INTERPRETING THE BIBLE AGAINST POSTMODERN BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS: THE ROLE OF TIME AND TRADITION

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ABSTRACT
There are two main streams for interpreting the Bible in postmodern hermeneutics, Reader-Response Criticism and Reception History. They have things in common, namely the "dialogical" character of analysis. However, they differ significantly in their perception of the role of time and tradition. Reader-Response is a purely synchronic approach; it has no interest in either time or tradition in its analysis. Scholars of Reader-Response claim that there is no persistency of meaning throughout time. On the one hand, we see this as a deficiency because it suggests that there is no such a thing as meaning of the text at all. On the other hand, it leaves enough space for original interpretation. Scholars of Reception History insist on the continuity of meaning throughout time. Thus they claim that there really is something which we may call the "core meaning" of the text to which new interpretations add new significances. However, they risk the other extreme – over-reliance on the tradition and dismissal of interpretations which are not in continuity with the tradition. David P. Parris brings in a concept of "paradigm shift", which takes tradition into account but leaves enough space for the originality of new interpretations.

Key words
Reader-Response Criticism, Reception History, Time, Tradition, Paradigm shift

In the present study, we shall present two postmodern approaches to interpreting the Scriptures, Reception History[1] and Reader-Response Criticism. They share some common concerns, for example, the interest in the reader; however, in many other ways, they are very distinct. There are two main differences between them: (i) the

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[1] The original German term is *Wirkungsgeschichte*.

role of time and (ii) the role of tradition in the analysis. These two differences are closely related to one another.

Reader-Response Criticism is a purely synchronic approach looking at the final form of the text and does not take into account either the development of the text or its history. One of the main promoters of this approach in biblical studies, David Clines, is persuaded that there is hardly any determinacy of meaning over time. Stanley Fish, an influential figure in literary criticism, takes a rather provocative stand on this matter: "There is no direct relationship between the meaning of a sentence (paragraph, novel, poem) and what its words mean."[2] Clines extends this position in a similar way: "Whatever a text may mean in one context, it is almost bound to mean something different in a different context."[3] Therefore, we may argue that there is hardly any space left for *tradition* with regard to the meaning of the biblical text. Reception History, on the contrary, is both synchronic and diachronic. The diachronic part covers, as the title suggests, the history of reception of the text. In other words, it is a history of the text from its final composition to the present day. Anthony Thiselton, in opposition to Clines, sees much more determinacy in meaning in the text. However, the main difference between Clines's and Thiselton's approach lies in the formative role of tradition. According to Thiselton, there is some continuity in meaning over time. He observes: "Tradition mediates *judgments* concerning textual content. Even if Fish could claim that these are no more than reactive constructions by earlier reading communities, at least these would constitute 'something outside' Fish's self-sufficient reader or reading community."[4] The problem of Reception History is that it does not address the question of what to do with interpretations throughout history which contradict each other. The aim of this paper is to offer a middle way between over-reliance on tradition, which does not leave enough space for originality and critical attitude (Reception History), and an absolute break with the tradition, which does not allow for any continuity of meaning throughout time (Reader-Response). This middle way can be found in the concept of "paradigm shift" introduced in biblical studies by David P. Parris.

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[2]   Stanley Fish. Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics. In: *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University 1980, p. 77.

[3]   Fish. Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics, p. 178.

[4]   Fish. Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics, p. 157.

In the first part of the study, we shall look at the roots of both Reader-Response and Reception History. We will expose some general principles of postmodern hermeneutics and show how they influenced biblical hermeneutics. Then we shall present our two approaches from the perspective of their concerns for time in the analysis and the role of tradition within them. In the final part, we will demonstrate the importance of a proper regard for time and tradition in biblical analysis in the example of the concept of "paradigm shift".

