

Excerpt from the Dissertation by
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Bibliodrama - Religious experiences in the context of life history.
A qualitative empirical study.

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1. The Adoption/Perception of the Bible in the Bibliodrama

1.1 Reciprocal Interpretations of Biblical Texts and Personal Biographies

It is no accident that the Bibliodrama emerged in Protestantism. The Bible, as the centre of the Protestant understanding of the world, of humanity, and of God, experienced a crisis when Biblical scholars favoured the historical-critical method for biblical exegesis.

Not a few theologians were irritated by the fruits of the decade-long exegesis according to the historical-critical method, and this is where Martin (1) sees one reason for the emergence of the Bibliodrama. The American New Testament Scholar Walter Wink is one of the pioneers of an innovative approach to the Bible, which critiques the historical-critical biblical exegesis. (2) Wink wants to counterbalance this one-sided treatment of the Bible as an object of historical research applying a “dialectic-hermeneutic” approach (3), which sees the text and the recipient of the message in a situation of subjective and mutual interaction. It is important that reader and text enter into such a process of communication and allow the text to unfurl its transforming energy. That means that Wink is not intent on superficially disparaging or even nullifying the historical-critical method. He prefers to broaden the methodological and hermeneutical repertoire for the text interpretation.

Apart from the theoretical contention with the historical-critical exegesis, Wink pursues a pastoral concern. In this context he makes it clear that the historical-critical effort rarely touches the whole person. Such an approach to a biblical text asks to be complemented with a dialogical method, by which the text addresses the person in her/his totality.(4) In his practical guidelines Wink outlines possibilities for ways to connect the historical-critical method with an individual approach based on personal experiences.

Timm Schramm is another Bibliodrama expert of the first hour, who used the TZI (Theme Focused Interaction) methods for the Bibliodrama. (5) He attempts to overcome the historical-critical distance between text and recipient by stressing the closeness of text and reader. The fact that the reader is personally touched by the text is for him a helpful category for the perception of the text. (6) Apart from suggestions for a more individual dealing with the Scripture text, in which the reader is supposed to build up a personal approach to the biblical passage, Schramm, together with Hermann Barth, develops a dialogical method based on the TZI method, which in its process-oriented form reveals a great closeness to the Bibliodrama. (7)

The model of Else Natalie Warns represents the preference for an aesthetical text approach over a historical-critical one. Aesthetical work is considered a valid form of text interpretation. In this way, Warns connects with the theological discussion on biblical hermeneutics in the sense mentioned above. By using the aesthetical text approach the participants, first of all, come nearer to an individual “perception” for which the historical distance to the text is of minimal importance. In this way the person’s own ‘life-context’ becomes the prevailing perspective for the understanding of the text. (8)

The hermeneutical circle of the reciprocal interpretation of the biblical and the personal life-context is also found in the publication by Carlos Meesters entitled: „Vom Leben zur Bibel – von der Bibel zum Leben” (From Life to the Bible – from the Bible to Life) (9). We see further methodological developments of this in German literature when the so called “Three Phase Model” for biblical interpretation is presented. When we connect the Bible with life, “the Bible begins to talk about life and life begins to facilitate the understanding of

Scripture.” (10)

The emergence of the Bibliodrama has to be located in the discussion about two different directions of biblical interpretations. The historical-critical exegesis focuses on an interpretation that stresses production and text. The Bibliodrama, on the other hand, stresses an interpretation that focuses on the reader and the reception of the text. Behind this change of position lies the development in literary criticism as part of the Science of Communication, which applies different methods in the examination of the effects a piece of art has on the addressee. (11)

With its interest in the effect and acceptance of a work of art, the aesthetics of reception thus overcomes the one-sided interest in the aesthetics of production and presentation. In view of the aesthetics of reception it becomes clear that historical-critical exegesis is more interested in the meaning of the original text than in the meaning the text holds for the present. It can edit the text so far that it can be responsibly translated into the present.

An exegesis that is oriented towards experience or the person of the reader - like that used in the Bibliodrama - needs to focus primarily on the text as such, so that it does not fall victim to arbitrariness, because of the readers' emotions or consternations. The Bibliodrama illustrates this by allowing the experiences of the text to recall personal experiences of the reader, which then become new and vivid. "In contrast to Psychodrama, where the biography of the participant is in the foreground, the Bibliodrama has from the outset always determined the themes, even though these seem to be broken down subjectively through play and plot. A golden rule could be: begin and end with the text." (12)

Having looked at significant models of Bibliodrama (13), the connection between the biblical text and the participants' biographies may be seen as the central hermeneutic of the Bibliodrama. It is the basis of all Bibliodrama concepts.

1.2 The Correlation between the Ambiguity of the Biblical Text and the Reader's Openness

In the centre of the Bibliodrama stands a text from the Judeo-Christian tradition. This casts a light on the recipients, because we presume that the text has meaning for their lives. Concerning the actual text, it is implied that it has a normative claim and a communicative function affirming the person's identity. (14)

"There is a credit of trust with regards to the biblical text concerning the expectation that it will accompany one's further life journey in an affirming, enriching and questioning way. It can become the text and context of one's life-text and be neither irrelevant nor cause additional confusion." (15)

The Bibliodramatist Martin is concerned with making the text present and performing it at the same time. His preoccupation with the different old and new ways of critically approaching a text shows, however, that he does not reduce the bibliodramatic work unilaterally to the practical application of the text. He aims at an understanding of the text that, on one hand, does justice to the text per se and, on the other hand, leaves room for its historical as well as current history of reception. Furthermore, he is interested in theologically qualifying the ambiguity of Biblical texts and the resulting openness in the reception process. Martin finds a hermeneutic in the text theory of Roland Barthes (16), which leaves room for a plural understanding of the text.

Barthes understands the text as a fabric of intrinsic structures, courses, complex relationships between periphery and centre, micro- and macro-structure. The interpretation is not bent on finding one single plausible meaning of the text or even adding to it, but he wants to discover the manifold possibilities of interpretation inherent in the text. The understanding of the text, as offered by Roland Barthes, makes obvious that a text that has survived hundreds of years of interpretation or blocking out processes is a system that can never be totally used up. The text is always open to a surplus of meaning. It wants to be read analogically and connotatively. Following the theory of structuralism, Martin understands the text as a textual field or textual space, which is marked by *lee ways* and 'homesteads' of interpretation. The task of the textual didactic, also in the context of a Bibliodrama, lies in the introduction of the participant into the 'space' of the text. In the theory and praxis of the "multiple meaning of Scripture" Martin finds a historical witness for his concern

"The Bible as a whole has never been read solely as a historical document; the readers did not live only on the cognitive level, in the interpretation of history, but also in the interpretation of their faith, and also in areas of moral action and emotional experience, as well as in those that go beyond emotions." (17)

The linguistic-structural and materialistic reading of the Bible is – according to Martin – especially suited for Bibliodrama. The linguistic-structural exegesis concerns itself with the deconstruction of the text from a synchronic perspective. The interest of historical-critical exegesis has focused on the stratification and regrouping of whole texts or fragments thereof. The linguistic-structural exegesis is more interested in the analysis of the synchronic, inherent and complex units of meaning in a text. The text is seen as a whole, as functioning on its own. According to a methodological technique the individual elements of a text are analysed and their mutual relationships determined. (18)

The materialistic reading of the Bible makes use of the instrument of linguistic-structural analysis and broadens this through Marxist and socio-political questions as well as those that are critical of religion. The aim is to gather the implicit statements of a text. For this purpose it locates the explicit contrasts of a text and identifies the meaning that has not been expressed in words, using critical language codes. (19)

"Structural text semantics and materialistic reading of the Bible reveal a trait of faithfulness and conservatism in their basic attitude as well as in their realization of the concrete textual analysis. This faithfulness corresponds with the basic biblio-dramatic handling of the text." (20)

Martin's work with the Bibliodrama lists the different word classes and applies some codes of the materialistic Bible readings. Basic oppositions in the evaluated material are identified. With regards to narrative texts, Martin refers the reader to a grid developed by Ulrich Bubenheimer. (21)

Bubenheimer arranges the text by scenes and sub-scenes. Then he assigns details of place and time, specifies persons and roles, indicates forms of communication, story lines and facts or realities. In a second step he marks the words that have to do with the body, the soul, the spirit and the symbolic and transcendent level. These he then arranges according to the above mentioned categories.

On one hand, the effect of the linguistic-structuralistic approach is the slowing-down of the text reception. This causes intensification in the concentration and broadens the recipient's cognitive ability related to elements that are lost in ordinary or everyday methods of approach. The text-field becomes visible and unfolds its effects. Content, persons and their interdependence appear. The joint analysis done by the group serves as an initial structuring of the continued process and is comprehensible for the participants. On the

other hand, the steps of structuralistic analysis can also be undertaken by non-theologians. Exegetical insights need not necessarily be put forward by experts. They are the work of the group after each one has contributed to the differentiation of the text's shape.

Martin's structuralistic approach to the understanding of the text corresponds with the text-theory of Barthes, who views the text as an open, while at the same time, limited textual field. In the Bibliodrama people encounter the text as a pluriform cosmos of meaning. However, the reading of the text is not arbitrary. "After all, the reading is not arbitrary. Still it has a respective, in each case varying and, and truly authoritative clarity." [Emphasis by the author] (22)

In the Bibliodrama process the highly differentiated exegetical techniques, with regards to time and labour input, come to the fore only in an abbreviated form. This corresponds with the fact that bibliodramatists of the more "cognitive dimension" differ when interpreting the text. (23) Martin wishes to show that bibliodramatic work does not approach the text in an uncritical, unhistorical and anti-scientific way. However, she puts the different exegeses and hermeneutics into perspective, thus broadening them through an open yet not arbitrary understanding. (24)

With regards to critical reflections about the Bibliodrama, Martin merits special mentioning, because he is concerned with doing justice to the text as such. At the same time, this also constitutes his limitations. One could ask, in how far Martin gives greater weight to the text when looking at the two poles: the text and the participant. This suspicion is confirmed when we look at Martin's approach to the Bibliodrama. He postulates the use of a model for interpretation (25) that comes from literature-teaching methods. I consider this a clear overemphasis of the text and its "objective fields of meaning." (26)

By referring to Martin, we could make it clear that the Bibliodrama approaches the multiple meaning of a text in different ways. The ambivalence of the text corresponds with the varied processes of interpretation applied in the Bibliodrama. On one hand, it relies on the text as such and on the other hand on the reception by the participants. Bibliodrama does not agree on one meaning of the text, it can be that in the course of the dramatic acting out of the text different meanings are juxtaposed.

However, the text sets clear limitations when it comes to exaggerated subjectivism and arbitrariness, because it has 'the final word'. Then there is still the reflection time, when the participants present their different perspectives and thereby correct and complement each other. There is further the phase of 'owning' the text, in which the different methods of interpretation of and approach to the text have their place.

