect the way emotions are defined.³⁹

However, inspite of the convincing empirical data in support of the socio-cultural influence of emotion behavior, two fundamental questions remain: (1) Are these cross-cultural variables differences in degree/emphasis or kind?; and (2) How are these differences to be interpreted? -- as culture-specific features or attributed to other non-cultural factors?⁴⁰ In fact, those engaging in empirical studies of emotion have perceived that the problem of such endeavours lies in 'the lack of a developed systematic framework or theoretical structure for cross-cultural comparison.'⁴¹ In the summary statement of his study on the emotion experiences across European cultures, Scherer has remarked that "while we clearly need more data we also urgently need more theory."⁴²

³⁹Cf. Appendix A, my findings in Reader-Response Surveys (a) and (b). The respondents who responded in English had to shift to Chinese emotional expressions on several occasions. This illustrates that one cannot assume the existence of universal equivalence in comparing emotional words across cultures. Note in particular Shaver's (et al.) comparative studies of the emotion hierarchy in the United States, Italy and China with the 'prototype approach' (i.e. addresses both the 'contents' of individual emotion-categories [e.g. the category of sadness episodes] and the 'hierarchical relations' among categories [e.g. loneliness is a type of sadness, which itself is a form of negative emotion]) in "Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences in Emotion," 185-199. I shall come back to the Chinese emotion hierarchy later in 5.4.

⁴⁰The same notion is presented in the conclusion of Wallbott and Scherer's large-scale cross-cultural study ("How Universal and Specific Is Emotional Experience?," 54-55).

⁴¹E.g. Scherer, "Emotion Experiences Across European Cultures: A Summary," *Experiencing Emotion: A Cross-Cultural Study*, 188; Wallbott and Scherer, "How Universal and Specific is Emotional Experience?," 55.

⁴²"Emotional Experiences Across European Cultures," 189.

5.3 Emotion and Gender

The statement I made previously in 5.1 that "emotions are often 'gendered'" needs an explication here. Significant gender differences in emotion are widely documented, particularly in the experience and expression of emotion.⁴³ While scholars have begun to raise concerns about the stereotype generalisation of the gender differences in emotion⁴⁴ as theoretically simplistic and empirically unsound, more and more attention has been paid to the importance of culture, gender roles (i.e. social

⁴³Cf. the most recent review and analysis of empirical studies on gender differences in emotion are: Leslie R. Brody, "On Understanding Gender Differences in the Expression of Emotion: Gender Roles, Socialization, and Language," *Human Feelings: Explorations in Affect Development and Meaning*, ed. Steven L. Ablon et al. (New York: The Analytic Press, 1993) 87-121; Brody and Judith A. Hall, "Gender and Emotion," *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland (New York: The Guilford Press, 1993) 447-60. Cf. in particular, Marianne LaFrance and Mahzarin Banaji, "Toward a Reconsideration of the Gender-Emotion Relationship," *Emotion and Social Behavior*, ed. Margaret S. Clark (Review of Personality and Social Psychology 14; London: Sage Publications, 1992) 178-201.

⁴⁴The stereotypical differences include: (1) women are more intensely expressive of positive and (some) negative emotions (e.g. shame, guilt, sadness, fear and anxiety); (2) women experience a wider variety of emotions and they are superior to men in recognising and decoding affective expressions (from non-verbal face, body and voice cues); (3) women are relatively weaker than men in both expressing and recognising anger and other outer-directed emotions (e.g. contempt); and (4) men have more pride in the self than women, and experience less intropunitive affects (e.g. shame, embarrassment, guilt, and anxiety). Cf. Brody, "Gender and Emotion," , 447, 452.

roles),⁴⁵ age, familial and peer socialisation, situational and contextual variables in emotional functioning.

Again, the three ingredients of my reader perspective shape the locus of my discussion here. Drawing on the whole body of literature and empirical data on emotion and gender, I shall focus on three important aspects which are pertinent to portraying a general picture of women's understanding and expressivity of emotion.

(1) *Empirical Data on Gender Differences in Emotion*

Gender differences are found primarily in three areas: (a) experience of emotions; (b) expression of emotion; and (c) decoding of expressive cues.

(a) Experience of Emotion: In their studies, R. A. Fabes and C. J. Martin⁴⁶ asked subjects to rate the frequency with which imaginary persons (varying with gender and age) would experience or express a list of emotions. Differences of experience were fewer and weaker than differences of expression. Out of six emotions, only with love was there a gender difference, with women said to experience love more often than men.⁴⁷ Gender

⁴⁵As remarked by Brody, gender roles (social roles) "are the more powerful determinants of sex differences in emotional functioning and may make a more significant contribution to emotional expressivity than does biological gender" ("On Understanding Gender Differences," 114). Moreover, the belief that gender differences in emotional expressivity vary from culture to culture is consistent with the argument that gender differences in emotion are related to adaptations to gender roles, which range in age, culture, and situation (114).

⁴⁶"Gender and Age Stereotypes of Emotionality," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 17 (1991) 532-40.

⁴⁷Note that on the expression of emotion, there were pervasive differences.

differences were also reported in the self-descriptions of male and female subjects ranging from 16 to 68 years of age. E. Diener and his group⁴⁸ found that women were higher on affect intensity (both positive and negative affects) and on extreme variations in mood than men. Consistent with women's generally greater intensity of affect, Leslie R. Brody⁴⁹ found that self-rated emotional reactions to written scenarios were more intense for women across a range of emotions (including annoyance, disgust, sadness, warmth, happiness, hurt, fear, nervousness, and anger).⁵⁰ J. P. Tangney⁵¹ also found that women reported more shame- and guilt-based experiences than did men.

(b) Expression of Emotion: With respect to emotional expressiveness, cultural stereotypes definitely point to women as more expressive than men. In J. G. Allen and D. M. Haccoun's study, undergraduate women reported a greater intensity of expression for fear, sadness, joy and anger, but the difference for anger was the weakest.⁵² Using a multi-item instrument, M.

⁴⁸E. Diener, E. Sandvik, and R. J. Larsen, "Age and Sex Effects for Emotional Intensity," *Developmental Psychology* 21 (1985) 542-46.

⁴⁹"On Understanding Gender Differences in the Expression of Emotion,"

⁵⁰For sadness/depression and anger, cf. Appendix B. Fear and nervousness were reported as more intense by women in many studies (e.g. Brody, D. Hay, and E. Vandewater, "Gender, Gender Role Identity and Children's Reported Feelings Toward the Same and Opposite Sex," *Sex Roles* 3 (1990) 363-87.

⁵¹"Assessing Individual Differences in Proneness to Shame and Guilt: Development of the Self Conscious Affect and Attribution Inventory," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59 (1990) 102-11.

⁵²Note that as Brody pointed out, overall research does not indicate any consistent pattern of gender differences in accuracy of communication for particular emotions ("Gender and Emotion,"

Zuckerman and D. T. Larrance⁵³ found that female college students described themselves as more expressive nonverbally (e.g. spontaneous facial and vocal expressions) than their male peers reported themselves to be. Observational studies of nonverbal expressiveness also find women to be considerably more expressive overall.⁵⁴

(c) Decoding of Expressive Cues

With respect to women and men's abilities to recognise or decode affective expressions, empirical results suggest overwhelmingly that women are superior than men in identifying affect from nonverbal cues of face, body, and voice.⁵⁵ Moreover, cross-cultural studies also affirm women's greater ability in identifying expressive cues (especially facial).⁵⁶

(2) *Role of Familial and Peer Socialisation*

The above findings are consistent with the view that gender differences in emotion are adaptive for the differing roles that men and women play in their society. In other words, the varying

451) .

⁵³"Individual Differences in Perceived Encoding and Decoding Abilities," *Skill in Nonverbal Communication: Individual Differences*, ed. R. Rosenthal (Cambridge, MA: Oelgeschlager, Gunn and Hain, 1979) 171-203.

⁵⁴Cf. J. A. Hall, *Nonverbal Sex Differences: Communication Accuracy and Expressive Style* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984).

⁵⁵Cf. Hall, "On Explaining Gender Differences: The Case of Nonverbal Communication," *Review of Personality and Social Psychology* 7 (1987) 177-200; and Hall, *Nonverbal Sex Differences*.

⁵⁶Brody, "Gender and Emotion," 452.

roles men and women play shape their daily lives, which in turn shape their affective experiences.

Among theories explaining the gender differences in emotion, the role of peer and familial socialisation stands out the most.⁵⁷ Research supports that parent-child emotion interaction patterns differ greatly for boys and girls. A growing and consistent body of literature indicates that, at least in North American culture, parents discuss emotions more with their daughters than with their sons (with the exception of anger and other outer-directed emotions such as disgust). Parents also display a wider range of emotions to their daughters than sons. It is very likely that these differential parental treatments for boys and girls will shape the emotional development of the children.

In addition to familial socialisation, sex-differentiated patterns in peer interaction plays a larger role in producing and maintaining the gender differences in emotional functioning.⁵⁸ Studies show that men express more warmth when the target of their affection is women, whereas women express more anger when the target of their rage is men. Interestingly, this suggests that gender differences in the expressivity of the two emotions (anger and warmth) are attributed to the fact that both men and women often interact in sex-differentiated situations.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Cf. Brody and Hall, "Gender and Emotion"

⁵⁸Cf. Brody, "On Understanding Gender Differences," esp. 98-104.

⁵⁹Brody, "Gender and Emotion," 454.

Moreover, both V. G. Paley's⁶⁰ and D. Tannen's⁶¹ descriptions of nursery school children's play vividly portray girls' tendencies to maintain affiliation and social bonding, often at the expense of individual needs, and boys' tendencies to emphasise competition and self-promotion often at the expense of cooperation and affiliation.⁶² Brody and Hall have come to the conclusion that these differing types of interaction would foster different emotional skills. Girls would become competent in reading both verbal and nonverbal emotional signals, at expressing and communicating their inner feelings, and at minimising anger. Boys would become adept at maximising their hostility and anger and at minimising emotions having to do with vulnerability, guilt, fear, and hurt.⁶³

The above empirical data on the socialisation of emotion all suggest that at least in Western culture, girls are encouraged to learn to express feelings through words and facial expressions; whereas boys are discouraged to do so. These sex-differentiated expressive patterns are in accordance with the gender role norms of the culture.

(3) *Implications on 'Gender and Reading of Emotions'*

The above brief review of the gender differences in emotion has significant bearings on gender and the reading of emotion.

⁶⁰*Boys and Girls: Superheroes in the Doll Corner* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

⁶¹*You Just Don't Understand* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990).

⁶²Brody and Hall, "Gender and Emotion," 454.

⁶³Brody and Hall, "Gender and Emotion," 454.

Drawing on the overall theoretical- and empirical-based portrait of women being more expressive, experiencing a wider range of emotional experience, more capable in identifying emotions from various nonverbal expressive cues, trained and encouraged to express their feelings since their childhood, etc. -- women are seen to be superior in their abilities to express, recognise and analyse emotions. All these qualities would make her a capable and competent reader in reading and decoding emotions.

(4) *Reflection*

Chinese culture, Canadian situatedness, and woman's viewpoint -- the three components of my reader perspective -- are always interacting in my preceding discussions. Empirical data in support of gender differences in emotion, and explanations for the differences identified above, have provided qualifiers to my woman-perspective on the one hand, and my combined status (Chinese culture, Canadian situatedness) on the other.

As I have noted earlier, the gender differences in emotion derived from empirical data are primarily conducted in the West and are targeted for that society.⁶⁴ But whether they are universal across-culture or Western-culture 'specific' is still an open question.⁶⁵ When the aspect of individual difference (in personality) is taken into consideration, another intriguing

⁶⁴Cf. Heider's exploration of the gender differences in emotions within three Indonesian cultures has yielded interesting results (*Landscapes of Emotion*, 43-44).

⁶⁵As Brody suggested, future focus on cross-cultural research would help us to understand the universality versus cultural specificity of the gender difference in emotion ("Gender and Emotion," 458).

question stands out: What accounts for the differences? -- individual differences in personality/coping strategy or culture-gender- context-bound? -- or a combination of some or all of these factors? My Chinese-Canadian Woman perspective in reading and response can be potentially attributed to any or all of the above. In fact, 'reading as Barbara Leung Lai' says it all -- this represents my reading as a woman, as an individual, and as a culture-context 'specific' reader.

5.4 Chinese Culture and Emotion

There have been relatively very few studies on 'Chinese culture and emotion.' J. Russell and M. Yik's "Emotion among the Chinese" in *Handbook of Chinese Psychology*⁶⁶ and a doctoral thesis by Anthony Kwok Kwun Tong entitled *A Cross-Cultural Study of the Perception, Expression, Regulation, and Coping of Emotion Among Chinese and Caucasian People*⁶⁷ are among the most recent works in this area. As Russell and Yik suggest, and as Tong affirms, more differences will be found when one compares Chinese emotions to the West by moving beyond the more 'basic' emotions to more complex, culture-specific ones.⁶⁸ By undertaking a

⁶⁶"Emotion Among the Chinese," *Handbook of Chinese Psychology*, ed. M. H. Bond (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1996). This was not available to me at time of writing this thesis.