Postmodern Hermeneutics

Postmodern hermeneutics, even though it is a very broad phenomenon, shares one common principle – the interest in the reader. The reader becomes an indivisible part of the hermeneutical process because he or she has an immanent impact on the meaning of the text. In other words, *the reader shapes the meaning of the text.* However, when we open an issue of an "involved interpreter", we risk suspicion from the perspective of modern hermeneutics, which sets up a threat in the form of "subjectivism". The label of subjectivism is given to anything that cannot be perceived "clare et distinctae",[5] i.e. cannot be verified or falsified. Moreover, the split in evaluating our perception of the world around us also created an abyss between the subject and object in the hermeneutical process, which is a desired prerequisite in modern hermeneutics. However, the dialectical subject-object relationship between the "I" (the interpreter) and the "other" (the interpreted text) is a false dichotomy and it was not "invented" until the period of the Enlightenment.[6]

In reaction against the modern dialectical subject-object relationship, Edmund Husserl formulates the human perception of the world around us and our relationship to it in general as a cohesive process. This perspective has an important impact on hermeneutics. Hans-Georg Gadamer in his hermeneutics introduced Husserl's concept of the "Lebenswelt".[7] In this concept, the individual is always seen

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[5] Cf. René Descartes – George Heffernan (eds.). *Meditationes de Prima Philosophia*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame 1990.

[6] Cf. Jürgen Habermas. The Entry to Postmodernity: Nietzsche as a Turning Point. In: Thomas Docherty (ed.). *Postmodernism: A Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press 1993, pp. 51–62.

[7] Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer. *Truth and Method*. London: Sheed and Ward 1975, p. 218. "life-world, German Lebenswelt, […] the world as immediately or directly experienced in the subjectivity of everyday life, as sharply distinguished from the objective

as a part of the whole to which he or she relates at every moment.[8] According to Jonathan Roberts, Gadamer's hermeneutics is essentially "dialogical".[9]

Gadamer defines a hermeneutical process which involves two partners as co-workers in dialogue as a "play".[10] Play begins with the creation of the work and continues with every new interpretation. All those who are involved in this hermeneutical process are, in Gadamer's terminology, perceived as "players". Play is an essential process in hermeneutics since only when the play takes place, i.e. when both partners are involved, we can actually talk about a text, music, theatre, etc. "A drama exists really only when it is played, and certainly, music must sound."[11] An American philosopher Merold Westphal paraphrases Gadamer and provides a useful link to hermeneutics of interpretation of the text: "If we are talking about a play, the spectator belongs to it essentially. If we are talking about a text, it is the reader who is essential."[12]

'worlds' of the sciences, which employ the methods of the mathematical sciences of nature; although these sciences originate in the life-world, they are not those of everyday life. The life-world includes individual, social, perceptual, and practical experiences. The objectivism of science obscures both its origin in the subjective perceptions of the life-world and the life-world itself. In analyzing and describing the life-world, Phenomenology attempts to show how the world of theory and science originates from the life-world, strives to discover the mundane phenomena of the life-world itself, and attempts to show how the experience of the life-world is possible by analyzing time, space, body, and the very givenness or presentation of experience." Encyclopædia Britannica Online. *Life-world* [2013-2-13]. <http://www.britannica .com/EBchecked/topic/340330/life-world>.

[8] "As the single word belongs within the total context of the sentence, so the single text belongs within the total context of a writer's work, and the latter within the whole of the particular literary genre or of literature. At the same time, however, the same text, as a manifestation of a creative moment, belongs to the whole inner life. Full understanding can take place only within this objective and subjective whole." Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 259.

[9] Cf. Jonathan Roberts. Introduction. In: Michael Lieb – Emma Mason (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Reception History of the Bible*. New York: Oxford University 2011, p. 3.

[10] Cf. Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 102.

[11] Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 104; cf. also Davies describes the hermeneutical relationship this way: "[t]he subject (reader) and the object (text) were indivisibly bound together, and the relationship between them was a dynamic process, for texts only became alive and meaningful when people became involved with them and responded to them." Eryl W. Davies. *Biblical Criticism: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Bloomsbury 2013, p. 14.

[12] Cf. Merold Westphal. *Whose Community? Which Interpretation?: Philosophical Hermeneutics for the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic 2009, p. 82.

Modern hermeneutics attributes a supreme position to the author. However, the author, according to Gadamer, Westphal and Davies, is not more important than the reader. In fact, the author is seen as being like any other reader.[13] There are two main points inherently arising from this observation: Firstly, in contrast to modern hermeneutics, there is a difference between the "mind" of the author and his or her text; therefore, there is a point further than the author to be reached. Seconly, there is an equality established between the author (through his or her text) and the reader/interpreter in regard to the creation of the meaning of the text but also in regard to the recognition that the author has his or her own "prejudices".[14]

Synchrony versus Diachrony

With regard to the interpretation of an ancient text, such as the Bible, there are two ways to deal with the question: "How to bridge the gap between the text which is more than 2000 years old and its contemporary reader?" Reader-Response Criticism, in reaction against modern hermeneutics, depends on the possibility of bringing the context of the text closer to the reader claiming that the ancient world is lost long ago and we cannot reconstruct it by any means. Thus, Reader-Response relies fully on the text in its final shape and is interested *only* in what the text tells us now. For the scholars in Reception History, this position is a step too far. They want to pay equal attention to what the text meant to its *first readers*, what it has meant to its *readers during the history* of reception and to what it means to its *readers nowadays*.