1.3 Aesthetic Bible Reception

Aesthetic Bible reception deals with the discovery of biblical texts by means of aesthetic media. In the course of efforts at reforming the methods of religious instruction at the end of the seventies, Else Natalie Warns (27), a drama- and play teacher, used interactive plays and aesthetic media to facilitate a playful approach to biblical texts. In a circle of theologians, who were engaged in converting biblical texts by means of aesthetic media used in theatre pedagogy and calling this procedure Bibliodrama, she reflected and further developed her work. Aesthetic is understood as the "sensuous and formative perception of reality" (28). This understanding differs fundamentally from an aesthetical concept of superficial adornment in the sense of making everyday life an aesthetic experience. "The aesthetics of the Bibliodrama in its 'depth-dimension' differ from the surface-dimension of

the illustration of texts through the addition of images or media reinforcement using theological content.”(29)

“The aesthetics of Bibliodrama differ in their ‘depth dimension’ from the surface dimension of embellishing texts with illustrations using assigned images or medial reinforcement of theological content.” (29)

The creative conversion of the texts in the Bibliodrama is authentic presentation, having at the same time the character of a new creation and imitation. The design always contains more than what the designer is aware of. The composition mediates and at the same time veils that which is intangible. It touches the realm of the unconscious as an immanent event. The non-objective is objectified and can thus be communicated. In the dialogue between the presenter and the observer that which has been unconscious and hidden can be brought to the surface. Yet at the same time a surplus of meaning can remain.

Aesthetical action as dealing with reality always has a transforming effect. Warns sees in this cathartic function of aesthetics the proximity between aesthetics and the biblical texts. Both cause change by touching and pushing for transformation.

Contrary to the widespread understanding that aesthetic composition comes second to the conceptual dealing with the text, Warns and Berger (30) point out that the aesthetic composition creates a free space for fantasy and the unconscious, because of its distance to every day reality. These can serve as a foundation for a new orientation. In opposition to the conceptual approach to the text, the aesthetical approaches preserve their “text orientation without pre-empting the interpretation.” (31)

“Aesthetics encompass all phenomena of bodily expressions, gestures, scenes, colour, form, sound and poetry.” Consequently, Natalie Warns knows an abundance of aesthetic media, beginning by working with different kinds of clay, the dealing with colours and their different qualities up to making theatre masks. Warns bases the decision, regarding the choice of the correct medium for the presentation, on the biblical text itself. In this way, colours are best suited for texts that live from metaphors and images. When using body work and gestures the verbs in the text are most important. If the text presents a dramatic movement between the persons, then various forms of scenic presentation are suitable.

1.4 Corporeal Bible Reception (33)

Warns maintains that play, as a comprehensive form for cognitive recognition of reality, belongs to the aesthetic dimension of the Bibliodrama. Just as it is the case in the arrangement, so also in performance: more comes to the fore than what the actor thinks to have made apparent. “The joy of recognition is the joy that more than what is familiar is noticed or seen.” (34) The play, therefore, not only function as imitation, but also aims at bringing out and discovering the unknown. Irrespective of Warns’ comprehensive concept of aesthetics, I would like to present the direct inclusion of the body in the play, the gestures and meditative or ritual body movement (35) or as a proper category of reception in the Bibliodrama. It appears to me that in the perception and experience of one’s body as well as in certain bodily expressions, a quality is shown that differs in its unconditionality from the usual means in the medial realisation of the text, for example by using colour and sound. (36)

Martin considers the body to be the “open and critical place for staging biblical traditions and processes of the Bibliodrama.” (37) A person can exist only in a body. A child needs tactile experiences for development, that is, it needs to touch and be touched. It experiences itself through physical contact and by being given feedback. This is vital to life. Should the child lack such experiences, there would be perceptual and contact disorders which could result in autism. In our time, the rise of countless physical therapies reflects such disregard for the body. The goal is to revive the unconscious body through perception, to activate the body’s memories and/or to enliven the body-image. What is important is the harmonising of bodily sensation and imagination. (38)

Brooks differentiates between the “deadly, earthy and holy theatre”, (39) and against this background Martin discovers three body images in the Christian tradition that have varied effects. Christ dying on the cross or resting in the lap of his Mother (the Pieta) are the most formative body-images of Christian iconography in the last millennium. This stands in contrast to a presentation speaking of vitality, love and zest for life. The body has been maltreated and is shown in its transience. It is already dead. There is no longer any chance for encounter and movement. We cannot underestimate the effect these images have on the body experience of many Christians. The image of the ‘Corpus Christi’ is contrasted with the image of the Risen Lord. It is a body beyond time and space, a body that is invisible and de-materialized, capable to be in more than one place at the same time.

The third way to understand the body corresponds with the notion of Paul: the human being is the ‘soma’, the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The body in its reality becomes the place of encounter with the Holy Spirit. And it is here that the experience of the invisible happens, which Brook claims for his theatre. If we take the biblical concept of the body as temple as literal as it is supposed to be taken, then God is no longer concretely and in actual fact present in the cell, in the Holiest of Holies in the temple, where now and then the Highpriest was allowed to enter, but in the bodily presence of the human person. “The body is earthy and holy.” (40)

What does it now mean to work with the body in the context of the Bibliodrama?

It is about sensibilising the person in his/her physicalness, so that his/her perception of the body and contact and the encounter, is increased and intensified. In the early stages of a Bibliodrama process working with the body helps the participants to establish a distance from their every day life and to become aware of the new environment. This centering of one’s own body and spirit in the present situation makes it possible to slow down, which has a positive effect on the interaction of intellect and emotion and thereby disconnects the fast pattern of action and reaction.

Working with the body is for the Bibliodrama also a possibility to enter it from the viewpoint of corporeality and creative work. Breathing exercises serve as an introduction to an active imagination. Voice and gestures are also supported by previous body work. The Bibliodrama, however, does not neglect dynamizing body work, as it is used in sport and partly in ‘bio energy’. At the beginning it is important to take seriously the current body experience of the participants as the starting point for their possibilities. In the presentations of Martin there remains a strange tension between the theological localization of the body as Temple of the Holy Spirit and the physical exercises that belong to the Bibliodrama. Martin was inspired by Katja Delakova (41) and, in his concept, took up her ideas. The body is not only considered in the context of Pauline soma-theology; however, the descriptions and reflections of body work in the Bibliodrama are based on psychological categories. Body work is seen from a pre-therapeutic perspective – for example by pointing out the increase in presence through awareness of the body - and considered from a pedagogical viewpoint – for example by warning that performance pressure should not be exerted. It seems as if Martin does not want to interpret the real body experience from the perspective of Pauline soma-theology.

Hildrun Kessler (42) begins her dissertation with the thesis that the body and corporeality present a central code for the Bibliodrama theory. By differentiating body and flesh in the context of philosophical, psychological and theological concepts, she finds an anthropology and theology of Bibliodrama that is closely connected with the body. (43) In this way she exceeds the understanding of Martin by applying the “theology of corpo-reality” as a “theology of the visible” for concrete experiences in the Bibliodrama. She considers the Bibliodrama to be an aesthetic event, which broadens the one-sidedness of the theology of the word through images that attempt to make God ‘visible’. Bibliodrama, in its corporeal aspect, can present God as one who is visible and yet hidden at the same time. For certain moments “God becomes momentarily visible in the playful performance but only fleetingly.” (44) More than Martin, Kessler broadens her concept of the body in the direction of its sociality. In Kessler’s concept the individual corporeality in the Bibliodrama is presented in the reciprocal community. “Since the Bibliodrama is based on the participation of all that take part, the individual presentations constitute the social body of the community.”

group. Individual and social experiences stand simultaneously and equally next to each other.” (45) group and the biblical text are a space for thought and experience, in which personal experiences and the experiences of the others are taken up, experienced and responded to.

The contributions of Kessler regarding theory and reflection can be read in such a way that the understanding of corpo-reality in Bibliodrama should not be restricted to the methodological and awareness exercises that focus on the body or aesthetical processes. In fact, corpo-reality in Bibliodrama means also the distinctive historicity of all human experiences, the present setting of biblical roles through their ‘incarnation’ in the play-process as well as the presentation of the “Body of Christ” through the community of participants. (46)

In practice, I know of no model for this comprehensive body concept that does not take into account the inclusion of the body in form of meditative, aesthetic, awareness-oriented exercises or those that focus on the identification with particular roles. Even Andriessen and Derksen, who do not mention work with the body as preparation or discovering work, report in the methodological part of their publication called “spirited mediation of faith in Bibliodrama” about forms of corporeal presentations of the acting process, that have a place in the acting. (47) Over and above that, we need to note that identification with certain roles and taking up a space in the room where the Bibliodrama takes place are already in the corporeal form of expressions in the text. This is, above all, the case when the actors are invited to consciously become aware of their place, their body posture, their facial expressions, gestures and their visual perspective. (48)

1.5 The Process of Biblical Reception

The Bibliodrama is process oriented and thus not only meets the educational insights into human learning conditions, but also perceives the basic dramatic structure of the biblical text as an action which moves and changes “from something – through something - towards something.” However, effectiveness is not simply something given in the biblical texts. The process-design in Bibliodrama therefore, serves the development of a space, in which the participants and text ‘read’ each other and interpret, question, in short: encounter each other. Heinrich Fallner describes a possible process flow in great detail. (49) We will present it here only in brief: in the first phase we allow the text to speak and to raise our awareness. The participants are to become conscious of the transition from everyday life to the new situation of the Bibliodrama and engage in a creative presentation. The second phase is used to contact and confront. Important is here the encounter of the biblical text and the “biographical life text” of the participants. Fallner calls the third phase “identification and debate“. The participants are to find their own place in the text taking into account the actual text as well as the situation of the group. Special importance is attached to the analysis of the relationship between the group process and the text. The fourth phase is to differentiate and update. This is the moment to reflect on theological, literary and historical knowledge of the text which are then made fruitful for the updating of text facets. For example, by acting out a scene. The personal and social resonances of the participants are connected with the historical, literary, and theological questions of the text in order to become an aesthetic expression of form. The fifth phase summarizes the whole process in form of a ritual, thus making possible for the participants to take leave of this particular Bibliodrama process.

The process - seen from the perspective of the participants - corresponds with the concept of ‘text space’ as a dramatic system of coordinates in the Bibliodrama. “Bibliodrama text-space is created when a group begins to ‘walk through’ the text in an interactive process, according to the dramatic structure of the texts, associations and scenes.” (50)

The ‘text space’ in the Bibliodrama is created through deceleration. This slowing-down process happens through the different perceptions of the text, as it has been previously presented. The text is seen

space through which one can 'walk'. In this text-space, the text is in motion and challenges participants to also move. The participants bring their own biography and the networks of their lives into this text-space. Each biblical story calls to mind aspects of one's own life story.

"At times these are painful experiences. Parting still needs to take place. Injustice is felt strongly. One's own narrowness becomes obvious. At times there are liberating touches. Blockages are dissolved. Conflicts are regenerated and become acceptable. Situations of being safe and in good hands become visible." (51)

Aldebert is aware of the specificity of biblio-dramatic spaces when she writes about "Perspective and hope for a successful life." (52) This perspective includes questions about the place (the here and the hereafter, inwardness) and about the how of a successful life (ethics). In the process of Bibliodrama the perspective of a successful life is at stake in the relationship (process) of the text and the participant. Salvation and healing, successful life, reconciliation – in brief, traces of the Kingdom of God – cannot be exacted, not even in Bibliodrama. The biblical text in its life-enabling perspective does not prevail automatically in the Bibliodrama process. It is, however, given a space, in which persons encounter the life-giving and incarnate Word of God through body language, aesthetic media and dialogue.