⁶⁷Unpublished Ed.D. Thesis, Graduate Department of Education, University of Toronto, 1996.

⁶⁸Tong, *A Cross-Cultural Study*, 42. Culture-specific emotions here refer to those non-Western ones that have no obvious counterparts in the West, or what anthropologists have referred to as 'indigenous emotions' (cf. Kitayama and Markus, "Introduction to Cultural Psychology and Emotion Research,"

combined 'etic'-'emic' approach, I hope that the 'culture-specific' Chinese emotional experience/concepts will be identified.

5.4.1 East Meets West: Exploring Chinese Culture and Emotion from the 'Etic' Approach

There are two basic 'etic' constructs which have significant implications on emotion in general, and on selfhood in particular: (1) collectivism versus individualism; and (2) interdependent Self versus independent Self. Exploration of these two pairs of differentiated concepts have served as guiding principles in identifying and analysing the 'core' differences across cultures.⁶⁹

(1) *Collectivism Versus Individualism*

In an attempt to explain how cultures vary in the emphasis they place on the different aspects of the self, H. C. Triandis⁷⁰ has identified and developed a key concept in explaining cultural difference -- i.e. collectivism versus individualism. Collectivistic societies raise children to conform to the group, whereas individualistic societies support and encourage diversity and self-expression. As a result, collectivistic societies emphasise the public and collective aspects of self even at the expense of the private. On the

Emotion and Culture, 13).

⁶⁹Particularly in anthropology and socio-psychology.

⁷⁰"The Self and Social Behavior in Different Cultural Contexts," *Psychological Review* 96 (1989) 506-520.

contrary, individualistic cultures encourage the development of the private self. Consequently, as Roy F. Baumeister suggested and empirical research affirms, these are 'tight' societies. In other words, societies where there are strong demands that people conform to in-group norms, role definitions, and values tend to produce people with well-developed public and collective selves. The private self will likely be less developed.⁷¹ Moreover, Baumeister identifies another phenomenon in the cultural shaping of selfhood. He points out that in highly complex cultures (i.e. those living in large metropolitan cities), people can belong to many different groups, and therefore there is less pressure to stay on good terms with any one of them. While the public self will be quite important, the collective self will be weaker, and people can afford to focus on developing their private self instead.⁷² However, empirical studies have suggested that complex cultures apparently foster identity problems and confusion.⁷³

On the global level, scholars⁷⁴ usually regard cultures in Northern and Central Europe, and North America, as individualistic cultures and their counterparts in Asia, Africa and South America as collectivistic cultures. As Tong noted, collectivism and individualism are like two poles on a continuum

⁷¹"Self and Identity: An Introduction," *Advanced Social Psychology*, ed. Abraham Tesser (New York et al.: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1995) 51-98, esp. 55-56.

⁷²"Self and Identity," 56.

⁷³Cf. examples cited in Baumeister, "Self and Identity," 56.

⁷⁴E.g. Triandis, "The Self and Social Behavior,"; Kitamaya and Markus, "Cultural Construction of Self and Emotion"

-- Chinese culture is usually considered as located near the end of the collectivistic side, with Japanese as the prototype of collectivism.⁷⁵ With Baumeister's notion of 'complex' society, North-American Chinese people who are long time residents in metropolitan cities will pose another challenge to researchers in identifying their cultural orientation.

(2) *Interdependent Self Versus Independent Self*

Another dimension of cultural variation in selfhood is interdependence and independence. Kitayama and Markus noted that American and Western European views of selfhood emphasise autonomy and separateness, whereas Japanese and other Asian and African cultures understand the self as fundamentally and essentially interconnected with other people and the surrounding social context. The self is interdependent with the social context and it is the self-in-relation-to-other that is focal in individual experience.⁷⁶

The two dimensions in the construal of selfhood reviewed above have pivotal implications for the interrelatedness between Chinese culture and emotional experience. This brief review serves as a distinct description of an Asian culture, and upon which I shall venture into a deeper look at the 'Chinese Concept of Self' in 5.4.3.

⁷⁵Tong, *A Cross-Cultural Study*, 30. Cf. also the comparisons done between the American and Japanese societies in Triandis, "The Self and Social Behavior," and Baumeister, "Self and Identity."

⁷⁶"Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation," *Psychological Review* 98 (1991) 224-53, cited in Markus and Kitayama, "Cultural Construction of Self and Emotion," 97.

5.4.2 Constructing A Profile of Chinese Culture from the 'Emic' Approach

By adopting an insider's perspective and using indigenous concepts, I shall present a profile of Chinese culture by focusing on four 'emic' constructs: (1) core characteristics of Chinese personality; (2) Confucianism and the essentials of Chinese philosophy and culture; (3) core characteristics of Chinese family values and child-rearing practice; and (4) the Chinese conceptions of emotion. Given the fact that overseas Chinese cultural groups are constantly and continuously undergoing changes due to the effects of modernisation and westernisation; and that some of the core traditional cultural ideas still inherently exist inspite of the changes; my overall emphasis and orientation here is the traditional Chinese culture in its four pivotal aspects.⁷⁷

(1) *Core Characteristics of Chinese Culture and Personality*

From the native's perspective, the prototypical characteristics of Chinese culture include: family-centredness, collective orientation, emphasis on social and moral order, emphasis on hardwork and education, pragmatic outlook of life,

⁷⁷I concur with Poon that in recognising one's unique cultural make-up, we should first begin with one's traditional cultural distinctiveness (or in my own terminology, 'the nurturing culture') before going into the other shaping forces which cause the subsequent changes in one's conceptual and cultural framework (See Appendix B).

and cherishing of harmony, moderation and personal networking.⁷⁸ From self reports and observations, Poon describes the general profile of Chinese character as big-hearted, demanding of self, distant, tolerant, obedient, responsible, self-controlled, shy, hidden and well-mannered.⁷⁹

Empirical studies (undertaken by Chinese researchers) on the basic temperament of Chinese people have revealed a similar profile.⁸⁰ Chinese are characterised as being cautious, repressed, patient, humble, modest, and non-aggressive. These traits constitute a temperamental pattern -- self-constraint in contrast to impulsivity. As compared to their American counterparts in comparative studies, Chinese subjects appeared to be more inhibited, cautious, patient, and less spontaneous and impulsive.⁸¹

(2) *Confucianism and the Essentials of Chinese Philosophy and Culture*

⁷⁸Cf. S. T. Tseng and D. Y. H. Wu, *Chinese Culture and Mental Health* (New York: Academic Press, 1985).

⁷⁹See Appendix B, item (1).

⁸⁰See K. S. Yang, "Chinese Personality and Its Change," *The Psychology of Chinese People*, ed. M. H. Bond (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1986) 106-70; Yang, "Expressed Values of Chinese College Students," *Symposium on the Character of the Chinese: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, ed. Y. Y. Li and K. S. Yang (Taipei: Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica). (In Chinese).

⁸¹Cf. Yang, Kuo-shu (ed.), *Chung-kuo jen ti hsin li* [中國人的心理], (Chung-kuojen ts'ung shu 2; T'ai-pei shih: Kuei kuan t'u shu kung ssu, 1988) 17-18; Yang, Kuo-shu, *Chung-kuo jen ti t'iu pien* [中國人的改變], (Chung-kuo jen ts'ung shu 3; T'ai-pei shih: Kuei kuan t'u shu yu hsien kung ssu, 1988) 107-137.

The mainstream philosophy in the Chinese culture is a mixture of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. With Confucianism as the predominant and orthodox cultural ideology, I shall focus on its core concepts, particularly in its relation to human nature and Chinese society.

The distinctive nature of Confucian thought is its primary concern for human nature and its great emphasis on the cultivation of humanity. There is the notion of *jen*, translated as human kindness or benevolence. This *jen* and other central and interrelated virtues (e.g. *li* 'propriety'; and *i* 'righteousness'), must be expressed and developed through self-cultivation (*xiu-ji*). The latter bears the emphasis that human action should be sympathetic, unselfish and unconditional, and beneficial to social well-being. As Brian Morris noted, there is a strong humanistic tendency in the teaching of Confucius.⁸² The imperative is to develop a person through self-cultivation into a relation-oriented individual who is not only socially responsive but is also capable of asserting a self-directed role in constructing a harmonious social world.⁸³ The achievement of this harmony requires every individual to act properly towards others in a proper way (i.e. the virtue of *li* 'propriety'). In this sense, as Francis Hsu has stated, the Chinese conception of the person is essentially based on an individual's transactions with his/her fellow human beings. The central focus of the concept *jen*, therefore, is "the place of the individual in a web

⁸²*Anthropology of the Self: The Individual in Cultural Perspective* (London: Pluto Press, 1994) 101.

⁸³Tong, *A Cross-Cultural Study*, 35.

of interpersonal relationships."⁸⁴ *Jen* can only be cultivated and developed in inter-human relationships in a social context. The Confucian self can thus be seen as a configuration of role relations with 'significant others.' It is no accident that the Chinese character *jen* [仁] means two persons. The other person(s) is always included in the definition of selfhood in Chinese culture.

In this Confucian paradigm, the human person is socially situated, defined and shaped in a relational context. As Tong has concluded, "Chinese people see themselves situated symbolically in the web of a relational network through which they define themselves."⁸⁵ This conception of the Chinese self may have significant implications for their expression of emotion.⁸⁶

(3) *Core Characteristics of Chinese Family Values and Child-Rearing Practices*

An important area to explore in relation to the essentials of Chinese culture is family values which is reflected in child-rearing practices. This is also an area that most overseas Chinese people would identify as their ethnic root, or in my own terminology, the nurturing culture. These culture 'specific' norms and values passed on from generation to generation with a relatively slow rate of fading or diminishing. In other words,

⁸⁴"The Self in Cross-Cultural Perspective," *Culture and Self: Asian and Western Perspectives*, ed. A. J. Marsella et al. (New York: Tavistock, 1985) 33.

⁸⁵*A Cross-Cultural Study*, 36.

⁸⁶I shall elaborate further in 5.4.3.

overseas Chinese families still uphold these values with much esteem.

In Chinese thought, harmony (*ho he*) is the touchstone for all interpersonal behaviour. To achieve this harmony is to practise the *li* (propriety) -- conforming to the norms that are acceptable to the society. These social norms structure family relations into hierarchial dualities: parents-children, elder brother/sister-younger brother/sister, husband-wife, male child-female child, and so forth. As D. Y. F. Ho has observed, children from a young age, are socialised to respect and conform to these hierarchies.⁸⁷ Children are not supposed to take the initiative in respect to adults, and are not to talk back to parents or other elders. This pattern of passivity is expressed in the Chinese phrase for obedience, *ting-hua* (listen to superior's teaching/instruction). Therefore, in child-rearing practices, a fundamental concern is to inhibit open emotional expressions, especially those of hostility or aggression towards authority or even peers.⁸⁸ Self-restraint (*yan*) is a highly desirable virtue in Chinese culture. It is also highlighted in the Chinese saying referring to a noble character -- 'to eat bitter,' which underscores the intensity and importance of this

⁸⁷"Traditional Patterns of Socialization in Chinese Society," *Acta Psychological Taiwanica* 23 (1981) 81-95.

⁸⁸M. H. Bond and S. H. Wang, "Aggressive Behavior in Chinese Society: The Problem of Maintaining Order and Harmony," *Global Perspectives on Aggression*, ed. A. P. Goldstein and M. Segall (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983) 58-74.

highly appraised virtue.⁸⁹ In this sense, controlling emotions is seen as a condition necessary for proper behaviour.

Another core characteristic of Chinese culture is moderation (or keeping the middle way). It has always been the superordinate guiding principle of Chinese *li*. When this is applied to the self-expression of feelings and emotions, it implies the propriety of 'not going to either extremes.' In a culture which encourages its men 'to shed blood instead of tears,' and 'to eat bitter' in order to foster perseverance, Chinese children are discouraged to express their emotions. Instead, they are encouraged to suppress their negative feelings which is appropriate behaviour. This nurtured self-restraint in emotional expression has significant and lasting influence on the Chinese conceptions of, and correspondingly, the coping of emotion.

(4) *The Indigenous Chinese Conceptions of Emotion*

There are two similar emotion-terms in the Chinese language: *qingxu* [情緒] and *qinggan* [情感], which can be translated as emotion but each of them has distinct undertones. The term *qingxu* when used in a everyday cultural context, conveys a negative connotation -- implying a bad mood or somewhat negative feelings. When a person is described as being 'emotional' (i.e. with fluctuating *qingxu*), he/she is regarded as losing self-control. On the contrary, in a society which puts much emphasis

⁸⁹Note that Tong also observed and subsequently concluded in his empirical studies regarding this character that it has greatly enhanced Chinese people's ability to cope with emotions - by choosing the strategy of avoidance instead of confrontation. Cf. *A Cross-Cultural Study*, ii.

on interpersonal relationships, *ginggan* denotes affective bonding and affectionate feelings toward others and between people in a mutual relationship. It thus implies a much encouraged and positive feeling state.