Gadamer, following Martin Heidegger, stresses the importance of the historicity of every text and its interpreter as well as of every understanding arising from this encounter in every moment of reception history of the text. Modern hermeneutics favored the role of the author above all the other elements in hermeneutics.[15] In other words, it claimed that if we understood the intention of the author, we would be able to find the original meaning. And this, according to Rudolf Bultmann, is

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[13] Cf. Davies. *Biblical Criticism: A Guide for the Perplexed*, p. 13.
[14] "It converts into a theory the idea of the poet inspired by a muse or a prophet inspired by God. The idea is simply that there is a power at work in finite authorial creation – for Gadamer the power of tradition – of whose agency and effects the author is never fully aware." Westphal. *Whose Community?*, p. 82.
[15] Cf. Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, pp. 153–158.

a feasible goal.[16] The time gap, according to modern hermeneutics, is a "bias" which puts obstacles to our journey into the mind of the author. The author is seen as a hermeneutical key to understanding the text.

However, according to postmodern hermeneutics, there is more to be attained than only the author, namely the message of the text. Even if we admit that, under ideal conditions, it is possible to reach the mind of the author, i.e. if we study the historical context, biblical languages, etc., it is not enough for understanding the author's intention. The message of the text, in fact, comprises both more and less than the author intended. The message of the text is grounded in (i) what the author imprinted in the text at the time of its creation, and in (ii) what we can discover in the text now.[17] Paul Ricoeur, in this respect, distinguishes (i) the world behind the text, (ii) the world of the text and (iii) the world in front of the text.[18] The "world behind the text" refers to the "Sitz im Leben" of the text, i.e. the searching for the author and the original meaning of the text (contextualisation of the message). The "world of the text" is to be understood as an equation: "the message equals the text". There is nothing behind to be attained apart from the text itself. We look at the text as a "sum of grammar", which is to be deciphered by various structuralist methods. Thus, we speak about the "de-contextualisation" of the text. The "world in front of the text" refers to what the message of the text says to us now, the so-called "re-contextualisation".[19] Gadamer, with regard to Ricoeur's third point, speaks about "application", which is to be understood as a re-contextualisation of the analysis to the interpreter's contemporality.[20] Thus, we may argue that the creed "back to sources" of modern hermeneutics and its focus on the contextualisation of the analysis in the original setting only is as deficient as the hermeneutics of formalists and structuralists, which maintains the other extreme, namely ignoring the history of the text altogether. We cannot separate the text (author) or the interpreter

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[16] "All decisions and acts have their causes and consequences; historical method presupposes that it is possible in principle to exhibit them and their connection and thus to understand the whole historical process as a closed unity." Rudolf Bultmann. Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible? In: Rudolf Bultmann. *New Testament Mythology and Other Basic Writings*. London: SCM 1985, p. 147.

[17] Cf. Paul Ricoeur. *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*. London: Athlone 1991, pp. 84–88.

[18] Cf. Ricoeur. *From Text to Action*, pp. 84–88.

[19] Cf. Westphal. *Whose Community?*, pp. 92–93; cf. also Ricoeur. *From Text to Action*, p. 83.

[20] Cf. Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 274.

from their context as both modern and some of postmodern hermeneutists did because, as Gadamer observes: "It is the mode of being of understanding itself which is […] revealed as temporality."[21] The historical conditionality of both the text and its interpreter is inevitable.[22] This recognition is a point at which two streams in postmodern hermeneutics part: (i) scholarships which deny any possibility of the continuity of meaning, i.e. there is no meaning outside of the context, no "core meaning", which would persist throughout history – Reader-Response Criticism (Fish, Clines);[23] and (ii) scholarships which take the "time gap" as a positive element in hermeneutics and try to take advantage of it, i.e. there is a meaning *per se* (outside the context), which is traceable throughout history – Reception History (Gadamer, Jauss, Thiselton).[24] The time gap can be, contrary to the understanding of modern hermeneutists, a productive feature. In fact, the historical distance helps to recognise the true prejudices, which we should keep from the false and misleading ones.[25]