2. Religious Experiences in the Bibliodrama?

2.1 Serious Reservations

In the context of Protestant criticism of religion, it is a very sensitive issue to pursue the topic of religious experiences (53) in Bibliodrama. Nevertheless, in literature dealing with the Bibliodrama we talk about faith experiences, God experiences, experiences of the transcendent and existential experiences. Therefore, the question of the possibility and quality of religious experiences in the Bibliodrama, especially in the context of the alleged mutual interpretation of Biblical text and life history of participants – has to be allowed. We can presume beyond dispute that the text, and with it the Bibliodrama, has to do with the existence, the life and the faith of people. Whether and in how far the Bibliodrama has something to do with the religious yearning of people, with their need for a religious interpretation of their lives within the faith deposit of Christianity, with the existential longing for a religious experience, depends, among other things, on the actual conception of the Bibliodrama model, first and foremost with the more or less explicitly stated interpretive horizon, in which the participants make or not make these experiences. In the publications of Martins (54) we read that religious experiences and faith are apparently not explicit goals of the Bibliodrama, but in the concepts of W. Andriessen/Derksen, Stangier, Langer and Kiehn they are seen as inclined towards "transcendent religion and faith." Kubitza and Schramm present their understanding of Bibliodrama in reference to Josuttis' understanding of workshop and the model of the 'Caring Community' in a "spiritual context." On principle, the preoccupation with the "elements of the Bibliodrama that produce religious experiences" depend on whether the Bibliodrama is perceived more as a process for the understanding of the text or its text-application, than as "Exerzitium" that stresses the relationship between life and faith-experiences. (56)

The question about the "religious element" in the Bibliodrama results also from the actual text that is used. After all, the texts in the Bibliodrama that are at stake are religious and not simply texts of general literature in the general sense. They are basic texts of our Christian faith. Their focal points are not stories, myths, or symbols of any religion. They belong to the Christian tradition. These are texts that can and must be connected with the historical self-revelation of God.

There are more than a few experts in Bibliodrama who experience certain unease when faith is considered a precondition for the Bibliodrama. However, this constraint is not present in most conceptions of Bibliodrama. (57) As far as the participants are concerned, interest in the text and readiness to s

and be challenged by one's life-experiences are necessary. (58)

On the other hand, again and again it is mentioned – in connection with the participants' experiences during the Bibliodrama – that these should not be hastily appropriated from the side of the Church or Christian faith. Drechsel does express this in his definition of pastoral-psychological work with Scripture, of which part is the Bibliodrama. Drechsel defines the pastoral-psychological work with the Bible as an elementary and life-related introduction to the Bible, which is directed towards an encounter with, in and under the text [in, mit und unter]; and this encounter can be seen as propaedeutic of the faith. With the goal to facilitate an encounter, space is created, where under the conditions of autonomy theonomous encounters happen that strengthens the faith of the individual who maintains his/her personal freedom." (59)

Drechsel relates the overall intention of Bible study to the individual's freedom to read the Bible. Bible Study must not be tied to certain ecclesial views or faith requirement. Rather, it creates the experiential basis that also the participant who "does not adhere to any faith" can be engaged with questions of the Christian tradition. In this sense the self-understanding of Bible study according to Drechsel can be understood as a school for Bible reading, a form of "religious aesthetics" and as a "way of a realising Protestant freedom under the conditions of the present". (60) The position of Drechsel might be appealing and fundamental, but the suspicion remains, that in this case freedom and faith are unduly placed in juxtaposition. (Neither the faith of the participants nor the text should become 'law' in a Bibliodrama). The question arises whether the freedom of the participants is immediately at stake when Bibliodrama, faith and religious experiences are jointly considered or, even more, when Bibliodrama is conceived as a way of communicating one's faith (as Andriessen and Derksen see this as the goal of their models). In fact, participants do have experiences and maintain convictions that come from the experience of a repressive Christian and Church related educational formation and consequently see faith and the Bible as a "joke" that restrict freedom and self-development. The danger that the Christian message is abused, especially in its biblical presentation, as an instrument of power and oppression, is and has always been a possibility. However, it needs not be so by necessity. It would mean "to throw out the baby with the bath", if we situated the Bibliodrama beyond the possibility of religious experiences, because we are afraid of a kind of 'foreign infiltration' and bondage. Might it not be necessary to hold on to the Bibliodrama as a place where people can make new experiences that are not connected to those negative experiences of their past and turn them into experiences of liberation?

Nevertheless, most scientific discussion about the Bibliodrama are more concerned with the 'reading theories' according to reception-aesthetical and anthropological viewpoints than with the question under what conditions the Bibliodrama can be a way on which people encounter themselves, the group and the text while they gain significant perspectives for their lives and their faith.

The one exception here is the dissertation of Panitz. He reconstructs the Bibliodrama by using the concept of drama and is not afraid to name religious (and therapeutic) effects of the Bibliodrama.

"The interpretation of the biblical message, the clarification of questions concerning human existence and identity in the light of the Gospel, our relationship with our neighbour and with God is its (meaning the Bibliodrama; C.M.) main topic. When giving instructions concerning the action he tries to raise these problems from the level of theoretical reflections to that of human and religious experiences. According to Chrysostomos, all human beings want to be close to the divine; they want to touch the holy. This was for him the reason and goal of all religious actions and this corresponds with the basic approach of the Bibliodrama. Although it does not follow the magical-ritual idea, that religious experience is 'doable', but it assumes that, as in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, and all other forms of meditation, the person is able to open up to the experience of transcendence and to maintain this openness. In a corresponding manner, the Bibliodrama picks up the idea that intimacy with God can be experienced in this world. It assumes that God can be encountered in human form and symbolic images. In the Bibliodrama God speaks and can be addressed. God responds – as it has always happened – through the words of human beings." (61)

There is another reservation with regards to the claim of a 'religious' element in the Bibliodrama, that is nurtured by the idea that the bibliodramatic processes cannot bring about religious experiences per se. (62) In contrast, there is nothing wrong with that, but

the question is whether beyond the dichotomy of realisability and unavailability, we may not adhere to the proposal for a bibliodramatic text space, where life-, faith-, and religious experiences may have their place and whether conditions exist that more or less facilitate and assist a bibliodramatic text space to become “a place of faith and/or religious experiences”.

But, while being concerned with the recognition of religious- and faith-experiences in the bibliodramatic process, we should not trivialize – as some praxis reports of bibliodramatic experiences make us believe – the possibility of aestheticism, of an inner orientation and the related privatization of religion or even a drifting into an esoteric context.

Admittedly, when it comes to my understanding of Bibliodrama, I clearly distance myself from those positions which want to dissolve the tensions in one direction between text- and participant-orientation, between a historical and current text-understanding, between freedom and faith. Bibliodrama must always focus on the connection between the Bible text and the life-text as well as the faith-story of the participant. In Bibliodrama the interpretation of the text and its application transpire in the context of one's personal life and faith.

In contrast to the position of Drechsel, to which the concepts of Wink, Schramm and Martin are close, there are Bibliodrama-conceptions that are concerned about the encounter with the "religious" sphere. The different terms used in praxis- and theory-reflections of the Bibliodrama for the purpose of naming these "religious experiences", indicate that the bibliodramatic experiences that refer to the existence, the faith and/or the religiosity of persons cannot be simply reduced to a single point. The present chapter wants to contribute to the identification of bibliodramatic experiences in view of the "religious" aspects involved. It does so, knowing that a number of Bibliodrama representatives do not declare religious experiences as explicit goals of the Bibliodrama.

While in this chapter the question about religious experiences in the Bibliodrama is developed from the Bibliodrama literature itself, chapter 1 of part II in this dissertation deals with the clarification of the concepts of "Religion", "religiosity", "religious experiences" and "faith".

2.2 Numinous and Mystical Experiences

Antje Kiehn (63), in her much quoted article, calls the experiences in Bibliodrama sessions experiences of transcendence. When working with the Bibliodrama she focuses on catalysing and initiating religious experiences, which she interprets against the background of her reading of Karlfried Graf Dürckheim as "initiatic experiences" that open the "gateway to the secret". For Kiehn the "initiatic experiences" in the Bibliodrama have a double direction: inwardly they unsettle and nurture people, outwardly they lead to a changed life-style. Going back to C. G. Jung, she sees the contribution of the Bibliodrama as a help for people in midlife to reach a "religious clarification" of their existence through the Bibliodrama, which, in contrast to the historical-critical exegesis, unlocks the religious dimension of the biblical texts as significant for the life of the individual. "The biblical words form the entry port to the 'other worlds' that Staretz talks about. They are like 'God's seeds' that will bear fruit in a person. This is what happens in the Bibliodrama performance." (64)

Doing this, Antje Kiehn is well aware that religious experiences are not doable during a Bibliodrama sessions. On the level of processes, Kiehn differentiates between three Bibliodrama phases. During the first phase the participants identify with a role in the text on a horizontal level. "- So, I am the mother who sets everything in motion for her sick child (Syro-Phoenician woman) [...]" (65) In the second phase the identification reaches the vertical level. The participants experience the religious dimension, the deeper meaning of the texts.

"The greater, the archetypal images of the eternal human drama that are lying behind him in the relationship to the last and essential aspects and to God, light up. In the previous, individually experienced role the collective archetype is experienced now." (66)

The concrete life situation of the participant is transcended in the direction of archetypal images and thus enriched with meaning. "Such 'experiences of revelation', as we would

call them in religious terms, happen mostly as gentle and afterwards often blissful encounters with the realm of the numinous.” (67) In contrast to the first phase the “trivial character of the early scenes” disappears. Intensive deep encounters have happened. The third phase serves as the retraction from identification and returns to one’s life.

As examples of the “great moments in Bibliodrama” Antje Kiehn describes the phenomena, which have brought about in the participants a changed sense of time and the appearance of inexplicable incidences of light.

In summary, it can be argued that Kiehn uses the Bibliodrama as an instrument to make accessible the numinous in biblical texts. In doing so, she trusts that the numinous in the biographies of people will unfold its effect beyond the play and be integrated into their lives.