Chinese conceptions of emotion can also be understood from Chinese clan wisdom (as social representations) expressed in *chengyu* (i.e. four character traditional idioms) and popular sayings. Tong has pointed to two popular sayings and two Chinese idioms which have significant implications on the Chinese concepts of emotion.⁹⁰ The saying, '*ren you giging liuyu*' [人有七情六慾] (man has seven emotions and six desires) implies that experiencing emotions is part of human nature. Yet the spontaneous expression and excess of emotion is discouraged as indicated in the *chengyu* '*le ji sheng bei*' [樂極生悲] (extreme happiness produces sorrow). On the occasion of funerals, Chinese people usually console relatives of the deceased by saying, '*jie ai shun bian*' [節哀順變], meaning to restrain sorrow and adapt to the changes. Another *chengyu*, '*ni lai shun shou*' [逆來順受], encourages people to accept and endure opposition. Tong further noted that the underlying meanings of the idioms and popular sayings cited are "consonant with the values of moderation, self-restraint, and endurance in traditional Chinese culture."⁹¹ It is very interesting to note that in a culture which values self-constraint (particularly in the expression of emotions), anger is frequently characterised in China by words and phrases related to heat, fire, and smoke

⁹⁰A *Cross-Cultural Study*, 45.

⁹¹A *Cross-Cultural Study*, 45.

with very dynamic expressions. The typical examples cited in Shelly Wu's study are: 'too much heated air' [火氣過盛], 'fire coming out of one's eyes' [兩眼冒火], 'smoke arising from openings in the head' (ears, eyes, nostrils, and mouth) [七竅生煙], 'the rising of an angry fire' [怒火上升], 'not cool and calm' [不冷靜], and 'pulsating, exploding blood vessels' [青筋暴跳].⁹²

The results of Shaver, Wu, and Schwartz's prototype-approach⁹³ in comparing the emotion hierarchy in the United States, China and Italy have significant contributions toward the understanding of the Chinese conceptualisation of emotion.⁹⁴ While there are impressive pieces of evidence for cross-cultural universality of basic emotions,⁹⁵ this group of researchers have highlighted two areas that are evidence of Chinese 'specific' emotion concepts.⁹⁶ Firstly, at the cognitive basic level, love is not a basic-level category on the positive side of Chinese hierarchy. It is embedded within the joy/happiness

⁹²Phillip R. Shaver, Shelly Wu, Judith C. Schwartz, "Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences in Emotion and Its Representation: A Prototype Approach," *Emotion*, ed. Margaret S. Clark (Review of Personality and Social Psychology 13; London: Sage Publications, 1992) 205.

⁹³The prototype approach here refers to the knowledge structures (i.e. schemas, prototypes, or scripts) from which people conceptualise their emotional experience. Or in other words, prototypes are the mental representations of one's conceptualisation of emotion. Cf. "Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences," 185-86; and E. Rosch, "Principles of Categorization," *Cognition and Categorization*, ed. E. Rosch and B. B. Lloyd (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1978) 27-48.

⁹⁴"Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences,"

⁹⁵Cf. the similarities as summed up in the group's report, "Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences," 190-195.

⁹⁶"Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences," 195-99.

category. More surprisingly, there is a separate 'sad love' cluster on the negative side of the Chinese hierarchy. It includes infatuation [痴情], unrequited love [单相思], nostalgia [怀旧], and sorrow-love [心疼], etc. Chinese apparently have many love-related concepts that seem sad to them. This sad aspect of love and attachment is hypercognised in China (i.e. are frequently noticed, emphasised, thought about, and articulated).⁹⁷ Secondly, there is a separate basic-level category for shame-related emotions which suggests the prominence of this state in the Chinese emotion lexicon (e.g. 羞愧, 羞耻, and 惭愧 are all translated simply as 'shame' in the Chinese-English dictionary without any specification). Again, this group of shame-related emotions is hypercognised in the Chinese conception.⁹⁸

5.4.3 The Chinese Concept of the Self

My combined 'etic'-'emic' approach to Chinese culture has concluded that the Chinese self is both interdependent and sociocentric (or situation-centred). Against this broad cultural background, this section aims to examine (1) whether the autonomy of the self is recognised in Chinese culture; and (2) the expression of the Chinese 'individual self' in everyday interpersonal relationships, in literature and art. In other words, I intend to have a closer look at the 'individual self'

⁹⁷On the contrary, it is hypocognised in the United States with Italy falling somewhere in between ("Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences," 196).

⁹⁸On the contrary, it is hypocognised in the United States.

of Chinese persons. With these objectives, I shall take into consideration data drawn from traditional Chinese society as well as the more contemporary settings of modern China. But in particular, overseas Chinese people living in North America are my focus here.

(1) *The Autonomy of the Chinese Individual Self*

Many scholars have argued that there is no 'individualism' in Chinese philosophy and thus contrast the Confucian 'social self' concept with the 'individuated self' of Western culture.⁹⁹ In Chinese art, the important element is the individual's place in nature and not the emotional state of the subject. In like manner, traditional Chinese novels concentrate on what the characters 'do' in their roles as persons rather than what the characters 'think' or 'feel' as individuals.¹⁰⁰ In Richard Vinograd's analysis of Chinese Portraits from 1600-1900, he has observed that there are absolutely no Chinese^{self} portraits during that period of time. Based on this observation, he suggested that the Chinese self has boundaries -- it is a 'hidden self.'¹⁰¹

⁹⁹E.g., Francis L. K. Hsu, "The Self in Cross-Cultural Perspective," *Culture and Self: Asian and Western Perspectives*, ed. A. J. Marsella et al. (New York: Tavistock, 1985) 24-55; Marsella, "Culture, Self, and Mental Disorder," *Culture and Self*, 281-308.

¹⁰⁰Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits 1600-1900* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992). Reviewed in *The China Quarterly* 134 (June, 1993) 346-655.

¹⁰¹*Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits 1600-1900* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992). Reviewed by Anne Farrer in *The China Quarterly* 134 (June, 1993) 364-65.

However, others have stressed that even in Confucian thought, the autonomy of the self is recognised¹⁰² and thus there exists the inherent conflict between individual autonomy and role expectations. Since the Chinese individual's relationship with others are neither independent nor dependent, but rather, interdependent, the 'self' is therefore not totally submerged in relationships. As Ambrose King argues, the individual has considerable social and psychological space for action.¹⁰³

The impacts of modernisation and westernisation (for Chinese people living in the West) play a significant role in the changing of the self-conceptions among Chinese. In a study of the self in contemporary China, Godwin Chu indicated that due to the recent changes in China's socio-economic structures, the dispersal of kinship networks and radical changes in the family and work force, a new conception of the self is emerging. He concludes: "The new Chinese self is not as strongly anchored in enduring family relations and traditional values as in the past but leans more toward relations built on what appears to be utilitarian and material basis."¹⁰⁴ In like manner, Vinograd has also observed that from the 1970s onwards, there were a few self portraits emerging. He further remarks that a Chinese

¹⁰²As Ambrose King has stated, *jen* can only be achieved by the efforts of the 'individual self' ("The Individual and the Group in Confucianism," *Individualism and Holism: Studies in Confucian and Taoist Values*, ed. D. J. Munro (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1985) 57-72.

¹⁰³"The Individual and the Group," 63.

¹⁰⁴"The Changing Concept of Self in Contemporary China," *Culture and Self*, 273.

person has to engage in intensive self-reflection to discover one's self or to take daring actions so as to break the boundaries of the self.¹⁰⁵ This is also one of the central themes in Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*.¹⁰⁶ The hidden urge to discover or free one's self exists between the two generations of mothers and daughters. This depiction is made more emphatic when it is brought forth by a second generation Chinese-American woman writer.¹⁰⁷

On the contemporary scene among the North-American Chinese, my interview study also supports this general portrait of the Chinese conception of the self. Thomas Choy observes that the Chinese self is a 'diffused' self. While traditional Chinese people find self-identity in terms of the external forces (e.g. status in society, recognition, parental approval, etc.), which collectively make up one's self-esteem, surprisingly, traits of this traditional norm are still to be found among westernised Chinese nowadays.¹⁰⁸ In other words, one's sense of 'being' comes from one's 'doing.' To Poon, the Chinese self does exist but it is a 'hidden' self. He points to the fact that even though this self may be hidden, Chinese people are highly capable of bringing something that is hidden (e.g. self and emotions) to

¹⁰⁵*Boundaries of the Self*.

¹⁰⁶New York: Ivy Books, 1989.

¹⁰⁷Cf. Walter Shear's analysis and critique in "Generational Differences and the Diaspora in *The Joy Luck Club*," *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* XXXIV 3 (Spring, 1993) 193-99; and "Film Critique: 'The Joy Luck Club,'" *East Week* 60 (Dec. 1993) 165. (In Chinese).

¹⁰⁸Cf. Appendix B, Item (3) in 'Findings.'

the foreground through various literary means.¹⁰⁹ This observation sets the stage for my discussion in the following section.

(2) *The Expression of the Chinese 'Individual' Self*

However, once this hidden 'self' is discovered, Chinese culture does not provide many direct means to express this 'self.' For the Chinese, saying 'I think' or 'I want' in a public context is considered as boasting, impolite. It is more generous to conform to the Chinese way of incorporating the 'self' into the corporate whole (i.e. the 'bigger-self'¹¹⁰) and say 'we think,' 'we want.' This everyday example points deeper to the fact that the Chinese self is expressed in less direct ways than in the West.¹¹¹ In expressing different facets of the self, Chinese people are accustomed to use an indirect media (art, literary means, religious language such as prayers etc.) to facilitate the expression. A typical illustration is found in the conventional imagery of a man sitting in a 'solitary boat'

¹⁰⁹Such as in classical Chinese poetry and literature, both the depth and intensity of the writer's emotions are expressed. Cf. Appendix B, Item (3) in 'Findings.'

¹¹⁰In traditional Chinese culture, this 'bigger-self' refers to family, clan or country. In contemporary or westernised Chinese societies, this conception of the 'bigger-self' still exists in everyday interpersonal relationships.

¹¹¹Robert E. Hegel and Richard C. Hessnet (eds.) *Expression of Self in Chinese Literature* (Studies in Oriental Culture 9; New York: Columbia University Press, 1985) 30.

[孤舟], floating along a stream of water, as a symbol of man's aloneness in an enlarging world.¹¹²

While study on the literary manifestations of Chinese 'individual self' has attracted much attention in recent years,¹¹³ it is still in its infancy. As R. Hegel has remarked, generalisations are therefore premature and study in this area demands a much greater number of narrow investigations.¹¹⁴ Moreover, Hegel noted that "self in literature is a function of the mind reflected in a product of the mind. Literary art is thus a distorting mirror of naked reality (the revealed true self versus the created literary self) is all that one hopes to perceive there."¹¹⁵ Given this observation is correct, in a culture which the individual self is both hidden and diffused, the literary medium does provide a legitimate means for Chinese people to express the self -- and whether it is the self 'under disguise' or the true self is secondary. Moreover, as emotion is a pivotal aspect of the self, both the intensity and depth of the writers' emotions are expressed in classical and contemporary

¹¹²R. Hegel has observed that this example also reflects another facet of the self: its necessary separability from temporal process, often visualised as a stream of water. (*Expression of the Self in Chinese Literature*, 10).

¹¹³Cf. esp. Leo Ou-Fan Lee, "The Solitary Traveler: Images of the Self in Modern Chinese Literature," and Edward M. Gunn, Jr., "Perceptions of Self and Values in Recent Chinese Literature," *Expression of Self in Chinese Literature*, ed. Robert E. Hegel and Richard C. Hessney (Studies in Oriental Culture 9; New York: Columbia University Press, 1985) 282-307; 308-336; and Donald Munro (ed.), *Individualism and Holism: Studies in Confucian and Taoist Values* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1985).

¹¹⁴*Expression of Self*, 4.

¹¹⁵*The Expression of Self*, 3. The words in brackets are mine.

Chinese literature. Appendices C and D are examples drawn from real life situations demonstrating flesh and blood samples of the Chinese expression of grief through literary means. In essence, a crucial part of the writers' self is revealed. The whole inquiry of the Chinese self is rather intriguing. R. Hegel's conclusion highlights the complexity and thus, challenge of such an inquiry. He notes that it takes a deeper level of understanding of the nature of the Chinese self. It is "no self and yet everything ... It is in constant flux and ... it encompasses mutually contrastive or even contradictory elements."¹¹⁶

5.4.4 The Chinese Response to Pleasant and Unpleasant¹¹⁷

Emotions

Since ancient times, Chinese have recognised joy, anger, grief, happiness, love, disgust, and desire (i.e. both pleasant and unpleasant emotions) as the seven basic emotions of human beings. This basic recognition of human nature sets the stage for my discussion here -- the specific ways in which Chinese respond to positive and negative emotions. The intriguing question is the extent to which the Chinese response is considered as culture-specific.

¹¹⁶*The Expression of Self*, 30.