Reception History in biblical studies, basing itself on the philosophical hermeneutics of Gadamer and the literary theory of H. R. Jauss, originally developed to depict the history of interpretation of the biblical text. Jauss adopted Gadamer's theory of "three steps of interpretation".[26] He calls it the "method of three successive readings", which comprises (i) understanding, (ii) interpretation and (iii) application.[27] The first reading creates our pre-understanding of the text, and it is called aesthetic reading. Even though it is seen as a rather

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[21] Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 109; cf. also "At any rate, it is clear that Dilthey did not regard the fact that finite historical man was tied to a particular time and place as any fundamental impairment of the possibility of knowledge in the human sciences." Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 206.

[22] Cf. "By virtue of our belonging, tradition produces within us the a priori element in interpretation. The double result is that all interpretation is perspectival and no interpretation is presuppositionless." Westphal. *Whose Community?*, p. 71.

[23] Cf. David J. A. Clines. *Interested Parties: The Ideology of Writers and Readers of the Hebrew Bible*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1995, pp. 178–179.

[24] Cf. Thiselton. Communicative Action and Promise in Interdisciplinary, Biblical and Theological Hermeneutics. In: Roger Lundin – Clarence Walhout – Anthony C. Thiselton. *The Promise of Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1999, p. 157.

[25] Cf. "It is only this temporal distance that can solve the really critical question of hermeneutics, namely of distinguishing the true prejudices, by which we understand, from the false ones by which we misunderstand." Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 266.

[26] Cf. Hans Robert Jauss. *Toward and Aesthetic of Reception*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota 1982, pp. 139–140.

[27] Cf. Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 274.

perceptive act, it has an impact on the interpretation of the text.[28] The second reading is a synchronic literary/textual analysis, which requires a highly informed reader in terms of literary theory.[29] The third reading is a historical-philological one, which involves a synopsis of an interpretation history of the text.[30] For the purposes of biblical studies, it requires a small adaptation that was developed by Thiselton. The first step remains unchanged. It is an aesthetic reading, which is perceptive and creates our pre-understanding of the text. The second step, which represents a critical reading, is modified into historical-critical exegesis. The third step is a historical reading, asking a question: "What did the text mean?", and applicatory reading, asking a question: "What does the text want to tell me now?" The third step includes a synopsis of an interpretation history of the biblical text as well as an interruption in the form of hermeneutics of suspicion,[31] which he borrowed from Paul Ricoeur.[32] Thiselton articulates this adjustment of Jauss's methodology to his requirement for the originality of interpretation. He apparently employs this tool although it does not organically belong to Jauss's methodological approach of three successive readings, but he does not seem to see any dissent in it. However, hermeneutics of suspicion belongs exclusively to synchronic literary scholarships (Reader-Response Criticism) like feminist criticism, ideology criticism, etc. since it does not perceive the role of the history of interpretation as formative and legitimising.

Reader-Response does not operate with the diachronic dimension of analysis, which, from the perspective of our analysis, is a deficiency. However, it offers a useful means, namely ideology criticism, which does not have a place in hermeneutics of either Gadamer or Jauss since they do not count on a negative response to the history of interpretation. Ideology criticism in biblical studies builds on the notion that the biblical text has been contaminated by various ideologies, both at the time of its origin and throughout the history of its reception.[33] It employs two steps to deconstruct the text or, in Clines's words, to show

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[28] Cf. Jauss. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, p. 143.
[29] Cf. Jauss. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, p. 145.
[30] Cf. Jauss. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, pp. 145–147.
[31] Cf. Thiselton. Reception Theory, H. R. Jauss and the Formative Power of Scripture. *Scottish Journal of Theology* 65 (2012), pp. 299–300.
[32] Cf. Thiselton. Reception Theory, H. R. Jauss and the Formative Power of Scripture, p. 300.
[33] Cf. Clines. *Interested Parties*, pp. 9–25.