Drechsel (68) reproaches Kiehn on two accounts: Kiehn is concerned about an experience-oriented religiosity, which uses the biblical text as means to an end. The autonomy of the texts is interpreted in a one-sided way in the direction of ‘numinous experiences’. This raises the question why Kiehn uses biblical texts at all for her work with religious topics, since the phenomena that Kiehn talks about appear also in fairy tales or myths. Secondly, in Kiehn’s use of biblical texts there is a cancellation of the historical and critical approach. In this way, her concept leads to a “belief in religious experiences.” Since the text is bracketed-off from interpretations of the related experiences, the associated discernment-knowledge is also lost. “The new mythical and general religious interpretation develops into a *representation of privateness*. [Italics by the author]” (69)

I agree with Drechsel’s criticism of Kiehn. Kiehn’s Bibliodrama concept comes close to a general religious, mythical Bible treatment. However, this way of qualifying the method should not belittle the actual experiences, which are the goals of her processes. However, we can claim that Kiehn, in her arrangement of the Bibliodrama, goes beyond the Christian context and crosses over to a rather esoterically-psychological context. The “guarantors” Karlfried Graf Dürckheim and C.G. Jung as well as others (**Erfahrungsinterpretamente**?????) confirm this impression. Radeck’s assessment is the same. She deplores that Kiehn locates the religious experience of the participants “not behind the text, but also behind the Christian religion”. She describes the other world, which breaks into the daily routine when ‘great moments’ are experienced, with the dimensions of depth and beginning. In contrast, the Christian religion has only surface character. The biblical text clears the way for something else, for what is really important.” (70)

Klaus Werner Stangier locates his work with the Bibliodrama within the “tension between psychodrama and liturgy.” (71) He sees the proximity of Bibliodrama and liturgy in the rich tradition of mystery plays, which developed in and outside of the liturgy until the Council of Trent put an end to it. Although the actors were mostly clerics and the so-called lay actors were relegated to the role of spectators, the goal was nevertheless the illustration and incarnation of God’s salvific acts in the here and now. In the mystery play the holy became noticeable. The dramatic embodiment (incarnation) was an attempt to create a sensory impression and an emotional dismay. Comparing the Bibliodrama with the liturgical reform movement, which advocated the “active participation of the laity” in divine worship, the Bibliodrama goes one step further. It broadens the “scope of the sacred” to embrace every profane reality. In addition, it involves “lay actors” in the performance, which means that each person can take on the role of Jesus, and the roles may be interchanged.

In the dramas of antiquity, Christian liturgy and mystery plays Stangier recognizes the relationship between the human drama and that of the Incarnation of God. Stangier understands the manifold ways of God’s wrestling with his people, as attested in the Bible, as the proper drama of the divine Incarnation. “God’s drama is the process of God’s Incarnation. The Word becomes flesh.” (72) For Stangier the goal of the Bibliodrama is to display the reverse process, that is, the incarnation of Holy Scripture in the human person.

In the preface to his publication Stangier describes the concern of his bibliodramatic work. "I would like to show how through stepping onto the set and the staging of biblical texts new life is created, how a door is opened into the space of the fulfilled present moment." (73) For Stangier encounter is the key that brings people to the experience of the fulfilled present. Moreno's central concept is, according to Stangier, the understanding of a person's life achievements. An encounter has a transcendent character and connects the individual with the larger context of life. Stangier rediscovers the "basic formula of what is Christian" in Moreno's use of role reversals. (74) Role reversals enable people to bodily empathise with others and to better understand the other.

In the role reversal one's perspective is changed; the outside world is connected with one's own inner world. For a moment one surrenders one's assumed life in order to take on another existential role, to literally incorporate it.

According to Stangier the role reversal between God and the human person is characteristic for the Christian faith. According to Stangier, Jesus' words in the Gospel of John, "Whoever sees me, sees the Father" are a basic statement about every Christian's life. Every Christian is Son and Father at the same time. This paradox determines the new self-consciousness of the Christian and cannot be cancelled out in any way. It is recognized in its dependence and freedom, in its creativity and its creatureliness at the same time.

"In a certain sense we can say: God reverses the role with the human person. God's relationship to the person is dialogical as God assumes the position of the human person. As Father he assumes the position of the Son and hands to the Son the role of the Father. The modest human self-consciousness, the Son, is connected in reverse direction to the greater self of the Father." (75)

Stangier perceives the concept Father neither in a historical nor in a gender-specific way, but as a cipher for the totally other, the origin, the mystery, which in its substantive emptiness constantly gives birth to fullness." (76) Persons, who base their lives on the relationship to the Father, live in greater freedom, which enables them to see the other as stranger, to meet him/her with empathy and to surrender to him/her. This is for Stangier the person's ability for a role reversal, based upon the role reversal of God and the human person. However, Stangier qualifies this by saying that we can only talk about God's role reversal, if we talk about God in anthropomorphic terms. It is another thing to bring God into play as incomprehensible deity. Stangier sees the solution in the fact that we can name the incomprehensible deity as such as the role reversal between two persons. It is to be understood as the movement between two roles.

What does this have to do with the Bibliodrama? In the Bibliodrama human persons play roles. They take on the role of a person who lived in a particular epoch of the past; they assume the role of God and the role of Jesus. What is strange, what is different makes its home in one's own body. And serious encounter happens. "The Bibliodrama makes people understand more and more that they are the presence of God in the world." (77)

In summary, it can be stated that by means of the Bibliodrama-play Stangier wants to initiate spiritual transformation processes that connect with the physical and psychological reality of the human person. He points out that transformation, liberation and/or healing do not happen without far-reaching stages of uncertainty and disillusionment. Only the one who is willing to let go of cherished ideas and habits will gain new life. This process of dying and rising to life again apply also to experiences that we make with God. Here, too, old images have to be let go off, until God can reveal himself as the totally other without name and form.

On the basis of these ideas, Stangier sees his Bibliodrama approach as a school for mysticism that wants to offer an instruction for the immediate vision of God. "Each step onto the stage is an invitation to an encounter with the deity. Each step grows out of the willingness to let go of certain notions. Each step onto the stage creates and opens up the hidden world. Each step is participation in the divine growth process. Before this is allowed to happen, the different Bibliodrama plays are preparations to enable the person to accept the gift of grace at the right moment." (78)

Similar to Kiehn and also with respect to the Bibliodrama model of Stangier, we need to point out the danger that biblical texts are robbed of their proper meaning and historicity.

As is done by Kiehn, the interpretation of the participants' experiences is not sought in the text itself, but is developed outside of it, for example, against the background of Moreno's model of role reversal.

The desired "immediacy of the God-experience" as goal of all Bibliodramas boils down to a strong "internalisation" of the importance of God in the life of the individual, in which the connections of the experience of God with ordinary life and the world, as presented in the model of Stangier, are not taken into account. In addition, Stangier runs the risk to dissolve the exciting unity and difference of God and the human person and turns it into a simple identification of God and the human person. In this context, the appropriation of the actors irritates, which is to be the culmination in the development of the bibliodramatic praxis, in which God is to be recognized as the "One without name and form."

2.3 Faith Experiences

Well-established Bibliodrama literature has in no way disclaimed the faith experience that can be made in the process. However, faith experiences are not the articulated goal of most of the Bibliodrama models. In the wake of Protestant reflections, there sounds the warning not to identify experiences made in bibliodramatic process with faith and (worse than that) to allow them to be 'pocketed' by Church authorities. (80)

Authors, who shy away from speaking about faith experiences in connection with the Bibliodrama, see the significance of biblical texts in that they describe experiences of life and faith, granted to people because of divine revelations through God's actions in human history.

"In the days of old people have experienced their lives, their faith or their relationship with God in such significant ways, that they wrote these up to be handed down to posterity. These experiences – wonderful, frightening, healing and others -, are interpretations of human existence, which have been given to us as the books of the Old and the New Testament." (81)

Eberhard Warns sees in the Bibliodrama a contribution to a "certainty of faith", by which the participants individually experience part of the divine message when they relate to a specific text. "The question that is present in the background regarding the significance of historical texts for one's faith is clearly answered in the process of the Bibliodrama through the intensity of the experience and the resulting plausibility of one's own experience in the context of a group of like-minded persons." (82)

At the same time, Warns points out, that at the end of a Bibliodrama process we do not see uniformity but diversity. The text remains a counterpart that cannot be caught up with. Warns shows that besides the possibility of being certain of one's faith as effect of the Bibliodrama while at the same time diversity is preserved and the strangeness of the text remains, the experience with the text has consequences for the lives of the participants. The Bibliodrama appeals to a person through specific texts, and challenges him/her to make personal decisions.

Brandhorst differentiates between a level of orthopraxis and orthodoxy in the Bibliodrama when he claims, "that the Bibliodrama can be an effective possibility to inspire faith development and faith growth, to grow in hope for the struggle for 'peace, justice and the integrity of creation.'" (83) What matters to him is that the concern, which arises from the bibliodramatic play, does not remain stuck in diffuse emotions, but lays the foundation for a new understanding of existence and brings about behavioural change.

In his hermeneutical considerations regarding the Bibliodrama, Aldebert includes the biblical text as "a strategy that provokes the faith." (84) In reliance the Protestant dogmatic theology, he differentiates between the Word of God as 'media salutis' and the Scripture text, which in Protestant dogmatic theology is attributed to the 'Prolegomena'. "The text of the Bible becomes the Word of God through the Holy Spirit." (85) The Catholic tradition of biblical interpretation differs from this Protestant understanding of Scripture:

"But in so far as divine revelation as remaining divine is mediated in history and not in any other way and this meditation ("undivided and unmixed") is part and parcel of its own nature, the pure mediation, which is testified by the Holy Spirit in the living witness of the Church's meditation, 'Scripture' can in truth be called Word of God and be 'norma non normata'. And in this sense the Old and the New Testament are for the Catholic faith the

Word of God.” (86)

When we consider the Bibliodrama as a form of Scripture interpretation and in that sense as proclamation, the systematic way of understanding Scripture as Word of God, is always given as a possibility that people make experiences with this word, which deepen their faith or lay a faith-foundation in their lives.

Kollmann, a Catholic Religious Educator, locates the Bibliodrama in the area of passing on the faith.

“From what has been said, it follows that the Bibliodrama is today and for all ages a most important and hardly irreplaceable form of a person’s encounter with the biblical claim to risk one’s life with God. Because it includes the whole person with his/her small, yet for him/herself significant life problems in the important drama of human history as salvation history with God.” (87)

The Bibliodrama brings together one’s own life and the life of God. The participants learn that God’s life has something to do with their own lives. God’s history and the history of humanity become interwoven under the influence of the Bibliodrama. The faith dimension in one’s own life is addressed and developed.

“Thereby the text and God’s Spirit speak directly and immediately through the parity of experience and time. They bring about experiences, which interpret my life and reconcile me with my biography and my relationship to the world, in the way that I can finally experience myself as the one who I am: God’s beloved child.” (88)

Faith experiences in the Bibliodrama can be placed in the area of identity-assurance. They help to interpret one’s own life with regards to the way it has developed, and to establish biographical consistence not against but in the face of biographical ambiguities and discontinuities. The retrospective features of life lived with meaning has prospective value. It upgrades the worth of self and world. We should not consider the metaphor of the “beloved child of God” that Helmut Kreller uses as the only “contingency formula” of a faith-filled life in and through the Bibliodrama. However, all images, myths and symbols are representatively addressed so that the participants can become aware of their relationship with the God of the Old and the New Testament and see their limitations but also their self-transcending totality.

“Biblical texts become a second time real on the stage of the Bibliodrama and speak their message directly and unmediated into the lives of the participants. [...] The place of the Bibliodrama is, therefore, a way of pastoral proclamation or ministry of proclamation. It is definitely more likely to be located in the area of pastoral care or hermeneutics than in pedagogy.” (89)

This quotation of Kreller creates the connection to the model of Andriessen and Derksen, which is situated explicitly in the area of pastoral care and wants the Bibliodrama to be seen as a form of faith communication.