¹¹⁷I adopted the term 'unpleasant' emotions after Julian Leff (Chapter 4 on "The Language of Emotion," *Psychiatry Around the Globe* [Experimental and Clinical Psy. 5; New York: Marcel Dekker, 1981]). By unpleasant, Leff is referring to emotive words such as anxiety, tension and depression. In colloquial Chinese expressions, there are no suitable words to differentiate such states of emotion. I use the word 'unpleasant' here to refer to the whole realm of negative emotional states -- including depression, suppression and repression.

The preceding discussions have provided a background for the interplay of Chinese culture and emotion. As a last step toward the construction of Chinese emotional experience, I shall focus on two specific areas: (1) the empirical and observational (from an insider's perspective) data on the Chinese expression and coping of emotion; and (2) real life examples of the Chinese expression of grief in social practices and through literary means.

(1) Adopting both quantitative and qualitative methods of empirical study,¹¹⁸ Tong found that the Chinese are emotionally inhibited, introverted, socially cautious and habituated to self-constraint. In particular, relative to Caucasians, Chinese (especially men) are less accustomed to verbally expressing their emotions -- both pleasant and unpleasant.¹¹⁹ Consequently, they tend to somatise their emotional problems.¹²⁰ While being overly concerned with the social implications of negative

¹¹⁸His research includes both a questionnaire survey and an interview study. A total of 136 Chinese and 91 Caucasians participated in the questionnaire survey and 6 Chinese and 6 Caucasians were interviewed.

¹¹⁹This emotional inhibition is quite outstandingly displayed in the film 'The Joy Luck Club,' particularly through the characters Suyuan, An-Mei, Lindo, and Ying-Ying.

¹²⁰Tong, *A Cross-Cultural Study*, 164-65. This observation finds its support in literature on Chinese mental health as well as in psychiatric practice. Cf. A. Kleinman and J. Kleinman, "Somatization: The Interconnections in Chinese Society among Culture, Depressive Experiences, and the Meanings of Pain," *Culture and Depression: Studies in the Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Psychiatry of Affect and Disorder*, ed. A. Kleinman and B. Good (Berkeley, Ca: University of California Press, 1985) 429-40; and Appendix B, Item (8) in 'Findings.' Note that Choy cautions that somatisation cannot be described as characteristically Chinese. Other factors such as education, sophistication, and the ability to acquire various survival means should be taken into consideration.

emotions on interpersonal relationships and social harmony, the Chinese tend to be more avoidant during interpersonal conflicts and Caucasians tend to be more confrontative. With respect to emotional control, Chinese people are found to have less anger control than Caucasians.¹²¹ In the face of emotional distress, Chinese relatively use passive reappraisal and distancing as coping strategies more, whereas Caucasians relatively usually use positive reappraisal and validation of their feelings. From an insider's and psychiatrist's perspectives, Choy acknowledges the educational aspect of emotion-coping. In dealing with unpleasant emotions (e.g. inner conflict and frustration), the more educated, more sophisticated will likely be capable of employing various survival means: self-analysis, reflection, or verbal expressions. Yet the less educated, less sophisticated would easily turn to denial or manifest with pathological symptoms: pains and sicknesses. Education can improve one's self-understanding and facilitate one's comprehension of distorted feelings. On the other hand, education can also help oneself to acknowledge (e.g. that 'it is o.k. to cry'), to experience, and to get in touch with one's emotion.¹²²

It is understandable that, with Chinese emotion being characterised as reserved and inhibited, Chinese specific emotion-study has been focused on the negative aspects of emotion and their impact on the well-being of Chinese people. The Chinese ways in expressing pleasant emotions (e.g. happiness,

¹²¹Interestingly, this may explain why there is so much emphasis on the Chinese literary expression of anger. Cf. 5.4.2.

¹²²Cf. Appendix B, Item (8) in Findings.

joy, excitement etc.) have thus far been overlooked. From an insider's perspective, I see the same pattern of reservation, non-verbal expression, and token-oriented gesture still existing in modern Chinese societies. To cite an example, Chinese families value children's academic success as something to be proud of. Yet if a child brings home an impressive school report, it is not customary for the parents to praise their child in front of people or even express their satisfaction and joy to the child. Rather, they would award the child with monetary gifts or a much wanted present as tokens of their appreciation and encouragement to the child.

(2) In spite of the fact that Chinese people were traditionally discouraged from displaying strong feelings in public, it is quite the contrast when it comes to the matter of mourning. Both men and women are encouraged to show their grief openly on one occasion -- on the death of family members through ritual mourning practices. This encourages the acceptance of loss through diminishing guilt and resentment. This funeral rite still exists in modern Chinese societies in North America.

Since Chinese culture puts much emphasis on 'eating bitter' as the manifestation of inner strength, it is often said that the Chinese have a better capacity to cope with constraints and suppressed emotions.¹²³ Both Choy and Poon concur that the most severe form of grief is the loss of love ones (spouse or children). From a psychiatrist's perspective, Choy identifies

¹²³Tong's questionnaire survey and interview study also support the hypothesis that emotional inhibition has a less negative impact on the well-being of Chinese people ("Abstract," *A Cross-Cultural Study*, ii).

some Chinese characteristics in the case of abnormal grief (i.e. 'grieving to a pathological state' -- such as the feelings of losing part of oneself, one's internal world is empty, or an intense guilt feeling) because of the death of a loved one. Under such a pathological situation, Chinese would use expressions such as [心死] (literally: my heart is dead, no English equivalent), and [欲哭無淚] (literary: my tears have dried up, again, no English equivalent). Among seniors, this extreme form of grief usually manifested in form of physical sickness.¹²⁴

Appendices C and D bring us beyond the confine of the mourning rituals. Their inclusion in this study is not meant to represent Chinese-specific response to grief,¹²⁵ nor do I intend to find any common features between them to be considered as characteristically Chinese. Rather, they are two real life examples of a grieving Chinese individual on the occasion of the death of the spouse. Therefore, I see the significance of the two appendices lies in their illustrative function rather than serving any specification. Appendix C is written in the literary style of classical Chinese poetry and Appendix D is a piece of contemporary Chinese literature. Though quite different in style, in both cases, the intensity and depth of the grief are manifested through various literary means: imageries, imaginary figures, distancing himself with the deceased (in order to

¹²⁴See Appendix B, Item (5) of 'Findings.'

¹²⁵Besides individual difference, education, acquired literary skills, and the age of the writer are all factors contributing to their representation as Chinese-specific expression of grief.

present an objective view of appraisal, Appendix D), etc. Appendix C is unique in the sense that the grief as well as the anxiety associated with the loss are quite hidden, expressed indirectly yet forcefully -- with an open-ended notion conveying to its readers that the grief is still lingering on.

One notion stands out in these samples. Even though Chinese emotion is very inhibited, the need is still very much recognised. Once people finds an indirect, non-verbal means to express (e.g. putting it down in writing), the need is served. Likewise, religious language like prayers and writings such as journals and memorials are culturally acceptable and healthy means for Chinese people to express their inner feelings -- even in severe emotional pain and grief.

5.5 Toward A Chinese Woman's Understanding of Self and Emotion

Reflecting on the Chinese idea of the self from the perspective of a modern Chinese woman is inspiring. In discovering one's private self (versus self-in-relation-to-other), Chinese women have come a long way since the ancient times. This difficult path has been well represented in novels such as Jung Chang's *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China*¹²⁶ and Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*. In traditional Chinese society, women are expected to behave silently with submission but act heroically with strength (e.g. to remain a widow for life after the death of the husband and to take care of the parent-in-laws

¹²⁶London: Flamingo, 1991.

until their death). As Veronica Wang has emphatically summed up, they are both 'sub-women' and 'super-women.'¹²⁷

The construal of the self as 'self-in-relation-to other' is focal in the Chinese conception of selfhood. It is very interesting to note that this conception of the self is also 'rediscovered' by modern feminism in Western culture as a more accurate description of the psychology of women.¹²⁸ In "Courageous Voices: Women Becoming Selves in History,"¹²⁹ Christian feminist Paula S. Datsko Barker first affirms that to become a self is the fundamental aspiration of every human subject. She then points to the conflict between this fundamental aspiration and the compelling cultural and circumstantial constraints imposed upon women as characteristic of womanhood.¹³⁰ As a result, women are often compelled to assume the status of the 'other.'¹³¹ The intriguing question is, whether this conception of selfhood, and the apparent conflict in women's becoming selves are Chinese-specific or rather, gender-specific. If they are gender-specific, then the Chinese women's concept of the self and their search for the private self are more identical with women across cultures than with Chinese men.

¹²⁷Cited in "Reality and Fantasy: The Chinese-American Woman's Quest for Identity," *Melus* 12 (1985) 23-31.

¹²⁸Cf. C. Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); also cited in Tong, *A Cross-Cultural Study*, 32.

¹²⁹*Daughters of Sarah* 20 (1, Winter 1995) 8-12.

¹³⁰"Courageous Voices," 8.

¹³¹"Courageous Voices," 8.

As one's nurturing culture, this self-concept is acquired early on, in one's childhood years and has been reinforced through social practices later in life. However, the inherent conflict between the discovering/freeing of the self and role expectations constantly exists and continues to impact a Chinese woman's life. Provided with favourable circumstances, this self-in-relation-to-other should be a much valued Chinese virtue. However, if society does not accept or allow any space for the development of the 'private/'individual' self, conflicts and frustrations would be inevitable. That is why most overseas-born Chinese women in North America want their children to have the best combination: North-American circumstances and Chinese character -- particularly living out the self in consideration of others. Even though R. Hegel's examination is confined to the literary manifestations of the Chinese self, he is quite perceptive in concluding that the Chinese self is "no self and yet everything... It is in constant flux and ... it encompasses mutually constrastive or even contradictory elements."¹³² That is why while others see the four mothers in *The Joy Luck Club* as too powerful to be considered as non-fictional, real-life figures,¹³³ I see the novel/film as a realistic representation of women's flight for independence and power against the traditional Chinese society in which women have a very low status.

It is true that the construal of the self has pivotal implications for personal emotional experience. In a Chinese

¹³²*The Expression of the Self*, 30.

¹³³See Appendix B, Item (9) in 'Findings.'

society, women are considered as the weaker sex, expected to be more emotional and emotionally fragile, and thus more vulnerable to suffer depressive symptoms.¹³⁴ In a way, this conception of women does give acceptance and thus freedom for women to express their emotions, especially sad and painful emotions such as crying and depression. Likewise, Chinese women may have problems accepting men who express their sadness with tears in public, as they too would be embarrassed by the action. However, Chinese women as well as men do experience the negative impacts of emotional inhibition. Likewise, these negative experiences may have a less negative impact on Chinese women because women are psychologically more accustomed to endure suppression and thus more capable in coping with inner conflicts and frustrations.

¹³⁴It is true even in North American Chinese societies. According to Choy, female psychiatric patients double the number of male patients. The former are more vulnerable to suffer from depression. Cf. Appendix B, Item (2) in 'Findings.'

CHAPTER SIX

A CHINESE-CANADIAN WOMAN'S RESPONSE TO THE
PROPHETIC PATHOS IN ISAIAH

This chapter is the working-out of my reader-oriented approach to the Isaian pathos. To map out precisely the particulars of my reader-perspective, other factors (besides my Chinese cultural background) have to be taken into consideration. The discussion on 'gender and reading' underscores my reading perspective as a woman. An examination of my social and methodological locations explicates both the diversity and richness of reading perspectives from which the community of readers bring to the Bible. The 'individualistic' aspect of my interpretation of the Isaian emotions is represented in the last section, in which I shall respond as a Chinese-Canadian woman.

6.1 Gender and Reading

The study of gender takes many forms¹ and serves many

¹For an example of its application to feminist literary criticism, cf. Exum, "Feminist Criticism: Whose Interests Are Being Served?," *Judges and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, ed. Gale A. Yee (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Fortress, 1995) 65-90. According to Elizabeth A. Flynn, recent scholarship on the interplay between gender and reading are primarily from two different sources: (1) reading researchers who provide empirical data on gender-related similarities and differences among developing readers (elementary and high school students); and (2) feminist literary criticism that analyses texts from a reader-oriented perspective ("Gender and Reading,"

interdisciplinary goals.² By confining my scope to 'gender and reading,' my purpose here is twofold. First, drawing on the empirical data, I shall illustrate that gender is a significant determinant of the interaction between text and reader.³ Second, I shall outline my own gender-specific reading strategy, which will be demonstrated in my response in 6.4.

Taking gender as a category of literary analysis, scholars have called for the consideration of the interaction between gender, race (and class) in textual representation and in the interpretation of texts.⁴ Gender differences in reading are observed in classroom settings and affirmed through structured experimental analysis.⁵ Although there are areas of affinity between male and female readers due to similar background experience and ethnicity (for example), the differences between them are significant.

Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts, ed. Flynn and Patrocinio P. Schweickart (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) 267.

²An impressive case is the University of Toronto's Center for Women's Studies. It is a collaboration of 16 departments within the university.

³Cf. in particular, Flynn and Schweickart, "Introduction," *Gender and Reading*, ix-xxix.

⁴Cf. for example, Danuta Fjellestad and Eleanor Wikborg, "Unit Five: The Presentation and the Reading of Gender and Race," *Reading Texts: An Introduction to Strategies of Interpretation* (Oslo-Stockholm-Copenhagen-Boston: Scandinavian University Press, 1995) 40f. See in particular, Schweickart and Flynn, "Introduction," *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts*, xxix.