"how the text deconstructs itself"[34]; both ways are strictly synchronic. "A text typically has a thesis to defend or a point of view to espouse; but inevitably texts falter and let slip evidence against their own cause."[35] Firstly, we look at whether the text deconstructs itself, i.e. whether we find elements which would contradict each other both in the immediate and in the larger context of our text. Secondly, we look at the text from the perspective of our interpretive communities. Are there elements which cannot be accepted by the 21st century reader? Clines, a Hebrew Bible scholar, paraphrases the strategy of reading the biblical text from the point of view of the contemporary reader by speaking about reading the text from left to right.[36]

Normativity of Tradition

The issue discussed above about the role of time in analysis and the persistence of meaning throughout history has an immediate impact on the role of tradition in interpretation. Whereas Reader-Response Criticism does not take tradition into account at all, Reception History sees tradition and historical continuity of meaning as one of the significant features in analysis. The historical continuity of the process of understanding and interpreting of the text results in a chain of interpretations of this text throughout history, which we may refer to as "the history of interpretation" or "tradition". We cannot but belong to tradition. We are "thrown into it" and formed by it. Westphal observes: "We belong to tradition by virtue of our having been thrown into it, our immersion in it, and our formation by it. This is an ontological claim about our being and an epistemological claim about our understanding of ourselves and our world."[37] It is never a single tradition by which we are formed; on the contrary, there is a plurality of tradition which takes part in this process.[38]

The tradition also functions as a means of legitimisation of understanding and interpretation. For the interpreter is always influenced

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[34] David J. A. Clines. *On the Way to the Postmodern: Old Testament Essays, 1967–1998.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1998, p. 41.

[35] Clines. *On the Way to the Postmodern*, p. 40.

[36] Cf. Clines. *On the Way to the Postmodern*, p. 3.

[37] Westphal. *Whose Community?*, p. 70.

[38] Cf. Westphal. *Whose Community?*, p. 71.

and formed by tradition, his or her prejudices correspond to it.[39] The interpretation should also be seen in relation to other interpretations which came before and after it.[40] It means that it has to be checked against the tradition, which is authoritative, hands down only true prejudices and, therefore, has a self-legitimising function.[41]

Gadamer's exposition of the importance of new insights which are gained by new interpretations throughout history is one of the most powerful arguments for using his hermeneutics among Reception History scholars. However, according to my understanding, the argument from a self-legitimising function of tradition does not organically arise from it. It is certainly true that both the text and its interpreter have their own contexts, which can meet at some point, and that there is a tradition mediating between them, which facilitates the encounter. However, tradition and continuity do not necessarily refer to one phenomenon. Even though we are formed by tradition and we inherit its prejudices, our response to it does not have to be in continuity. It can, on the contrary, move us to a dissent, i.e. a response which is in discontinuity with the tradition. To what extent do we speak about new insights and new significance of the text, and where does the originality begin? The best way to illustrate this problem is art. It often has an interruptive and prophetic role, which tends to "rebel" against the character of historical continuity assigned to it by Gadamer. It rather appears to follow Adorno's theory of the non-affirmative role of art in hermeneutics.[42] But are these two concepts necessarily in disagreement? Gadamer is most likely right when he speaks about the formative role of tradition. However, as we have pointed out, even our own tradition does not have to lead us to an affirmative response.

In order to establish a middle path between the two bordering concepts of Reception History and Reader-Response, we shall propose a concept of "paradigm shifts" brought to biblical scholarship by David P. Parris. Parris borrowed the concept of "paradigm shifts" from a scientist Thomas Kuhn and appropriated it to biblical studies.[43]

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[39] Cf. Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, pp. 258–262.
[40] Cf. "Understanding is not to be thought of so much as an action of one's own subjectivity, but as the placing of oneself within a process of tradition, in which past and present are constantly fused." Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, p. 258.
[41] Cf. Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, pp. 248–250.
[42] Cf. Theodore Adorno. *Ästhetische Theorie*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp 1970, p. 349.
[43] Cf. This term is closely related to the concept of "horizon of expectation". It delineates similar features, i.e. changes in interpretations throughout time. Even though the

This concept notices that there are such discoveries in history, for example, the Earth moving around the Sun, which change the existing paradigm so radically that it is no longer possible to sustain it and operate within it. Parris is well aware that changes in paradigms do not occur in human sciences to such an extent. However, he points out the differences between different approaches to the biblical text in different eras. There are certainly various sets of questions with which we approach the biblical text than was the case some hundred years ago.[44] History does not follow a cumulative model of understanding. It rather moves in large leaps. There is a dynamics between operating within a paradigm and a paradigm shift. There is a set of appropriate questions for the pertinent paradigm.[45] When the set of questions is used up, the epistemological crisis comes. The epistemological crisis results in the "paradigm shift". "When a tradition is no longer able to address the questions in its core problematic in a manner that satisfies its members, that tradition is said to enter an epistemological crisis."[46] However, the concept of paradigm shifts still allows for some degree of continuity within diversity and possibility of progress through learning from the past.