2.4 Theological Reassurance: The Bible as Literature and Revelation Testimony

The question regarding “religious experiences in Bibliodrama processes” raises the hermeneutical query about the understanding of the Bible and the adequacy of its treatment. We were able to show that the Bibliodrama developed in relation with the critical discussion about the historical-critical exegesis, and in the openness of its reception process postulates a multiple meaning of Scripture. Moreover, it became apparent that the objective of the bibliodramatic process is at times more on the side of the text and its understanding, while at other times more on the side of the recipients and their self-understanding in the context of the text, and this is true, although the representatives of both schools claim for themselves the mutual interpretation of Scripture text and life stories of the participants as basic hermeneutics. In this regard, the Protestant restraint became obvious, that is, the claim that the work with the Bibliodrama is for the self-understanding of the participants as believers (or as non-believers, not-yet-believers).

The following chapter intends to highlight the biblical-theological background, against which the Bibliodrama appears as one form of biblical interpretation and application. At the same time, a theological foundation is to be laid, on which it is possible to talk about religious experiences in connection with the Bibliodrama, without being suspected of pre-critical and/or a fundamentalist Bible reading.

The biblical texts as literature and Holy Scripture

Historical-critical exegesis perceives the texts of the Bible as literature and deals with them according to the methodology of the study of literature. (90) In this way it takes seriously the historicity of the texts. The Bible is considered a collection of texts, of which language, structure, author and addressees, tradition and reception need to be paid attention to. It examines analogies to non-biblical texts and discovers that language, form, genre and motives are related to other contemporary writings.

The Bible as literature cannot be reduced to one common denominator. The biblical texts are too diverse in view of their tradition, authorship, time and place of origin, language and form, whereby the Old Testament surpasses the New Testament with regards to its literary form.

“There is no formal proprium, which, on the one hand, connects the biblical texts with each other, while on the other hand differentiates them significantly from other types of literature. Their cohesion and specificity are caused theologically by their common reference to the one God and historically through their common frame of reference to the history of Israel and early Christianity.” [Emphasis by the author] (91)

Understanding the Bible as Holy Scripture is closely connected with the question: what gives the biblical texts their specific character? The point of contact between Holy Scripture and the divine, in whatever way it is thought and formulated, - as divine origin, divine mandate or divine effect – is covered by the theological term of Scripture interpretation.

“The attempts to attach the idea of an inspired Scripture immediately and exclusively to the text itself, either, in absolute form as words that are directly inspired by God, or in a relative way, as effects of an inspired author, have, in the course of the history of theology, led again and again to problems and debates that have been reflected in the question of inerrancy and infallibility of this Scripture text of divine authorship.” (92)

In the course of time the understanding of an inspired Holy Scripture changed from verbal inspiration to real inspiration. Against this background stand the statements of *Dei Verbum* 11. The special character of Holy Scripture lies in the fact that God wanted these texts to be “recorded in the Bible for our salvation”. (93) That means that the biblical texts are Holy Scripture in as far as they remind us of God’s salvific plans, testify and proclaim them, in short, reveal them. Scripture is not the Word of God in the sense that it was revelation itself, but rather only in as far as it allows God’s Word to be recognized in human words, because God communicated himself as God to these people. Already early, Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar criticized the lack of theological understanding of historical critical exegesis. Both of them stressed that the historical-critical exegesis did not do justice to the theological significance of the Bible.

The emphasis on the human transmission of the Word of God does not depreciate the quality of Scripture but avoids the (fundamentalist) misunderstanding, that the truth of the Bible can only be preserved if we take it out of the context of human history. The Constitution on Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, prepared by the ground-breaking encyclical *Divini afflante Spiritu* (Pius XII., 1943) (94), leads to a renewed understanding of the necessity of historical and theological interpretation of Scripture (DV 19) (95)

Since Vatican II we notice a movement in Catholic theology, in which Systematic and Biblical Theology move towards each other. The historicity of the biblical texts, which is the starting point of the exegetical analysis and the assessment of the Bible as Holy Scripture and thus as record of revelation, which is the starting point for Systematic Theologians, are two perspectives, which are necessary in equal measure for a deeper understanding of biblical texts as literature and as theology. The extent to which exegetical analysis is necessary for the “theology of Sacred Scripture”, “the importance of the texts as stories of faith and as part of the history of the community, that produces texts and proves itself as their foundation of tradition, applied to their exegesis.” (96)

The biblical texts as testimonies of God- and faith-experiences

The biblical texts preserve experiences that persons have made with God and their faith. These experiences are not direct or “clotted” experiences in the text. “Clotted” because they are hardly direct but reflected, revised, interpreted presentations of God- and faith-experiences, which in the process of tradition with its transpositions and refractions, rarely draw from the experiences of one person but mostly from those of a whole group and at times even from that of generations.

“However, in the final analysis it is important that the biblical texts (apart from many other things) refer primarily to God-experiences realised through faith (and then looked at specifically as mystical experiences) [Emphasis by the author]” (97) We not only identify theophanies, visions, auditions, experiences of one’s vocation or actions of divine service like prayers, celebrations, rituals as such experiences. Religious experiences of God comprise all experiences through which persons feel directly or indirectly addressed by God. From the perspective of the person who responds, we call this event, in the language of the New Testament: faith. Biblical texts can be understood in a double sense as testimonies of faith: on the one hand, they testify to the faith of their writer and on the other hand, they want to strengthen the faith of the addressees.

Applied to the biblical texts this means that the experiences of God, being experiences of faith, are not only in regards to form and content, manifold and at times also contradictory. The historicity of biblical texts is valid even when these are understood as testimonies of God- and faith-experiences. Historicity and theocentricity are therefore the fundamental approach for their understanding. “The literary character and the strong connection to experiences are essential elements of their historicity.” (98) If the analysis of experiences refers to the historicity of the texts, then the analysis of the God-experience expresses the theocentricity of Holy Scripture.

The understanding of revelation and the dealing with Scripture

The understanding of divine revelation was deepened in the texts of the Vatican Council, especially in the Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*. (99) Revelation is not understood as a verbal statement, a divine instruction, but rather as personal self-communication of God. God is not only made accessible to human recognition, but rather, it makes present his saving reality and offers it to humanity. Even though we say that revelation has reached its completion in Jesus Christ, this does not mean that henceforth God remains silent. By handing on the revelation that has come to fullness in Christ, God continues to speak and work in the lives of people.

The understanding of revelation as self-disclosure of God includes the acceptance of revelation through the human person. It is necessary to understand revelation as an act of communication and encounter between God and the human person.

In this sense the understanding of revelation as presented by Vatican II makes it possible to connect

human experiences as such relevant for revelation.

“In as far as revelation is indeed a *self*-communication of God, it is written history to the same extent as it allows the human person to be a personal counterpart: Certainly not in the sense that it gives expression to the history of God’s essence, but in a way as to assume essentially a dialogical character, which addresses people as individuals and as community in their totality and gives them a definite place in history [Emphasis by the author].” (100)

Revelation is, therefore, not just information but God’s personal communication with human beings. Also today, God speaks to people in many ways: through the lives of Christians and the life of the Church, as well as through the events in the history of the world. (101)

What is the significance of this kind of understanding of revelation for our way of dealing with Scripture?

As we were able to show, the texts of the Bible can be understood as testimonies of God’s self-revelation in human history and the faith responses of people. Furthermore, it became clear that to our understanding of God’s self-revelation in history also belongs the pneumatic ability of people to be true ‘listeners of the Word’ and to test the inspiration of Scripture always anew through its interpretation and application to one’s own life.

Divini afflante Spiritu stresses that the updating or actualization of Scripture is due to the nature of the same. While *Dei Verbum* demands that “the access to Holy Scripture...should be wide open for those who believe in Christ [must: C.M.]!” (DV 22), the Document of the Pontifical Bible Commission: “The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church” from the year 1993, the “Use of the Bible” (102) encourages all the faithful to read and use the Bible.

The document presents a comprehensive appreciation of the diachronic and synchronic methods of biblical interpretation. (103) While the diachronic methods, to which we count the historical-critical Scripture interpretation, place the decrypting of the historical meaning of the texts in the foreground, the synchronic methods are more concerned with the involvement of the reader in a dialogue with the text. But the methods do as yet not place any weight on the fact that we are dealing with a text of Holy Scripture.

This is quite different from certain “approaches” to Holy Scripture. In the document of 1993 we see three different groups of approaches to interpretation: approaches that are based on tradition, approaches that include findings of the ‘science of humanities’ e.g., depth-psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology, as well as ‘contextual’ approaches as we find them in Liberation or Feminist Theology.

“Although biblical interpretation is the specific task of exegetes, it is, however, not their monopoly; because the interpretation of the Bible in the Church goes beyond the scientific analysis of the texts. For the Church the Bible is not simply a collection of historical documents concerning its origin. She receives the Bible as the Word of God, addressing the whole world here and now.” (104)

The actualization corresponds with the dynamic character of a faith community’s living tradition, which is again connected with those communities, in which Holy Scripture originated and was preserved. Thus the actualization of Scripture has, among other things, the task to take care that the original dynamic continues. (105)

What do the theological considerations have to do with the way the Bible is dealt with in

Bibliodrama?

Bibliodrama can be reconstructed as a form of reading the Bible, in which Holy Scripture is actualised in recognition of its multiple meanings in the lives of the participants.

The Bibliodrama invites individuals to become “Listeners of the Word”: he and she become persons who are called out by the Word, which depends on the ever new answer of the listener. God’s self-revelation in history, which is the basis for the writings as event and as process, can become, “with the gift of the Holy Spirit” “an experience” during the Bibliodrama, in the way that people today recognize and experience themselves in their perception and action through the “old message” as people challenged, irritated, liberated by God – in brief as persons called. In this regard, we may and must also assume regarding the process of Scripture interpretation in the Bibliodrama that people interpret their experiences as experiences of faith in the sense of an encounter with the God of their “fathers and mothers” and interpret this as religious (going to the roots) experiences of their lives and assume them to be true. (106) Schöttler interprets what happens in the Bibliodrama as “releasing” the message compared to what is happening in a sermon, with the difference that in the Bibliodrama the individuals are more directly involved in the process of receiving the message, (107) as they interweave the scriptural text, the life-text and the faith-text into one. Schöttler understands the way of dealing with the biblical text as biographical appropriation of the traditional belief, which is the basic level of faith communication and has its significance next to magisterial speech and scientific discourses from and about the faith. He points out that the three levels of faith communication are connected, but that no one can speak convincingly about God without having made a personal discovery of God in his/her own biography. He locates the Bibliodrama on this basic level of faith communication.

“Schöttler shows in a relatively free reception of the theodramatic approach in the theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar” (108) in what perspective the Bibliodrama – especially in the model of Andriessen and Derksen – can be termed a “theodramatic miniature” (109). Below I will summarize the thoughts of Schöttler.

1. In the theology of Urs von Balthasar revelation is presented in the categories of the theatre, which he does by taking the ancient topos of life as theatre and the world as stage.