⁵Cf. Fjellestad and Wikborg, *Reading Texts*; Mary Crawford and Roger Chaffin, "The Reader's Construction of Meaning: Cognitive Research on Gender and Comprehension," David Bleich, "Gender Interests in Reading and Language," Flynn, "Gender and Reading," *Gender and Reading*, 3-30; 234-66; 267-88 respectively. Cf. also Appendix A, though the findings are not conclusive.

(1) Interpersonal verbs have different meanings for women and men. This may lead to interesting implications for the comprehension of prose by readers of both sexes. In particular, women readers respond affectively to the human relationships represented in the stories.⁶ (2) 'Generic' masculine language (e.g., "man" in the context of "*man* is by nature a rational being"; and "his" in "the psychologist and *his* work") is often understood differently by women and men. To male readers, he/man refers to males only; to women, he/man is an 'automatic' choice that leads gender neutral images.⁷ (3) In the perception of the 'voice' in literature, both men and women read lyric poetry similarly in the sense they both perceived a strong lyric voice in the poetry, but the former read prose fiction differently from the latter. In prose fiction, men perceive a strong narrative voice. On the contrary, women experience it as a 'world'. In other words, women enter into the world of the novel by placing themselves in its context, while "men see the novel as a result of someone's action and construe its meaning or logic in those terms."⁸ (4) Women readers have a greater willingness to listen, a sensitivity to emotional nuance, and an ability to empathise with the characters.⁹ (5) While male readers are more detached from the text, female readers have greater participation in its events (i.e., more attached). They interact with the text

⁶Crawford and Chaffin, "The Reader's Construction of Meaning," 15.

⁷Crawford and Chaffin, "The Reader's Construction of Meaning," 15.

⁸Bleich, "Gender Interests in Reading," 239.

⁹Flynn, "Gender and Reading," 286.

more successfully, become more involved in its actions and are more critically alert than male readers.¹⁰ (6) With regards to confronting tensions in stories, women are found to be more capable in resolving its tensions and maintaining a consistent pattern of meaning.¹¹ All of this empirical evidence points to gender differences in the perception and correspondingly, interpretation of texts.

Two features underscore the dynamics of my gender-specific reading. (1) My reading is a *conscious woman's reading*. In other words, I have full awareness 'to read as a woman' instead of attempting 'to read as the other (sex).'¹² In doing so, I empathetically experience the persona's emotions and interact freely with the text in an affective fashion. I am an interested and attached reader entering into the inner world of the persona. (2) My reading is a *woman's perception of a man's 'I'-voice*.¹³ In my reading process, my 'self' encounters the 'other' -- the

¹⁰Flynn, "Gender and Reading," 267-68.

¹¹Flynn, "Gender and Reading," 284-86.

¹²Cf. K. M. Craig and M. A. Kristjansson, "Woman Reading as Man/Women Reading as Women," *Semeia* 51 (1990) 119-136; Carolyn Osiek, "Reading the Bible as Women," *NIB* I:181-87.

¹³As Elaine Showalter argued, if gender study is to develop, the extension of gender construction from femininity to masculinity should be an area for future research. Likewise, Alice Bach issued the same call to male scholars -- that they should consciously explore masculinism within their own readings ("Reading Allowed: Feminist Biblical Criticism Approaching the Millennium," *CR:BS* [1993] 195). I see Clines' "David the Man: The Construction of Masculinity in the Hebrew Bible," (*Interested Parties: The Ideology of Writers and Readers of the Hebrew Bible* [Gender, Culture, Theory 1; JSOTS 205; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995] 212-43) is a response to this call. It demonstrates the interaction between culture and gender construction.

text.¹⁴ Yet at the same time, it is also a reading of the female 'self' encountering the 'other' -- the male 'self.' In a way, while reading as a woman, I am at the same time constructing important aspects in the literary representation of the masculinity of the prophetic persona. With the specific cultural and contextual conceptions of maleness that I bring into the 'I'-Passages, my reading is thus a worked-out example of gender construction shaped by my own cultural context. What Clines does in "David the Man: The Construction of Masculinity in the Hebrew Bible,"¹⁵ is a man's perception of the masculinity of David the Man; whereas my reading is in essence a woman's interpretation of the manliness of Isaiah the prophet. Potentially, I may confront the conflict of the persona's masculinity, especially when the focus of my reading is his emotions.

6.2 Social Location and Biblical Interpretation

In 1.2.1, I have briefly discussed the two emerging trends in biblical studies: (1) reading the Bible from particular social locations;¹⁶ and (2) postcoloniality and biblical interpretation. While their impact on the theory and practice

¹⁴Note that Flynn describes the reading process as the confrontation between the reader and the 'other' (i.e. the text) ("Gender and Reading," 267).

¹⁵*Interested Parties*, 212-43.

¹⁶Cf. James E. Massey, "Reading the Bible from Particular Social Locations: An Introduction," *NIB* 1:150-53. Massey describes the phenomena that life in a particular social location helps to shape a group's hermeneutic as "natural, expected, and perhaps inevitable" (152).

of biblical interpretation is yet to be seen,¹⁷ on the practical level, the locus of their concerns rests on one fundamental question -- the question of identity. I see this dimension of 'social location' suggesting an additional measure for the identity issue of interpreters.

6.2.1 The Interlocking Question of Identity

Crucial to my response in this chapter is the determination of from which perspective to speak, or whose voice I represent. To put this in the form of a question: Who am I? Where should I locate myself in the guild of biblical interpreters? The answer to this requires in-depth reflections and perhaps, more conscious self-examinations.¹⁸ I have found aspects of affinity in the following designations of my identity: diasporic interpreter; postcolonial interpreter; Chinese-immigrant reader; and Chinese-Canadian reader.

Each of the above designations carries different connotations. I shall attempt to lay out my rationale in locating myself in a social context. The generic meaning for the term 'diaspora' accurately denotes Chinese scattered all over the world, or collectively describes 'overseas Chinese living outside China.' Among them are the three generations of my family. Because of my collectivistic Chinese personality, I tend to identify with my ancestors as 'diasporic' Chinese. However, in practice, 'diasporic' Chinese are often referred to those who

¹⁷Cf. especially, the reference cited in 1.2.1.

¹⁸This has never occurred to me prior to writing this thesis.

disperse from their homeland because of political suppressions, or the like. In similar circumstances, a great number of the mainland Chinese scholars ended up in the West during historical upheavals such as the Cultural Revolution, or more recently, after the June 4 Tienanmen Massacre in 1989.

Growing up in the British colony of Hong Kong is, to me, a pathway toward westernisation. Postcolonial interpreters are often known as those who grew up in a colonial setting but intellectually contextualised in the West later in life.¹⁹ This also best describes my background. As a member of the boomer's generation, back in the '60s and '70s, there was no such critique or reflection on the impact of colonialisation on the background and life experience of individuals. As a result, I lived through many unconscious years under colonial government and education system without much reflection. On the other hand, with the sovereignty of Hong Kong to be returned to China only months from now, more and more postcolonial discourse emerged in the recent past among academics and intellectuals.²⁰ In a way, it is a belated consciousness for some Chinese people with colonial experience like myself. Though with similar background and familiarity, I don't have the kind of passion and consciousness

¹⁹Cf. my discussion in 1.2.1.

²⁰A few of the representative examples are: Kwok Nai Wang (ed.), *Reflection: Colonial Government -- A Reflection and Critique* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Christian Institute, 1997) (in Chinese); Philip P. Chia, "On Naming the Subject: Postcolonial Reading of Daniel 1," *Jian Dao: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 7 (1997) 17-36.

as reflected in Rey Chow's writings,²¹ nor the strong voice as represented in Minh-ha T. Trinh's postcolonial and feminist critiques.²² At best, I am at the periphery in identifying myself with their respective corporate voices.

Status-wise, I am considered as a Chinese immigrant, or precisely, overseas born Chinese-Canadian in the Canadian context. While most Chinese immigrants coming to Canada have gone through a conscious choice -- uprooting from their culture and lifestyle and adapting to the new life in a foreign land -- my immigration to Canada from the U.S. (where I was a graduate student) some 20 years ago was a natural process.²³ The adjustment was more in the peripheral aspects rather than cultural.

Searching for my own identity at this stage is now a conscious decision. In determining from which perspective to speak, I feel rather comfortable to identify myself as Chinese-Canadian. This designation signifies my bi-cultural background and orientation and from which I shall represent the 'visible' minority woman's voice in a multi-cultural Canadian context. With the rise of ethnicity in recent years, researchers began to

²¹E.g. *Woman and Chinese Modernity: The Politics of Reading Between West and East* (Theory and History of Literature 75; Minnesota, Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), cf. esp. 'Preface.'

²²E.g. *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989).

²³In the early '70s, the Canadian immigration law was such that if you had a masters degree and were under 35 years old, you were almost guaranteed the immigrant status.

seriously challenge the 'assimilationist assumption.'²⁴ The fact that Chinese became the third most spoken language in Canada two years ago²⁵ reflects its voice's firm footing and thus, occupies a strategic place in all sectors of the Canadian society.²⁶

6.2.2 My Horizon as a Chinese-Canadian Woman

My use of the word 'horizon' here refers primarily to the cultural horizon in which I have been socialised and identified. However, both the notion of 'finiteness' (in the sense of the limit of one's mental perception, experience, and interest) and the possibility of 'expansion' (through enlarging one's range of vision) are implied in the term.²⁷ With the woman's viewpoint on the foreground and my Chinese culture as my repertoire, the focus here is rather on my social location as 'Canadian' and the effect of the fusion of the two horizons (Chinese and Canadian). This process of westernisation should be taken as a multi-dimensional phenomenon instead of a linear one.

²⁴I.e. assuming that in the course of urbanisation and industrialisation, ethnic minorities would assimilate and disappear into the melting pot. Cf. Valda Blundell; John Shepherd; Ian Taylor (eds.), *Relocating Cultural Studies: Developments in Theory and Research* (London: Routledge, 1993) 1-20, esp. 6.

²⁵after English and French.

²⁶This is evident in the work force, employment opportunities, etc. Recruiters of professional and academic positions encourage minorities and women to apply. The same is true for the Association of Theological Schools (ATS).

²⁷I borrowed the general concept of the term 'horizon' from Hans-Georg Gadamer with appropriation. Cf. *Truth and Method* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975, esp. 216-17).

It is difficult to spell out exactly what happens during this fusion. As one may privilege certain aspects to maintain or conform to; or consciously choose to depart from or share no part in certain areas of adaptation. As a matter of fact, since Canada favours and encourages multi-culturalism, it provides supportive social contexts for one to become a truly bi-cultural person. To be a Chinese-Canadian (through immigration) may turn out to be quite different from a Chinese-American. With the American 'melting-pot' philosophy toward acculturation, the younger generation is easily being assimilated into the American culture, leaving very few traits of one's own culture.

The above analysis has significant implications on my social location as a bi-cultural Chinese-Canadian. With regard to the impact of this bi-cultural background on my reading of the Isaian pathos, it is a rather interesting self-assessment. In terms of the perception and coping of emotion, I am more Chinese than Western. However, in the expression of emotion, I have fully adapted to the Western ways of manifestation. Canadian or Chinese, I believe education plays an important role (besides one's cultural orientation) in emotion-coping. I have acquired the kind of sophistication and survival skills to cope with the unpleasant emotions -- e.g., through monologic reflections and mental rehearsal. I can also identify with the gender-specific characteristics of emotion.²⁸ It is with this Chinese-Canadian woman horizon (or perspective) that I interact with the horizon of the text -- the textual representation of the Isaian pathos.

²⁸With regard to emotion, the question of whether I am more Chinese, Western, or female is an intriguing one.

This phenomenon can also be described as the 'fusion of two horizons.'²⁹

6.3 Methodological Location and Biblical Interpretation

Methodological location³⁰ should be taken as a criterion for explaining the diversity in reading strategy and perspective. In other words, both contextual (social) and methodological locations have significant impact on the ways that the Bible is read and understood. In defining my present methodological location, I shall attempt to identify my interpretative communities,³¹ in which I can be understood and in dialogue with the other members in a supportive, dialectical, and enriching relationship. In relation to this, Renita J. Weems' remark is inspiring: "Interpretation takes place in community, in relationship, in conversation among people."³²

6.3.1 My Interpretative Communities³³

Clines, in his *What Does Eve Do to Help?*, has suggested the following criteria in the identification of one's interpretative

²⁹Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 216-17.

³⁰Cf. Clines, "Possibilities and Priorities," 73-76.

³¹Stanley Fish first introduced the term 'interpretative community.' See *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980) 147-73.

³²"A Conversation with Renita J. Weems," *Religious News* 12 (1, 1997) 14.