Conclusion

In the present study, we focused on two postmodern approaches to biblical interpretation, Reader-Response Criticism and Reception History. We started with depicting the roots of these two approaches and demonstrated the points they have in common, namely the interest in the individuality of the reader. The context of the reader (in

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concept of horizon of expectation is more broadly used, for our present study the argumentation of "paradigm shifts" is more persuasive and accurate. However, we shall engage with the concept of horizon of expectation when we move to the study of the history of reception. Cf. Jauss. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception.*

[44] "While the centrality of an authoritative text, such as the Bible, is one of the elements that constitutes the continuity of the Christian tradition, the function it serves in this tradition has changed over time. As the tradition changes the questions put to the text will also change. […] These questions were embedded in their stage in the narrative of the Christian tradition. The answers they received from the text in turn contributed to the growth of the tradition and how the authoritative role of the Bible was understood at that stage." David P. Parris. *Reception Theory and Biblical Hermeneutics.* Eugene: Pickwick 2009, pp. 175, 179.

[45] Cf. Horizon of expectation.

[46] Parris. *Reception Theory and Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 188.

Reader-Response) or prejudices (in Reception History) are unavoidable and, in fact, contribute to the hermeneutical process. We have seen that the reader, the author and the text are partners in the hermeneutical process and none of them is superior to the other.

The differences between the two approaches are, at least, as important as their similarities. We have found two significant differences between Reader-Response and Reception History, namely in their perception of time and tradition. David Clines, following Stanley Fish, claims that there is no persistence of meaning over time and that the text is determined to mean in a new context something completely different from what it means to us now. This is the reason why Clines does not attribute any significance to tradition. A danger of this view which should not be overlooked is that it suggests that when there is no persistence of meaning of the text over time, it does not have a meaning at all. However, the positive outcome is that there is enough space for the originality of new interpretations. Anthony Thiselton, following Hans Robert Jauss, claims that there is indeed a continuity of meaning throughout time, to which new interpretations add new significance. The advantage of this position is that the core portion of meaning of the text is maintained regardless of time and context. However, it may result in an over-reliance on tradition, which does not leave enough space for original interpretations provided namely by art.

David Parris comes up with a possible middle path between these two poles. It is the concept of "paradigm shift". This concept acknowledges the importance of tradition. However, it allows for a negative response to it while it simultaneously maintains that it could happen only as a result of this tradition. Thus, the concept of "paradigm shift" seems to offer the combination of positive features from both Reader-Response and Reception History and is, therefore, an ideal approach to follow. It maintains the meaning of the text, which is enriched by new meanings that come with new interpretations, and yet it allows for the originality of interpretation.

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ABSTRAKT

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Postmoderní biblická interpretace: Čas a tradice

Mezi postmoderními přístupy k biblické interpretaci dominují zejména dva – čtenářsky orientované teorie a dějiny působnosti textu. Některé věci, jako dialogický přístup k analýze textu, mají společné, naopak jiné, jako je role časovosti a tradice, se výrazně liší. Čtenářsky orientované teorie jsou přístupy synchronní, nezabývají se ani otázkou časovosti, ani tradice. Badatelé v této oblasti tvrdí, že význam textu je v dějinách nepřenosný. Toto stanovisko vnímáme negativně, neboť v podstatě tvrdí, že text sám o sobě, tedy nezávisle na kontextu, žádný význam nemá. Jeho výhodou však je, že ponechává dostatek prostoru pro originální interpretace. Badatelé v oblasti dějin působnosti textu trvají na tom, že význam textu přetrvá dějinné změny. To znamená, že existuje jakési „jádro významu" textu, k němuž nové interpretace, vznikající v novém kontextu, doplňují nové důrazy. U tohoto přístupu, který zdůrazňuje kontinuitu interpretace textu, hrozí, že originální interpretace, které by nebyly v kontinuitě s tradicí, označí za nelegitimní. Koncept „změny paradigmatu", který představuje David P. Parris, bere vážně koncept tradice, ale současně nechává dostatek prostoru pro originální interpretace.

Klíčová slova
čtenářsky orientované teorie, dějiny působnosti textu, analýza z hlediska času, tradice, změna paradigmatu