“Life is a drama: God the Father is the author, the director and the actor on the stage of the world. To human persons God offers different roles; each one has his/her part to play – before God, yes with God in so far as God is also a central actor or player.” (110)

The dynamic of the drama lies in the question of how the ‘I’ of the individual meets with the person’s mission. The question: ‘Who am I?’ corresponds and competes with the question, “What is my task, what is the ultimate meaning of my existence?”

2. The drama of the world, which up to today has not yet reached its final stage and in which each person has to find his/her role, is connected with the divine drama of the Incarnation. In Jesus Christ God took the risk to get involved in the drama of salvation. Jesus Christ is the personal involvement of God, which God dares to realise then and now. In this drama, in which God tries to win human beings not through force but in freedom, we need to discover our own role and overcome the resistance against the message of Christ. In this way humanity is involved in the drama of the Incarnation. Although the drama is already played out in Christ, it is acted out again in every life story.

3. Against the background of Urs von Balthasar's theo-dramatic concept a person's question "Who am I?" appears as a theological and spiritual question. The human person has to answer this question in the course of his/her life.

"Life as a drama demands from the person to accept her/his role and identify more and more with it [...], that is, to reach in Christ, who in his mission has closed the tragic gap between person and role, the "I" that is marked by the unique name and the identity of role and mission, which God has given him/her." (111)

Schöttler locates the Bibliodrama on the path between assigned role and entrusted mission, and does so by opening a space, in which orientation can be found in view of one's own role within the horizon of the mission. The space is a "holy text", from which the roles are chosen. Similar to theo-drama, in Bibliodrama the space or scope is understood as a space opened up by God. The dramatic form of revelation can be experienced in this space and the respective role.

4. God's and the person's freedom are at the basis of the divine and human drama. Next to or within the divine freedom there is another, a created freedom, which participates in the true being of divine freedom, regardless of the decision for or against God. In the Bibliodrama the "holy text" penetrates that layer of the personality, where an awareness of calling and destiny grows. In this way the participants may discover an aspect of their personal mission, which also, in the concept of Hans Urs von Balthasar, is not a static, closed term but a dynamic drama with setbacks, progresses and crises. Therefore, it can happen in the Bibliodrama process that actors with specific roles detach themselves from the "approach to the solution" in the "holy text" and choose their own way. During the Bibliodrama the biblical solution often turns out to be historically conditioned in a way that stands in contrast and tension to one's own life-concept or philosophy and because of that it discloses the theo-dramatic area of conflict in the Bibliodrama. The participants' personal life-text, which resists the biblical solution, proves itself – in the act of resistance – as the strength of freedom, without which faith is impossible.

5. Though the role of the person is determined in the theo-dramatic concept of Urs von Balthasar, it nevertheless stays open in the way that the person continues to seek his/her own self while God remains the "One to be sought". For this reason the person cannot "know" his/her final form, it can only be discovered in a life-long process, which also constitutes the risk and the dynamic of faith. If the knowing not-knowing or the not knowing are seen as the quintessence of the theo-dramatic life dynamic, then the "always already knowing" means the loss of this dynamic. Thus "living means risking one's faith, playing along knowingly/not-knowingly in the great theo-drama and to trust that the author "God" is revealed in the life-drama or is seen from the perspective of human beings: allows Himself to be found." (112)

The part one plays in the Bibliodrama becomes the mediator, who helps to touch the personal truth without finding it conclusively. Just as in theo-drama, the actor in the Bibliodrama does at the end not know what the final and whole mission of his/her existence is, but he/she might have discovered something in the Scripture texts which previously was not evident but at the same time had something to do with him-/herself in the sense of the dynamics of role and mission.

The Bibliodrama becomes engaged in the "great play" of the theo-drama and "is temporary and fragmentary participation in the theo-drama." (113) In the Bibliodrama life and faith of the actors become interrelated and are experienced and interpreted as part of the theo-drama through the acting out of the "holy texts". In the Bibliodrama-role, which is

taken from the “holy text“, an access opens to the role assigned by God in the theo-drama, and “in the temporary Bibliodrama-role something of the truth of life begins to shine, the finding of which is the task of the life-drama”. (114) According to Schöttler the focus of the Bibliodrama is the reception of the message as revelation event.

2.5 Conclusion in View of the present Research Work

Whether the Bibliodrama regards itself as part of a pastoral or therapeutic context or even as part of religious education, common to all is the understanding that Bibliodrama has to do with acting out biblical stories. One's own life story is told as part of the biblical stories, and the biblical story casts its light on one's own life. Depending on the bibliodramatic orientation, the focus is more on:

A) The understanding and experience of one's own history: in the staging of a text the person's biography is always included. In the moment of the performance more is shown and revealed than the actors are aware of. It is through the instrument of taking on a specific role in the Bibliodrama that the "unlived life" can be told in the sense of potentiality, but also in the sense of regression. In light of the text all that is visible or invisible leading a shadow existence, is illuminated. This gives a new perspective to the personal history of the participant and is told with a "more" of possibilities.

"My self- and life-experience enter into dialogue with that, which is revealed in the biblical text, with a God-experience. From this dialogue between biblical text and the person's life-text, the reflection and feed-back of the group, new experiences are added – concerning the text and me." (115)

B) The understanding and experiencing of the biblical text as history, as text: In the re-enactment, the text becomes concrete and tangible in its unfamiliarity, its complexity and inexhaustibility. The process of retelling also enriches the text with its "unlived parts." It connects it with reference points outside itself. In light of the personal histories of the participants the text gains new significance. Its history of transmission is continued. The text gains elements of history. On the other hand, during the reflective moments in the Bibliodrama process the text, in its literary meaning, is worked on by the different methods of critical exegesis. The diverse hermeneutics show the multiple meaning of a text and broaden the participants' understanding of it.

C) The understanding and experiencing of how, also today, God does or does not speak in one's own life:

"Biblical stories, yes all biblical texts, want to be told or read as a challenge to enter the narrated or discussed God-story, and in this way to discover the meaning of the names of God, told in metaphors in one's own biography." (116)

In this sense, the Bibliodrama can also be seen as a search for God's foot-prints in one's own life. This is not a positivistic or fundamentalistic re-reading of biblical texts as "material to be believed" but as questioning further how God is revealed in one's own life. After all, Holy Scripture was not recorded because it is interesting but because truth is spoken, a truth that human beings seek. This truth is not found in a history, supposedly free of interpretation, nor in a history behind the stories, but in the stories and in the praxis inspired by it.

The present work is especially interested in the effect the Bibliodrama has from the pastoral-kerygmatic perspective. It examines the significance of the Bibliodrama for the religious development in persons' life-stories. How do people express their bibliodramatic experiences? How do they reconstruct these experiences? Which function of religion is the basis of the reconstruction of bibliodramatic experiences and on the background of what social form of religion are these experiences articulated?

3. The Bibliodrama as an Instrument of Faith-Communication - The Bibliodrama Model of Andriessen and Derksen

Early in the 80s Hermann Andriessen and Nicolaas Derksen began to play and guide Bibliodrama performances. In 1986 they published their Bibliodrama-concept in the Dutch language (117), which then appeared in 1991 in the German translation. (118) In numerous courses, in the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland pastoral personnel was trained as Bibliodrama leaders. Andriessen and Derksen are the only Catholic theologians, who have developed a specific Bibliodrama model. All other models originated largely in Protestant areas, where they were further reflected and developed. Maybe this is one of the reasons why the approach of Andriessen and Derksen is so little discussed. This deficit in the reception of the Bibliodrama is the reason for the missing scientific discussion and the lack of praxis reflections. Most dissertations mention the approach of Andriessen and Derksen only marginally. Only the work of Wolfgang Drechsel has a good look at the question, in how far the participants' experience in the Bibliodrama can be identified as "authentic faith experience". (119)

This work intends to compensate for the deficit in the reception and wants to make a contribution to the critical reflection on the models of Andriessen and Derksen.

3.1 Bibliodrama as Pastoral Action

Andriessen and Derksen locate their model in the pastoral work of parishes and within that partly in catechetical instructions and partly in diaconal ministry. (120) Bibliodrama as catechesis aims at opening up the Scriptures for the participants.

"Catechesis attempts to connect four poles: on the one hand the Judeo-Christian tradition and on the other hand the culture and experience of the people currently living; the pole, that is God and the pole of people living today with their God-image and forms of relationship with God." (121)

They also take this multi-dimensionality as basis of the Bibliodrama. Catechesis focuses on faith formation and growth into the ecclesial community. These are also the goals that the Bibliodrama postulates. "Bibliodrama as catechesis is then a more or less long process of faith formation, which fosters a Christian attitude and a growing into the community." (122)

Andriessen and Derksen explicitly emphasise that Bibliodrama is also pastoral care, apart from having a catechetical dimension. By pastoral care they mean the spiritual accompaniment of individuals and groups. Ecclesialogically they ground it in the paraclesis, the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Pastoral care as paraclesis has two poles: affirmation, encouragement, challenge, and urging. (123) Both poles can be experienced in the Bibliodrama, namely, affirmation and challenge. "Real consolation teaches us to call 'alive' what is alive, 'dead' what is dead 'threatening' what threatens, and 'empty' that which is empty. True consolation, genuine help are offered, where that which matters at the moment, may come up for discussion." (124)

Andriessen and Derksen are convinced that due to the paracletic reality, that precedes every Bibliodrama, the communicative processes in the drama can have a healing effect on the actors' personal relationships.

By locating the Bibliodrama in catechesis and pastoral care Andriessen and Derksen indicate that each drama develops within the poles of Scripture, assistance of the Spirit, and the participants. How this is to be understood more precisely and what conditions need to be fulfilled so that a process of faith can develop, will have to be presented below.

3.2 Bibliodrama as Faith-Communication

Bibliodrama stands in the service of the proclamation of our faith in the parish and in places where people gather to hear the Word of God as presented in the Bible. The following text will attempt to describe the premises that are the basis of faith communication according to three fundamental concepts.

Faith

According to Andriessen and Derksen, the Bibliodrama deals with the communication of our faith. The authors are interested in the faith dimension (125) and focus on our belief. Thereby, they differ from other approaches to the Bibliodrama (see Part I, 1-2). However, we can see a double direction of meaning:

1. Faith is that which lives as ultimate conviction in a person here and now. The Bibliodrama reveals the faith of the individual in the context of a biblical story. It becomes clear which symbolic-mythical images find an echo in the person and which do not.
2. Faith is documented when dealing with questions like: Who is God for me now? What is my relationship with God? How do I actively respond to His presence? (126) Dealing with these questions in the context of biblical stories presupposes a person's faith in the sense of sharing the basic Judeo-Christian traditions.

When Andriessen and Derksen talk here about faith as being a precondition for the Bibliodrama, it does not mean the faith in its "material content", but faith as openness, allowing Scripture to speak to the person and to agree in principle to it as a potential reservoir of symbols and images, at least for oneself. Concerning Schöttler (127), who wants to make fruitful the theodramatic approach of Balthasar for the understanding of role identification in the play, Andriessen says the following:

"It is not expected that each participant in a Bibliodrama session shares this Christological spirituality, that is, the theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar. (C.M) Bibliodrama is, at least in our model, directed towards it so that – based on the text – one's own spirituality is brought to the fore and elaborated." (128)

In addition, Andriessen formulates four dimensions, in which faith as spiritual experience is today accessible for every person: existence, meaning, religion and faith. (129) The Bibliodrama reveals under which pluralistic perspectives faith is incarnated in the lives of people.