³³Note that according to Fish, the 'interpretative community' is to be perceived as 'interpretative strategies.' Cf. *Is There a Text in this Class?*, 171.

community: (1) social location/context; (2) engagement in scholarly reading and dialectic activities; and (3) willingness to persuade and be persuaded.³⁴ In addition, I shall add two more criteria for my own appropriation: (a) interpretative preference/strategy³⁵; and (b) sharing an impetus in appropriating literary theories to biblical interpretation. This may well involve frustrating experiences and struggles.³⁶

In my social location, I find a community of junior and senior scholars who can identify with me in the following aspects: (1) trained in the old school yet with the eagerness to explore new frontiers for biblical studies and are at the cross-road of being persuaded; and (2) at times feel frustrated as the 'applicational' aspect of these newer methodologies are still in their infancy. No one can lay claim on a right or wrong method.

The above factors collectively serve as the criteria for the identification of the following three groups, i.e., my interpretative communities. The first two groups belong to my

³⁴9-24.

³⁵This puts me in touch with the Chinese Confessional community. I.e., to make sense of our faith and our scriptural texts in the light of our context -- through in depth reflection out of our 'experience.' I shall elaborate on this further in 6.3.2. Cf. Sugirtharajah, "Postscript: Achievements and Items for a Future Agenda," *Voices from the Margin*, 434. Cf. also Goldingay, *Models for Interpretation of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Mich and Carlisle: The Paternoster, 1985) 233-24 on doing biblical interpretation in the context of a 'confessional community.'

³⁶This kind of frustration or struggle often provides the incentive and impetus for scholarly investigations. See the introduction section of Haynes and McKenzie's (ed.), *To Each Its Own Meaning*, 2, in which both editors indicate that the frustrating experience and struggles they share in common are behind the conception of the book.

social location; the third one accounts for my ethnic background and cultural allegiance.

(1) Tyndale House³⁷ readers whose on-going research focuses on the utilisation of literary theories to biblical studies in general; and on the implication of these new approaches to the hermeneutical framework in particular.

(2) A small group of educated, non-biblical specialists who can dialogue with me on an intellectual level. My views are constantly being enriched and sharpened through their interaction with me as specialists in their specialised fields (counsellors clergywomen/men, homemakers, psychiatrists, and academics).³⁸

(3) The emerging Chinese scholars who were trained in the West with a firm footing in critical methods, yet have the sensibility to reclaim their Chinese heritage and then engage in cross-cultural biblical interpretation.

Outside the field of biblical studies, in literature, drama, film and art, Chinese perspectives are appreciated and their uniqueness is celebrated.³⁹ However, in the field of biblical studies, after decades of complete silence and under-representation, a small number of Chinese scholars are emerging on the international scene.⁴⁰ My involvement and dialogue with

³⁷A specialised centre for biblical research in Cambridge, England. With readers coming from all over the world, Tyndale is also an international community.

³⁸This is one of the target groups that I selected as a sample for my reader-response survey and interview.

³⁹E.g., Jung Chang's best seller *The Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China*, and Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*.

⁴⁰The representative examples are: Khiok-Khng Yeo (USA); Philip P. Chia (Hong Kong/China); Kwok Pui Lan (USA); Archie Lee (Hong Kong/China); John Lim (USA); Sze-Kar Wan (USA); and John

members of this interpretative community is hindered by the geographical distance; the lack of a certain common locale which fosters such dialogue (e.g., occasions such as consultations, forums); and the vast ideological gap between the different sub-cultural groups within the Chinese context (e.g., North American born Chinese, South East Asian Chinese, Mainland China Chinese, and bi-cultural, overseas Chinese now living in North America such as myself).

6.3.2 My Interpretative Strategy

My allegiance to the three interpretative communities opens up new possibilities and imposes certain constraints upon me as a member.⁴¹ Chinese Christians do not read the Bible outside of the context of faith and life experience. The meaning of the biblical text and its appropriation to one's life experience are, to a Chinese Christian, always grounded in faith.⁴²

As member of the Chinese confessional community, I share with other members the same strategy/preference of interpretation -- i.e., context-to-text. This interpretative strategy can be witnessed in the emerging Chinese theologies on the global scene. In the past few years, the following emerged: Theology of the

Y. H. Yieh (USA), etc. Of course, this list is not inclusive. The general trend is that the more vocal and dynamic few who contribute regularly to scholarly journals are most well-known.

⁴¹Cf. Clines, *What Does Eve Do to Help?*, 16.

⁴²See David S. Lim, "Trends of Theology in Asia," *Themelios* 19 (3, 1994) 18.

June 4 Massacre,⁴³ the Theology of Immigration,⁴⁴ the "Green" Theology, and the Theology of the Work of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵

6.4 My Response to the Isaian Pathos as A Chinese-Canadian Reader⁴⁶

This 'individualistic' response is in essence, a fusion of the two horizons -- (1) as a Chinese-Canadian woman; and (2) the textual representation of the Isaian pathos. The characteristics of this response as discussed in 2.3.2 best describe the dynamics of this 'fusion'-- as a reflective and pathetic experiencing activity.

The two established entry-points⁴⁷ and the three components of my reader perspective⁴⁸ together serve as the criteria for my response here. To articulate this strategy, four perspectives are at work. They are namely (1) as a woman reading into the pathos of a male persona; (2) as a 'Chinese self' interacting

⁴³Cf. in particular, Yeo, "Isaiah 5:2-7 and 27:2-6: Let's Hear the Whole Song of Rejection and Restoration," *Jian Dao* 3 (1995) 77-94. Yeo seeks to respond to the despair of many Chinese Christians prompted by the Tienanmen Square tragedy of June 4, 1989.

⁴⁴I.e., the influx of Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong to North America and U.K.

⁴⁵As a defense against the 'Third Wave' movement.

⁴⁶The conclusion of my synchronic-literary study of the 'I'-Passages in 4.3 serves as the textual basis of my response in this section. I shall not repeat the text-reference here.

⁴⁷I.e., (1) my own emotional/psychological make-up; and (2) my Chinese 'self' (cf. 2.3.2).

⁴⁸I.e., (1) Chinese culture; (2) Canadian situatedness; and (3) a woman's perspective. Together, the first two components denote one aspect of my identity as a bi-cultural person.

with the 'Isaian self'; (3) as a bi-cultural person responding to the Hebrew persona; (4) personally speaking: as Barbara Leung Lai reflecting on the inner life of this prophetic persona. Of course, there are areas of overlapping in these perspectives. My objective here is not to show their distinctiveness, but rather, to demonstrate that a reader can produce a plurality of reading from the same piece of literature when it is read from a number of focused perspectives. In other words, I intend to show the complexity of a reader's repertoire from which different representations or identities emerge. On the other hand, when this Isaian persona is approached from a number of perspectives, a fuller, or a more holistic portrait is constructed.

(1) *As a woman reading into the pathos of a male persona:* A woman's reading into the 'I'-voice of a man is, in essence, a reading of the 'other.' Particularly, when this 'I' serves as the channel for the self-representation of emotions, the impact upon me is rather fascinating. My perception of men coping and expressing emotions is thus in constant interaction with the textual portrait of the Isaian persona. As a woman understanding a man's coping of emotions, I find that Isaiah is rather helpless -- he deals with his unpleasant feelings alone. A strong notion of helplessness is behind his lament, grief, sigh, and complaint. The fact that his 'I'-voice breaks out in several occasions amidst the narrative/speech implies that he is on the verge of an emotional breakdown. Grieving to the point of experiencing severe physical pain (21:3-4), or weeping to the extent of refusing all comforts (22:4) is -- pathological. In other words, he is unable to cope.

Through his 'I'-voice, Isaiah is able to present his response to both pleasant and unpleasant emotions -- his affection, love, hope and trust. More impressively, both the intensity and depth of his unpleasant emotions are expressed. I find it rather peculiar to see a man so highly expressive in his 'I'-voice. Whenever a man speaks in his 'I'-voice, it is often intended to convey his opinions, or in other words, more direction-idea-oriented. While it is more acceptable for a woman to become emotional or to admit her emotional needs, expressing one's deepest feelings to the public audience in an 'I'-voice is quite unique to a man's character.

(2) *As a 'Chinese self' interacting with the 'Isaian self':*

In the Isaian text, most of the time Isaiah either speaks in the corporate voice of the community/audience or speaks as God's mouthpiece. His 'self' is rather hidden or submerged. However, in places where his 'I'-voice breaks out, aspects of his inmost being -- his inner 'self' is represented. General categories of emotions (e.g., joy, love, hope) as well as the more complex ones (e.g., frustration and perplexity) are brought to the foreground. Contrasting emotions (e.g. doubt and trust, lament and joy) exist side by side.

Another aspect of the Isaian 'self' is reflected in his self consciousness toward his prophetic mission. In other words, the Isaian self is hidden, yet its existence is consciously felt and affirmed. Interestingly, this consciousness is exclusively mission-oriented, or more precisely, role-oriented (as God's mouthpiece, servant, watchman, and pupil-sufferer).

Likewise, my Chinese self finds its affinity with the Isaian one. While others see it as hidden, inhibited -- or 'no self,' its existence is affirmed and its urge to be acknowledged is always there. In the same way Isaiah expresses this self through monologues, the Chinese self is often kept alive through journaling or self-reflection (sometimes in the form of monologic reflections). The second area of similarity is found in the role-oriented aspect of the Chinese self. My public self (i.e., how I am perceived as an individual by other people)⁴⁹ often looms large at the expense of my private self. In other words, when too much attention and effort are paid toward the well being of my public self, my private self is neglected. As my 'self' interacts with the Isaian one, I find the persona takes a rather courageous step in exposing his 'private' self to the 'public' -- his audience.

(3) *As a bi-cultural person responding to the Hebrew persona:* Stepping out of my inherent perception of emotion into the bi-cultural context, I find myself seeing some new lights in the Isaian response to his unpleasant emotions. On the one hand, I can identify with aspects of the persona's suppressed emotions. On the other hand, while I still hold that perseverance is a virtue, I also believe that bottling-up one's feelings and

⁴⁹In explaining how culture shapes the self, social psychologist H. C. Triandis developed several key concepts to distinguish between the public, private and collective self. The private self refers to how the person understands herself/himself; and the collective self points to one's membership in various social groups (e.g., ethnic, family). Cf. Triandis, "The Self and Social Behavior in Differing Cultural Contexts," *Psychological Review* 96 (1989) 506-520, cited in Abraham Tesser (ed.), *Advanced Social Psychology* (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1995) 55. I adopted Triandis' distinction here.

refusing to seek help is detrimental -- to the extent that it becomes pathological. However, monologic reflection or reflective journaling is therapeutic. I can also empathise with Isaiah his frustration of being a comforter but being placed on the 'receiving end' of consolation. It is even harder for a care-giver to receive help herself/himself.

One of the striking features that appeals to me in my reading of this Hebrew persona is his patriotic love toward his own people. As a bi-cultural person, you benefit from a broader horizon, which helps you perceive things. Yet, you always have the feeling of being on the periphery of both cultures -- that I am not very Chinese nor Canadian, in spite of the fact that I see myself rooted in the Chinese culture and sufficiently Westernised. Being brought up in the British Colony Hong Kong,⁵⁰ I never felt that I have a country where I belong. China back then was still separated from the rest of the world with an iron curtain. As Isaiah expresses his love for Israel and its people in great intensity, I lament for my generation of diasporic Chinese who scattered all over the world -- seeking favourable educational opportunities and a better life for ourselves and our next generation.

(4) *Personally Speaking*: I see another Isaiah inside me. I find myself identifying with this persona in many aspects: his mission (seeing-hearing-perceiving and proclaiming); his prophetic consciousness in seeing himself as God's mouthpiece, (suffering) servant, and watchman; the divine constraint, his

⁵⁰Three generations of my family were born and educated in Hong Kong.

grief, his feeling of frustration, perplexity, and helplessness; his anxiety and fear; being confronted with the tension between trust and doubt, joy and sadness; his love and affection toward his God; being able to grasp the glimpse of hope amidst destruction. Equating my reading activity as pathetic experience, I find the composite portrait of the Isaian pathos rather explosive! -- it has risen in me a new awareness (my private self) and a renewed identity that goes beyond 'cultural.'⁵¹ It opens up a new dimension of affective reading as I allow my own emotions to be evoked in this experience.

Reading as Barbara Leung Lai provides a distinct angle for my response as an individual. To be able to look into the inner life of the persona and to feel his emotions is, in itself, a comforting path -- a path which has led me in finding my 'self' and identity.

⁵¹As God's mouthpiece, overseer, and servant.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REFLECTION

My synchronic-literary study of the 'I'-Passages yielded fruitful results. A rich portrait of the Isaian pathos emerged as I utilised the methodological tools -- the tailor-made entry-points for my reading. Both reference and inference of pleasant and unpleasant emotions were identified in the textual representation of the persona.

The reader-oriented approach explicates the ways that culture-gender-context shapes one's reading. My employment of the empirical research methods go beyond theories into the real life participation of flesh-and-blood readers/interviewees. Reading as Barbara Leung Lai provides a strong 'individualistic' voice in the response. By pursuing this two-centred approach, I demonstrated in a multi-dimensional way how a piece of biblical literature is understood by a gender-culture-context 'specific' reader -- like myself.