1. Life experiences are existential experiences. Human beings experience that they are not simply in command of their lives, that the origin and meaning of their existence are not a given. "That is the experience of our 'contingency' as well as our 'being thrown': into a certain period of history; as man or woman; involved in various institutions, of which size and numbers increase and which exert an anonymous power over us; in a situation, in which no one can any longer control those powers, which rule history; with the joy and suffering and the tragedy of every day life." (130) The Bibliodrama reveals whether and how these existential life experiences make people feel insecure, whether they block them out, whether and how they face them in their actions.

2. Faith is demonstrated in the question and the meaning of experience. Even among Christians, the Christian faith has long ceased to be the only source of meaning. People do find meaning outside of the Christian tradition. There is a possibility that the Bibliodrama brings about challenging encounters between those whose source of meaning

is alone the Judeo-Christian tradition and those, who find their meaning in other traditions as well.

3. A religious experience is the experience of immediate evidence, evidence that concerns me personally, that breaks through the everyday consciousness and makes it transparent for another dimension. People seek such a “religiosity of experiences“. While longing for situations, that bring me into immediate or close contact with the “absolute“, faith is expressed. In the Bibliodrama we hardly ever experience the pure “absolute“, but it can happen, that the participants make such an experience, as it appears through the text, the person’s biography and the encounter with the other participants. (131)

4. Faith is a holding on to unconscious preliminary decisions as part of the context of shared knowledge, actions and experiences. For most of the participants in a Bibliodrama session this is – as far as I see it - the context of the Judeo-Christian tradition. “But it is very well possible that the participants meet with opposites: within themselves, in the group, in confrontation with the Church and its doctrine, in their relationship to the mystery.” (132)

Faith becomes clear and graphic during the Bibliodrama process, be it in the dimension of life experience, of life’s meaning, of religious experience or of one’s belief. In this sense the Bibliodrama is a path to raising consciousness. It becomes clear how faith is at work in the lives of the individual, whether and how it supports, whether and how it is a resource for coping with life and a creative power. Faith in the sense of clinging to unconscious preconceptions is thinned out. What was preconscious or unconscious becomes tangible, rationally palpable, and alienable in linguistic or symbolic actions. In other words: faith can be experienced.

Touching the Mystery

Bibliodrama as faith mediation wants to bring the actor in contact with the “mystery“. Mystery should not be understood in a one-sided way as an attribute of God, but also as an attribute of human reality. Each Scripture text preserves experiences that pertain to the mysterious dimension of human and divine realities.

“Every Bibliodrama involves, in the actual situation of the drama, under the aspect of experience as well as under that of the action, a contact with this mystery, which we meet on the one hand in the text and on the other hand in our own lives.” (133)

Which facets of the mystery “come into play” depends on one side on what the Bible text addresses and otherwise on what is alive in the participants and is evoked in the encounter with the text.

“The knowledge of the mystery, that of God and that of people, represents the actual context in which the Bibliodrama evolves. The deeper the roots of this awareness are, the more profound the Bibliodrama will be. And the more we are moved by it, the more it renews our lives. The focus of faith is this mystery.” (134)

The directional movement of the Bibliodrama is the encounter with the “mystery“. This is greater than the biblical text. This statement about the fundamental concern of the Bibliodrama constitutes the greatest difference in the understanding of Bibliodrama among Protestants. The latter are concerned with the recovery of the text as subject, Andriessen and Derksen are more likely to respond to the function of the text as justifying and challenging it as literary work and Word of God. In this duality lies its subjectivity. Andriessen and Derksen certainly would not go that far and deny the text its subjectivity, though the subjectivity of the text lies in its service function with respect to the revelation of God. In this sense, the Scripture text is a message and as such subject of God’s

self-revelation.



Sacred Space

We notice in the Bibliodrama according to Andriessen and Derksen an attempt to open up a sacred space, but it is inaccessible. Neither the participants nor the leaders can “make” it. (135)

“According to my experience this space opens when people sense in their concrete lives that they are utterly deprived of their de facto subjective as well as objective constraints and share in a reality that is beyond all this. That does not mean that they would skip over their de facto constraints; but they experience that they are more than what limits or might limit them. It is the experience that this “more” is alive in them and that it belongs to another reality outside their everyday life.” (136)

The “spiritual space“, that is to be opened up in the Bibliodrama process has a certain quality of experience. It depends on the condition of the actors. If they, in their personal origin, feel connected to a transcendent reality, the horizon of “being-of this world” broadens into the horizon of “not-being-of-this-world”.

It is about the existential experience of perceiving oneself and the others as persons and thereby as ‘mysteries’. The German word for mystery (Geheimnis) contains the word ‘heim’. [Home] Ge-‘heim’ therefore is something that belongs to the ‘house’ and makes the dwelling to something that means ‘being at home’. This discovery makes us recover our original freedom that characterizes us as persons and again and again wants to be experienced situationally.” (137)

The Bibliodrama, therefore, deals with re-experiencing and re-discovering of what the original ‘at-homeness’ of people truly is. In this way, people find their original freedom vis-à-vis determinations through ancestry, sex, colour, and competence. The text and the lives of the participants/actors and what happens when they meet are now perceived from the perspective of the “spiritual space”. During the Bibliodrama, which takes place in the context of the Judeo-Christian (138) tradition, this “spiritual space“ is experienced as the work of “God’s Spirit“ or more openly as the experience of the “mystery”. (139). Everything, which is experienced, is in this context experienced as gift of the Holy Spirit or seen in connection with the mystery.

“When a Bibliodrama opens up to the ‘spiritual space’, the atmosphere among the participants in the room changes. The attention of the participants intensifies: it becomes quieter in the room. Not all participants, but at least some in the group, are touched by the effect of the ‘mystery’. It is an encounter with the ‘mystery’, as it becomes visible through the text, the life-stories and the interaction among the participants. (140)

3.3 Awareness and Deepening as Direction of the Intervention

Andriessen differentiates four levels of encounter in the Bibliodrama: (141) the verbal exchange, the connection of meaning and emotion, the level of convictions and the level of existence. Since the Bibliodrama is concerned about deepening, the ministers or pastoral leaders endeavour to help the actors reach the deepest possible level of exchange. On the first level there is a verbal exchange among the participants. This happens usually during the initial phase of a Bibliodrama. The encounter of the actors is similar to an exchange of ideas among the actors about the text. The text is the object. It is interpreted on the background of personal knowledge and experience. The healed person could, for example, explaining what healing means for him/her. The scribe comments about the importance of the Sabbath for the identity of the People of God. The chosen roles are as yet not connected to the person in the here and now. In this phase, a Bibliodrama at times turns

into a discussion. There is neither movement nor action. Each one confirms his/her status quo.

There is a difference when meaning and emotions are being connected. In contrast to the first level, the statements have a highly emotional tone. However, the contacts remain functional, even though the higher emotional level creates an increased presence to each other. It happens frequently during this phase that debates come about, for example, whether and why there ought to be exceptions to the ban on healing on the Sabbath. The actors that are not directly involved in the debate take side for or against an argument. Some realize that what is “in progress” is not their topic. On this level, it becomes evident what feeling habits and encounter patterns shape the individual. They feel and speak according to an “old film”. The frame of reference that the participants draw from corresponds to their habits and experiences, but not to the events in the here and now. In more than a few participants this phase results in a better self-perception, because in the long run the emotional agitation cannot be maintained, it exhausts itself. There is a pause that allows the individual to stop and come into his/her own.

On the third level the participants meet each other in the confrontation of their convictions, which in contrast to meaning and feeling is less situational and includes a deeper connection to the core of the person. In Bibliodrama convictions are not expressed verbally but through movement and concrete behaviour. When persons encounter each other in their convictions – when for example the scribe wants to prevent the healing on a Sabbath and blocks the way to the sick person, because he is convinced that he has to guard the law -, a real contact comes about, which goes beyond pure emotionality and is connected to the person’s own core. Though convictions belong to the cognitive structures that control our behaviour, they are often unconscious. Precisely for this reason they are seen as self-evident in the person’s behaviour and not uncommonly rub other convictions up the wrong way. In this way the Bibliodrama directly shows the consequences of convictions.

The fourth level indicates the dimension of one’s basic attitude and existence. Fundamental attitudes are a certain way of how people deal with situations in their lives: from confident to anxious, taking initiatives to being cautious, curious to suspicious, certain to uncertain. People develop these fundamental attitudes in the course of their lives. They permeate everything that people do, think, and feel. There are also basic attitudes that concern our faith. These range from disbelief to trust, from doubt to certainty, from guilt feelings to reconciliation. The Bibliodrama reveals how belief and unbelief, guilt and reconciliation, salvation and perdition work in the encounter of the participants, whether and in how far the participants encourage, support, protect and nurture each other, and whether and in how far they fight, wound and fall out with each other. Sometimes there are situations, in which persons encounter themselves as mystery or meet THE “mystery”. This happens when people discover that there is more behind meaning, emotions, convictions and fundamental attitudes.

The only briefly described levels of encounter in the Bibliodrama make it clear that deepening the faith means two things:

1. Deepening of the faith refers to the way how someone lives and believes.
2. Deepening of the faith deals with how someone lives and believes. In the Bibliodrama faith dimensions are revealed through dialogue, movement and contact between the participants and the text. The task of the person responsible for the pastoral care consists in inviting the participants to become aware of their position in the here and now and in helping them to sense whether and in what direction the inner movement of the individual person wants to unfold. The actor is to move internally and become better aware of his/her own questions, challenges, and desires. “With questions and occasionally with reactions the leader/pastor helps the actors to question their inner voice, to come into motion and to articulate what is moving them on the basis of their faith.” (142)

Connection of faith- and life-history

The Bibliodrama model of Andriessen and Derksen aims at closely connecting a person's faith story with his/her biography. Each one is to situate him/herself with his/her personal life- and faith-story within the biblical story.

“In the model that we present, the Bibliodrama has the explicit goal to foster in the participants the relationship and mutual influence of their concrete lives and concrete faith. It is not primarily about a better understanding of the biblical passage – of course this happens practically always – nor about a psycho dramatic method – though the psyche is often positively influenced by the drama. In every believing life there is a personal “faith script” and personal “life script”. In the Bibliodrama both are connected in a playful and dramatic way, and this happens in the light of a story from the Bible [...]”. (143)

While in most of the other bibliodramatic models the emphasis is on the relationship between the biblical text and the life script, Andriessen and Derksen differentiate once more between life text and faith text. The Bibliodrama should ensure that life and faith of the participants permeate each another more and more. Therefore, Andriessen and Derksen are not primarily concerned with a better understanding of the biblical text, but with the relationship of faith and life against the horizon of a biblical story. The Bibliodrama model of Andriessen and Derksen is therefore to be located less in the area of text interpretation but rather in the area of text application. This makes it different from most of the other Bibliodrama models, especially from the scientific reflections of Martin. In this context we ought to locate the understanding of the text as presented by Andriessen and Derksen. Andriessen and Derksen are less interested in the text as literature than in the message contained therein (see part I, 3.5).