Putting these two-fold results together, I can describe this venture as -- 'A Chinese-Canadian Reading of the Isaian Pathos.' This may be suited to go under the rubric of 'cultural exegesis' -- an emerging and exciting field in biblical studies. Writing on culture and scripture reading, John Y. H. Yieh notes that although the basic cultural perspectives of Chinese Christians remain the same, the horizon of their concerns changes over time.¹ However, as he challenges that "we may never reach a

¹"Cultural Reading of the Bible: Some Chinese Christian Cases," *Text and Experience*, 152.

final version of (Chinese) cultural exegesis," he is quite perceptive in stating that "the question for cultural exegesis is not any more whether or not we can do it, but rather *how* we do it."² In a way, this thesis is a heuristic attempt to demonstrate this '*how*' as underscored in Yieh's remark. In fact, aiming to reach a *final* version of Chinese cultural exegesis is contrary to the ethos of any reader-oriented approach. The plurality and/or diversity of Chinese reading perspectives should be a more realistic and enriching target. In this sense, I believe that this study has succeeded in providing the research agenda (i.e. the '*how*') toward 'a' version of culture-gender-context '*specific*' interpretation.

²"Cultural Reading," 152 for both quotations, italics and the word in brackets are mine. On another occasion, he further reminds his readers of the complexity of the task (cf. "On Methodology: A Response to Towner and Yao," *Jian Dao* 5 [1996] 151).

APPENDIX A: READER-RESPONSE SURVEYS

I have conducted four reader-response surveys between March 1994 and April 1996. The first three are geared toward homogeneous groups in Toronto (Surveys [a], [b] and [c]). The fourth (Survey [d]) is targeted toward a multi-cultural group in Cambridge, U.K. All respondents have been informed in writing of the purpose of the survey before their actual participation. The samples are intentionally selected as I am acquainted with all the subjects.

The socio-demographic homogeneity of participants in Surveys (a), (b) and (c) constitute the following:

- Cultural-context: Overseas born (in Canadian context), bilingual and bi-cultural Chinese Canadians who have been in Canada/North America for a minimum of 20 years
- Age: 40-50
- Literacy and Education: Trained readers with post-secondary education in North America
- Gender: All participants in Survey (a) are woman. Surveys (b) and (c) are mixed groups with both genders evenly represented.
- Religion: Protestants from different denominational backgrounds; to various degrees, all familiar with the biblical texts

Aims for Surveys (a) and (b):

Using 'response-survey' as my empirical research tool, I seek to discover if there is any implication that can be drawn from the surveys on the following: (i) the 'gender'-difference in reading 'emotions'; (ii) is there any constraint in reading a piece of biblical literature for those who are accustomed to reading the Bible for confessional purpose?; and (iii) in the area of emotion, can my findings say anything that is characteristically Chinese (in a North-American context)?

Participants in Surveys (a) and (b) are given the text of Isaiah 21: 1-12 and are asked to identify and respond to the 'emotion(s)' of Isaiah as depicted in the text. Below is a sample of the survey 'form.'

A READER-RESPONSE SURVEY ON THE PROPHETIC PATHOS (THE EMOTIONS OF ISAIAH) AS DEPICTED IN ISA 21:1-12

Name: _____

To the Readers (i.e. "You")

- Your reading process is "meaning-making." Keep asking: What does this passage mean to me?
"Meaning is context-bound and context is boundless."
- Put yourself at the centre, on the foreground of your meaning-making. Don't worry about your interpretation.
- Be conscious that you are a "Chinese," "Female"/"Male" reader with a unique personal formation (including spiritual).

- Retrieve from your cultural background, your past experiences and interact freely with the passage in your meaning-making.
- Use whichever version that is most familiar to you.
- In your response, use whatever language (English or Chinese) that comes to you most naturally. (E.g. [無奈]).

Aims:

- To identify the references of emotion in this passage;
- To elaborate on the kind and/or the realm of emotion(s) in each of the references; and
- To reflect on: a) the emotional impact of this passage on you; or b) if you were Isaiah, describe your emotional state.

My Findings in Surveys (a) and (b):

Ten women participated in Survey (a) and four couples took part in Survey (b). In these two homogeneous groups, all but three participants used both English and Chinese in their response, though English is primarily the language used. Among the bilingual responses, the following emotive expressions are overwhelmingly presented in English: anguish, despair, depressed, helpless, bewilderment, perplexed, frustrated; and [無奈] (closest English equivalent: 'helpless'), [肉緊] (in my judgment, no English equivalent, the closest would be 'urgent') are expressed in Chinese. Women respondents generally depict a fuller picture of the Isaian emotions and feelings than men in terms of their expressiveness (i.e. they used a variety of emotive terms) and descriptive details. With regard to the watchman theme in vv. 6-8, 11-12, all but two among the women participants have observed Isaian emotions in the realm of 'under the demand of staying alert', 'self-consciousness of the character's role' etc. About half of the respondents tried to resolve the tension between the prophet's 'lament' over the fall of Babylon and the fact that Babylon is a known enemy of Judah. Its fall should be an occasion for joy instead. In this aspect, I observe the notion of interpretative constraint among some of the participants.

If there is anything that can be said as 'characteristically Chinese' from both surveys, it is that the readings are very *reflective*. The respondents exhibit a consistent tendency to relate the text to their contexts. They are able to draw parallels from their past experiences (e.g. The Cultural Revolution in Mainland China; the desert storm in Southern California; and various world disasters) and making the text relevant to their present contexts (e.g. their role as overseer in their church community; the agony of being asked but unable to provide answers to the seekers; national disasters; war scenes, etc.). This observation is significant -- it indicates that their reading is at the same time an active meaning-making endeavour. To a certain degree, it can be considered as an 'emotive reading' as their emotions are being evoked in relating this piece of biblical literature to their individual contexts.

Aims for Survey (c):

My study in group (c) is to look into the role of 'experience' (particularly the nurturing environment, value system and

experience from youth to adulthood) in the interpretation of a biblical text. Group (c) is given Luke 15: 11-32 (The Parable of the Lost Son) as the text. The responses occurred in a group response setting. All participants are encouraged to respond and interact freely with each other, with myself as the moderator and observer.

The dynamics of the discussions focused primarily on the interpretation of the parable from the perspectives of the father (parent); the elder son; and the younger one. This general direction then boiled down to one fundamental question: Are their actions justified?

My Findings in Group-Survey (c):

I have observed strong indications that experience (i.e. upbringing, family values, sibling rivalry and parental favouritism) plays a crucial role in the interpretation of this parable. This observation is evident in the ways that gaps in the parable are being filled in; and the actions of the characters (the father, the younger and elder son) are being justified and/or condemned.

Group (d) is a multi-cultural group with both genders and the following cultures represented: Indian, British, Iranian, Korean, Singaporean, American, Russian, Romanian, Brazilian, Australian, Norwegian, and German. The following is a list of the particulars of this group:

- Social/Cultural-Context: very diverse
- Age Range: 30-55
- Reading Competence and Education: professional, competent readers of the Bible, biblical scholars
- Religion: from a variety of religious and interpretative traditions

Aims for Survey (d):

My survey-research in group (d) is aimed at looking into two specific aspects. Firstly, for this multi-cultural group, my priority is to see if emotion (expression and understanding of) differs culturally. Within the limits of this small-scale cross-cultural survey, I understand that the result will be far from conclusive in terms of having anything 'specific' to say about a particular culture. With this in mind, the objective of Survey (d) is thus to serve as a 'collective-comparative' basis for Surveys (a) and (b) -- by highlighting the similarities and distinctiveness between the two: (i) homogeneous Chinese-Canadians (represented by groups [a] and [b]; and (ii) multi-cultural (represented by group [d]). In my analysis of Survey (d), I will take into account the interplay between the nurturing culture and social context of respondents as reflected in the ethno-cultural information provided on the survey. Secondly, I seek to explore if there is any interpretative constraint (on account of religious tradition, methodological location, etc.) for competent readers of the Bible. Below is a sample of the

survey designed for this multi-cultural group (a minor revised version of the survey for groups [a] and [b]):

PROPHETIC PATHOS AS DEPICTED IN ISA 21:1-12
(A CROSS-CULTURAL READER-RESPONSE SURVEY)

Name: _____ Sex: _____
 Ethnicity: _____
 Nationality: _____
 Age: 25-35 _____ 36-55 _____ 56+ _____

To the Readers (i.e. 'You'):

- Your reading process is "meaning-making." Keep asking: What does this passage mean to me?
 "Meaning is context bound and context is boundless."
- Put yourself at the centre, on the foreground of your meaning-making. Don't worry about right or wrong interpretation.
- Be conscious that every reading is potentially a gender-culture-context 'specific' meaning-making activity. You are a reader with a unique personal formation (including spiritual). Retrieve from your cultural background, your past experiences and interact freely and reflectively with the passage.
- Use whichever Bible version is most familiar to you.

Aims:

- To identify the references/inferences of Isaiah's emotions in this passage;
- To elaborate on the kind and/or realm of emotion(s) in each of the references; and
- To reflect on: (i) the emotional impact of this passage on you; (ii) if you were Isaiah, describe your emotional state.

My Findings in Survey (d):

A total of 15 participated in Survey (d), with four of them women. As a basis for comparison (with Surveys [a] and [b]), I shall first present my findings in more general terms; they will then be followed by an analysis pertaining to the 'comparative' purpose. (1) As to the identification of emotive language/Isaian emotions in this passage, the responses range from "there are no explicit emotions indicated" to remarks such as: "with very strong emotive terms," "the way that (he) describes his emotions is very phenomenal," "uses many natural forces and element to describe his emotions." However, the majority of participants do find this piece of literature containing emotive language. (2) Nine out of the 15 responses indicate a 'text to context' (or vice versa) reading strategy. Only one in this group notes that her own emotions are being evoked in reading the passage. (3) As to the gender difference in reading, I believe it will be too presumptuous to pinpoint anything specific in this very diversified group. However, the most elaborate and descriptive response is from a woman.

In comparing Survey (d) with (a) and (b), I note the following specifics: (1) Five out of the 15 responses have pointed out the element of 'hope'/'joy' in the passage (esp. v.3 -- though in travail, the hope will be in the newborn; v. 9 -- the fall of Babylon will be hope for Judah; vv. 11-12 -- night comes but morning will come also). It is interesting to note that this element of 'hope'/'joy' is absent in Surveys (a) and (b). This implication may point to the fact that respondents in (a) and (b)

groups are primarily overwhelmed by the emotions in the realm of terror, anguish and doubt. (2) In addition to the emotive terms given in Surveys (a) and (b), the following emotions are identified in Survey (d): torn-between (proclaiming God's judgment and saving his people); uncertainty/ambivalent; and 'longing for freedom and an end to all sufferings.' (3) Quite distinctly, the Isaian emotions as associated with the representation of the watchman theme in verses 6-8, 11-12 are essentially missed in the responses of Survey (d), whereas the majority of the respondents in (a) and (b) have identified Isaian emotions along this subject.

This group of competent Bible readers is intentionally selected to fulfil my purpose. As anticipated, I have found an implicit notion of interpretative constraint in the responses. In this case, the restraint is not so much on interpretative strategy but on the fact that they are asked to respond to Isaian 'emotions'-- (for some) an area that any objective interpreter should have no part in. One respondent indicates specifically that my survey is very manipulating as I invite reflection on the emotional impact of the passage upon readers and invite them to put themselves in Isaiah's shoes. Yet another participant expresses his resentment and uneasiness when asked to interact freely with the passage (implying first that there is no 'the' meaning of the text; and secondly, emotional impact could be the outcome of a reading). It is in these side-comments that I find the notion of interpretative constraint existing among this group of competent Bible readers.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS

Objectives:

Using interviews as my research instrument, I seek to find if there is anything that can be said as characteristically 'Chinese' (in North American context) in the area of emotion. With this as my primary objective, I have conducted two interviews in Toronto in the summer of 1994. My first interview was with Dr. Thomas Choy, a practising psychiatrist in Scarborough, Ontario. A subsequent interview was done with Dr. Vincent Poon, a family physician and a licensed marriage and family therapist in Metro Toronto. Both specialists are bi-lingual and bi-cultural. Sixty percent of Choy's patients are ethnic Chinese whereas in Poon's counselling practice, Chinese clients constitute about 30%. Due to the complexity in the constituency of 'Chinese-Canadians,' the interviews are targeted toward the overseas born (in Canadian context), bi-lingual and bi-cultural, middle-aged Chinese-Canadians. The following interview schedule was provided beforehand and it was used as a general procedural guide during the interviews. With myself being the interviewer, I have taken the liberty to interact with the respondents simultaneously. Both interviewees were asked to respond in whatever language that comes to them most naturally. As a result, both Chinese and English were used in the interviews though the questions are constructed in English. The proceedings were recorded on tape on both occasions.

The Interview Schedule

- 1) In the area of emotion and feeling, can you label anything that is characteristically Chinese?
- 2) Is there any significant distinction between men and women in the area of emotion?
- 3) Between ethnicity, gender and personality, which is the most dominant factor in dealing with emotions?
- 4) What is the Chinese concept of the "self"? If a person thinks/talks (i.e. non-verbal and verbal) to her/himself in form of a "monologue" (non-pathological), what does it appeal to you?
- 5) To Chinese people, what is the most severe form of "grief"? What kinds of emotion are expressed in such a context? In what way/mode will such an emotion of "grief" be expressed?
- 6) If a man expresses to you in his own words: "My body is racked with pain, pangs seize me like those of a woman in labor; I am staggered by what I hear, I am bewildered by what I see. My heart falters, fear makes me tremble; the twilight I longed for has become a horror to me," What message is conveyed to you? Is he suffering from physical or emotional pains (or both)? How are they related?
- 7) If someone who ministers in the capacity of a comforter says to you, "Turn away from me, let me weep bitterly. Do not try to console me . . .," what kind of emotional state is this person in?
- 8) How would a Chinese person most likely react in facing "inner conflict"? E.g. tension between one's "being" and "doing."
- 9) How would Chinese most likely react to restraint, or if overpowered, being driven to do something?

- 10) What are the symptoms/signs for "suppressed emotions" among Chinese people? Do you think that there is an educational aspect in emotion? What exactly is the interplay between the cognitive and non-cognitive aspects in handling emotions from the therapeutic point of view?
- 11) If you have seen the movie "The Joy Luck Club," do you think that it is a true reflection of the Chinese 'way' of handling emotions or is it rather fictional?

A Synthesised Summary of My Findings:

As a summary of my findings from the two interviews, my purpose is to construct a general picture of 'Chinese-Canadians (note the criteria for my target group) and emotion' with special reference to the interplay of the nurturing culture, gender, personality, and Canadian context. I shall present the data gathered and the insight shared by the two interviewees in the form of a synthesised summary. It is crucial to note that Choy approaches the questions with the belief that due to the broad spectrum represented by Chinese-Canadians, it is impossible to label any emotion/mode of expression as of 'Chinese-characteristic.' Poon affirms that traditional Chinese culture still plays a major role in emotions. Using this observation as his starting point in constructing emotion-patterns that can be used to describe Chinese people, he further suggests that due attention should be paid to the influence of Western culture on individual Chinese-Canadians (as an add-on dimension).

(1) Emotion is universal; it is only in the 'way' that it is expressed that we can see cultural differences. Orientals in general use somatic expressions/symptoms to express negative feelings. While some emotions find no equivalent in Chinese (e.g. depressing, anxiety), the more sophisticated, or more westernised Chinese will use English to express these types of unpleasant feelings. Education does play a role in terms of the capability in expressing emotions. Personality is the dominant factor -- how one experiences emotion in the past makes up one's personality. While culture affects the style of child-rearing and it in turn shapes the character-formation, there is, however, no significant difference between the local-born and overseas-born Chinese Canadians in view of the variables within the same culture (Choy). In accordance with his starting point, Poon regards 'culture' as the dominant factor in determining one's emotional make-up. The following descriptive terms can be applied to a general profile of Chinese personality in relation to emotive responses: big-heart, demanding of self, distant, tolerant, obedient, responsible, self-control, shy, hidden, well-mannered (Poon).

(2) In the Chinese context, there are significant gender differences in the area of emotion. Men expect themselves to be strong and remain calm even in difficult situations. Crying is a sign of weakness. Women are supposed to be the weaker sex -- more fragile emotionally and adopt the norm of 'dependence on men' in many aspects of their life. Due to the nature of his practice, Choy admits that his observation may touch only the pathological side of human emotions. Female patients double the

number of male and the former are more vulnerable to suffer depression. Anger expressed aggressively and violently is one of the common symptoms among male patients.

(3) While Choy cautions over-emphasis of stereo types may distort individuality, this leads naturally into the discussion of the Chinese 'self.' It is a diffused 'self' (Choy). Traditional Chinese people find self-identity in terms of the relationship with the 'bigger-self' -- family, clan or country. A traditional portrait of Chinese 'self' is dependent on external forces (e.g. status in society, recognition, parental approval etc.) which collectively make up one's self-worth/esteem. In other words, one's sense of 'being' comes from one's 'doing.' This may well describe the Chinese concept of 'self'; and traits of this traditional norm are still to be found among the westernised Chinese nowadays. To Poon, the Chinese 'self' is a 'hidden-self.' Although this self may be 'hidden', in classical Chinese poetry and literature, both the depth and intensity of the author's emotions are expressed through various literary means. By inference, in literature, Chinese people are highly capable of bringing something that is hidden (e.g. self and emotions) to the foreground.

(4) Speaking to oneself in the form of a monologue is quite universal and it can be taken as a survival skill. A monologue is in effect, creating an imaginary dialogue by splitting up one's self (Poon). In doing so, one is objectivising oneself as he/she engages in detailed analysis and introspection. It may have therapeutic values (Choy). The more educated and sophisticated can take advantage of this self-analysis, whereas the less educated and more simplistic may not have acquired such a skill (Poon).

(5) To Chinese people, the most severe form of grief occurs when they experience the loss of loved ones. For males, the grief that comes with the death of parents is more severe than in the case of females. It is the idea of indebtedness -- and the loss of the opportunity to repay one's debts to one's parents which may be considered as the most intense sorrow (Poon). For a female, the loss of husband or child may cause depression and a strong sense of guilt. This observation is quite universal (Poon). Choy approaches this question basically from the ways that psychiatrists deal with grief. There are only two kinds of grief: (i) normal grief; and (ii) abnormal grief. Along the lines of the death of loved ones, abnormal grief is 'grieving to a pathological state': such as the feelings of losing part of oneself, one's internal world is empty, intense guilt feeling. Some Chinese characteristics can be detected in this form of grief. Under a similar pathological situation, Chinese would use an expression such as [心死] (literally: my heart is dead, no English equivalent), and [欲哭無淚] (literally: my tears have dried up, again no English equivalent). Some may come to the state of unconscious denial -- repression, a non-adapted form of grief. Among seniors, this extreme form of grief usually manifests in form of physical sickness. However, the Chinese funeral rites do encourage mourners (male and female) to cry and

lament in public without any restraint. In this way, Chinese cultural practice can facilitate the release of such extreme sorrow.

(6) The description cited from Isa 21:3-4 depicts a very visual, uncommon picture (in view of the fact that the character Isaiah is male). It uses a lot of physical senses to present an extreme case of suffering. However, what is more appealing to Poon is the depiction of Isaiah's emotional pain rather than physical -- very unusual expressions from the perspective of a Chinese male. Choy sees it as a reflection of both the depth and intensity of grief (though not in a pathological state). Isaiah uses bodily symptoms to express his psychological pain. It is a depiction of deep sorrow, deep depression, anguish, helplessness yet desperately seeking help. As long as these negative feelings are expressed, they are considered as 'dealt with' emotions and are therefore, normal emotional responses. For a Chinese person to seek counselling, it is quite normal that he/she starts from complaining physical pains/symptoms. In a way, this can be considered as the revelation of the 'true'-self (Poon). The underlying message in Isa 21:3-4 is that the character expresses himself fully, revealing that he is very vulnerable, dust to dust, unable to function (Poon).

(7) Choy sees that the notion of role-conflict is implied in Isaiah's reaction (cited from Isa 22:4). For example, it is often difficult for a care-giver to change roles and be cared for by someone else. "Turn away from me . . .," is actually . . . a way of turning people off yet one is desperately seeking help at the same time. It is like saying: "I want help but yet I don't" -- the anger is transferred to his helper. It also indicates a self-realisation of being beyond help -- a desperate expression. As to the notion of hope, Choy comments that people behaving in such a situation lack trust, and even if hope exists, it is not strong. In the case of inner-conflict, 'receiving' is a matured psychological development.

(8) In dealing with unpleasant emotions such as inner conflict and frustration, the more educated, more sophisticated are capable of employing various survival means: eg. self-analysis, reflection, or verbal expressions. Yet the less educated, less sophisticated would easily turn to denial or manifest with somatic symptoms: pains and sicknesses. However, these observations can not be said as characteristically Chinese. Education and sophistication have a lot to do with emotion-coping. On the one hand, education can improve one's self-understanding and help one to understand distorted feelings (the cognitive aspect of emotion). On the other hand, education can also help one to acknowledge (e.g. that 'it is O.K. to cry'), to experience, to get-in-touch with one's emotion (the non-cognitive aspect of emotion).

(9) Generally speaking, we can see 'traits' of the Chinese ways of dealing with emotions in 'Joy Luck Club' (Poon). However, it is not a true reflection. Against the background of traditional family values and norms, it is a rather dramatic portrait of

women's flight for independence and power. Cast in the setting of the old Chinese society whereby women have a very low social status, the women portrayed are too powerful to be considered as non-fictional, real-life figures (Choy).

APPENDIX C: A CLASSICAL DIRGE POEM

(WRITTEN BY A CHINESE WOMAN IN HER 60S, SHORTLY AFTER THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND -- FALL, 1984 IN HONG KONG)

無題

一

燈昏抱影寂寂心，
數尺更等替未溫

冷窗已是重簾鎖，
簷前風雪點滴聞

二

啞聲死別夢也稀，
空蒼渺渺會何時

顧我無家甘作客，
魂兮還矣嘆親焉

永別叮嚀耳尤記，
碑前立字志不移

同衾共穴連生死，
北雁南還定有期。

APPENDIX D: A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

(WRITTEN BY A CHINESE MAN IN HIS 40S, WHOSE WIFE PASSED AWAY
AFTER A LONG BATTLE WITH CANCER -- SUMMER, 1993
IN TORONTO, CANADA)

笑萍，謝謝妳！

就像一個堅毅的長跑運動員，在一片支持和敬佩聲中，妳踏進運動場館，所有人都站了起來，甚至道與妳伴跑....笑萍，妳終於抵達了終點。

在這五年半的里程中，妳穩健的步伐，堅定的心志，對隊友忘我的支持，令整個長跑行列都散發著光輝，使週圍的人幾乎忘記了 神在妳身上特別的工作，以致妳會比大部份隊員都早完成妳的旅程；並且抵達終點之時，也正是與我們別離的日子。

但妳終於先我們而去了。只留下那爽朗的笑容、響亮的聲音，以及一段段不捨的回憶。

妳的別去，送來了遠近片片不斷的情誼。在那擠得滿滿一堂的安息禮拜中，讀經的，見證的，致慰詞的，甚至意外地連主持聚會的牧師，都一個個用簡單的語句，親切地講述妳在他們的生命上所留下的痕蹟。而堂週圍隱隱發出的泣聲，更反映著無數掩蓋不住的共鳴，倘使不是因著他日與妳重逢的寶貴盼望，恐怕都要化悲慟不禁的哀哭。

笑萍，我們有機會一起放下旁務，共走妳最後的一程，並且更單獨共渡那最終的一刻，是 神給我們一份十分珍貴的禮物。雖然這段日子，（我明白是為了妳的原故，）是那麼令人詫異地短速。竭盡心力的漫漫長程，使妳到終點在望的時候，已只能全神灌注地踏上每一步，再沒有多說話的餘力。

我承認過去與妳在一起的十八年歲月，並不盡是愉快的日子，然而這段與妳最後朝夕相對的光陰---每天妳我為了使妳的身體能繼續操作而重複的動作，加上我如愛侶情話般為這些努力配上的旁白---卻寸寸都是刻骨銘心，永誌不忘。

笑萍，有一點值得我們引以為傲的，是妳我都盡了力。週圍每一個疼愛妳的人也都盡了力。而我們都明白在那可見的終點以外，我們沒有人能伴妳多走一步。

然而我不得不更向妳傾吐，在這與妳並跑的最後一程，我是完全被妳的風采所傾倒。在跑道上，我和眾人一樣，都是有上有下，有跑有歇。惟有妳是全然投入，始終無間地專心前行，使每一步都瀟灑地激發起無盡信與愛的回應。在妳的安息禮拜中，我們聽到因為妳而返到教會的鄰居剛信主的消息；而教會昨天出版的《新歌》月刊裡，更讀到多篇主動投稿思念妳的文章。

笑萍，還有一點我們應當感謝的，是一切都是那麼完美。那最後的一個早晨，妳在半昏迷中，當我輕輕地親妳的時候，妳突然狠狠地在我的面頰上印上的一記，至今仍使我的眼眶淌著熱淚。隨後，妳以一整天的時間，用微弱得幾乎不能辨別的聲響，一一對穿梭不斷到來慰問的親友表達謝意。然後至深夜所有人都離去後，妳才讓我單獨與妳道別....

數天後，在莊嚴肅穆的安葬禮中，本來蓋上薄薄烏雲的天空，突然擠出豆大的雨點，伴著一枝枝往棺木上的鮮花，也和應著天融親自作曲，用法國號為妳吹奏的一曲「媽咪」。在悠揚雄渾的號聲中，再分不出眼前雨是淚，是喜樂還是哀傷。

為了這些以及其他一切，除了向 神感恩以外，我只能衷心地加上一句：笑萍，謝謝妳....

勝利榮歸日，
戴冠別去時，
恩福盈盈聚，
情義絮依依。

錢北斗 一九九三年六月廿一日

(此文投香港《時代》
專欄)

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