When involved in a Bibliodrama process the participants expose themselves to the message of a biblical story. They are challenged to find a place in this story. This creates a certain tension in the participants between their personal situations in the here and now, between their faith and that to which the text challenges them. This tension makes it possible to discover one’s own faith relationship. In this sense the Bibliodrama wants to help in writing one’s personal faith story with its believing and unbelieving facets, and to discover what is alive in the participants, be it fear, sorrow, courage or desire.

“Faith does not grow or develop on its own; it is a personal decision. In the Bibliodrama process this decision may appear very modest: it happens in the light of the chosen biblical story: it turns out to be a fact that this process has much to do with the lives of the actors involved and to a large extent goes beyond the drama situation.” (144)

In response to the connection between faith story and the person’s biography, the Bibliodrama does not remain noncommittal. It challenges the actors to make a decision, which is admittedly limited in the context of the story, yet does not lose its effect on the lives of the participants outside the Bibliodrama situation.

3.4 Leadership as Pastoral Care

Andriessen and Derksen call the leaders of the Bibliodrama session ministers or pastors, since it is their task to accompany what is happening in the Bibliodrama with great pastoral attention, to structure it and, where necessary, animate the players. (145) The leaders responsible for the pastoral care pay attention to the unfolding of life and faith of the individuals when they come in contact with the text and the other actors. Calling the leaders pastors does have a further dimension beyond this.

“Pastoral care states that there is a pastor. This is always the starting point in the Bibliodrama. It is a concrete encounter with the pastor, just as he appears in the pericope in question. In this encounter life is now brought in touch with the living history of the pastor.” (146)

Those involved in pastoral tasks during the Bibliodrama sessions are well aware that there is another shepherd or pastor besides themselves. (147) Such trust in the “other pastor” prevents them from taking on excessive responsibility, activism and wanting-to-do-everything. Though the leader takes the initiative, but does so knowing that “where two or three are gathered in His name, He is in the midst of them.” Andriessen and Derksen see pastors as midwives. (148) They help bringing to birth what is moving the actor in terms of faith and unbelief, fear and desire, grief and confidence, guilt and reconciliation. They trust in the presence of the Spirit while they act out the text of the Bibliodrama. (149)

The Task of the Minister/Facilitator

Andriessen and Derksen postulate two pastors or ministers for their model, one as the leader and one as the assistant or co-leader. The task of the latter is to support the leader by trying to illustrate or exemplify the processes that occur in the individual or the whole group. For this the leaders use non-verbal and verbal forms of communication. (See part I, 3.7)

After the participants have chosen their role and place in the room the leader talks to each one individually. “The goal of this dialogue is to help each participant to gain clarity about the choice of his/her role, to know what will be important in the role within the context of the group and the pericope.” (150)

The aim of the dialogue is to come to a clear understanding of one’s own place and the emotions, questions and inner reasons connected with it. It is important that the initiative remains totally with the participants. Though the facilitator may ask questions to point out inconsistencies or contradictions, it is always the participant who decides what is true from his/her perspective. In this respect, the same applies to the participants and the facilitator during this dialogue that applies also to “client-centred, non-directive dialogues.” (151)

During the acting the facilitator has the task to promote relationships among the actors. He/she does this by trying to bring the actors into contact with each other. He connects the themes, and places one person’s experience at the service of another. (152) If this succeeds there will be intensive movements and dialogue between the participants themselves. One can experience how the individuals need the life- and faith experiences of the others to find anew their own way and do so at a deeper level.

The Bibliodrama is a complex process relating the biblical story, the individual and the interactions of the group. In the Bibliodrama concept of Andriessen and Derksen the facilitator is also the “advocate of the text.” (153) It is his/her responsibility to preserve the meaning of the story. “The minister/facilitator is charged to maintain the orientation of the story and ask the actors, for what reasons they move outside the story, just as it is handed down in their faith tradition.” (154)

Respect for the Experience of the Participants

Andriessen and Derksen are aware of the prominent role of the facilitator or leader in their Bibliodrama model. Therefore, they do not tire to stress that – similar to other helping relationships – it is important to consciously deal with the imbalance of power arising from the relationships. (155) In the context of the Bibliodrama that means that the facilitators put themselves at the service of the participants’ experiences. Reminiscent experiences and actual experience are to be met with respect and reverence. That means: perception, interpretation and action are decided by the participants. At the same time, Andriessen and Derksen stress that reverence is not noncommittal. (156)

The facilitator is asked to state his/her perceptions with regards to the role of an actor or the interaction between participants. The actors are free to deal with the statements of the facilitator, that is, to accept or not to accept them. The criticism of too strong a role of the leader in the model of Andriessen and Derksen is weakened by the stress on respect for the participants.

Identity of the Minister

In the Bibliodrama model, developed by Andriessen and Derksen, there is less talk about the requirements concerning the Bibliodrama leader, but more consciously about that of the minister or pastor. In this way, they make it clear that it is not primarily the acquisition of competence but the development of the personal identity in the sense of a “good and supportive ‘self-esteem’”. (157) They describe how in four areas in the Bibliodrama the identity of the minister takes shape. At this point it becomes clear that Andriessen and Derksen consequently pursue the thought of the intersubjective encounter of participants, leaders and mystery.

1. Professional Competence (158)

Those who guide the Bibliodrama process need to have the ability to actively listen. They need to be able to hear the objective aspect of a message as well as the aspect of the relationships and express these in words. They are able to feel empathy for the person and sense how they can develop the inner movements of the actors. They know the rhythm of intervening initiative and cautious intervention. They know how to deal with intimacy and distance and are used to think in biblical images. They try to connect the faith-movement of the narrative with the life-experience of the participants.

2. Openness in Faith

As a person of faith, the minister is rooted in salvation history. Being so grounded, he has the real competence to guide the Bibliodrama process pastorally. At the same time, it is true that through the dynamism of the Bibliodrama the minister, too, comes into touch with his own faith and unbelief, his fears and his longings, with salvation and damnation. He/she needs to be willing to be corrected and guided through the text. Just as the participants, the minister too is influenced by the biblical narrative. For this the minister is in need of an attitude of believing openness. “Sacred Scripture is continued to be written in the here and now. The minister does not know what will be written in the next line. He/she helps to let it be born. What exactly is being born is not determined by him/her.” (159)

3. Memory (memoria) as Foundation of Pastoral Actions (160)

It is the task of the ministers to perceive themselves, the group and the narratives as source of faith and life and to connect them. It can happen that during a dramatic action these sources do not run together. Then one dimension is overemphasised at the expense of the others. It happens frequently that the dimension of salvific history in the play, as the narrative tells it, misses out. Then it is the task of the minister to recall it through actions – words, gestures or movements. Without the memoria as living memory of God’s actions in human history, the pastoral identity of the minister loses its significance. In the Bibliodrama this memory is not only expressed in words but it is also acted out. It makes people move and come into contact. It also challenges the identity of the minister him/herself and continues to be effective in his/her pastoral praxis beyond the Bibliodrama.

4. The Role of Prayer

Part of the identity of the minister is also the role as a praying person. In the Bibliodrama there can be situations in which people have to make profound decisions. This process needs time and intensive attention. It is never clear at the outset how a person continues

to describe his/her journey. What happens does not lie in the hands of the minister. "In such moments the minister prays, not to push off the responsibility, but to share it with the One and entrust it to the One, who carries the weight of salvation history and now leads it on." (161) The prayer makes two things clear: the identity of the minister is rooted in the faith relationship with the mystery.

In the Bibliodrama it is important that a space is opened for people, in which they can continue writing their own life- and faith-history in the context of the narrative and in interaction with the participants and the mystery that is at work.

3.5 Biblical Narratives as Models

Andriessen and Derksen present their understanding of biblical narratives in a way that distinguishes them from universal human stories. The biblical narratives are diverse manifestations of faith experiences of the People of God. They are stories of the origin. They address a special foundation, that is, the God-relationship. (162)

In contrast to general human stories, the biblical narratives always present an offer of faith. Yahweh offers a relationship. In this respect, faith is always an offer to enter into a relationship. (163) In contrast to universal human stories, (164) the biblical narratives do not deal with a lone hero who has to master his life and all the dangers happening in it. The hero of faith is one who nurtures God's offer of relationship, calls for God's help and rescue from distress. This creates a unity between God and human beings. Both influence each other. The infidelity of the people causes God to suffer and expands his heart to infinite love. The apparent absence of God tempts the people to act on their own authority. It commits idolatry. But God's love makes the people turn back to Him.

Therein lies the difference with mythological hero stories: what makes believing persons to heroes is not their independence, not their growth in power, but in their ability to form relationships, to grow in trust in God and in the length and depth of their shared journey.

Andriessen and Derksen name five categories which account for the specific mark of the biblical stories in contrast to the universal human stories:

1. The aspect of vocation

A person's vocation from God is a central theme of biblical stories. Individuals are being called (Adam, Eve, Cain, Abraham, Samuel, Jonah, Mary...) and finally a whole nation is seen as a people called by God. The persons' and the people's answer to the call is often ambivalent. However, God remains faithful to his call.

2. The aspect of decision

Those who are called face a decision. Will they follow the call or not? Often the biblical story describes a serious struggle, for example, in the stories of Jonah, Elijah, Jeremiah, the rich young man, Nathanael.

3. The aspect of destiny

For Andriessen and Derksen this means referring the so-called biblical main character to the whole nation. Individuals are not called as private persons. Their history does not only have a personal character, but is connected with the past, present and future of a whole people. "The destiny of belonging to a community is always present in the biblical story, even if it is very much concerned with a single person." (165)

The aspect of salvation

Biblical stories always deal with an offer of salvation. The situation of sin moves towards a change from being lost to being saved. However, on their way to salvation the people are being confronted with the reality of evil.

5. The concrete-historical aspect

The biblical stories deal with concrete persons, political events, and definite actions in connection with God, who in turn speaks again with the people, calls them, negotiates with them, threatens them, and promises them salvation.

Times and places in the stories are named very precisely. They are concrete; they place the individual event into the larger context of Israel's history. Beyond that, biblical stories go back to incidents which happened long ago and in far away places (for example, the call and faith of Abraham, the time of the Exodus from Egypt, persons like Moses and Elijah).

People, who absorb the biblical stories into their self-image, develop and move in a different way from those who do not do that or do not do it any longer. (166) During the Bibliodrama process the biblical stories appear to the participants as "doubling-up possibilities". By revealing the religious origin, they offer the participants a place among many in a long history of salvation and iniquity. Based on the past, the present can be interpreted and the future can be developed.

In this way the Bibliodrama frees the person from ahistoricity and the excessive demand of extreme individualisms. It grounds the participants in tradition with all its straight paths and detours, resources and resistance and inserts them into a larger whole. Texts and related roles are predefined in the Bibliodrama. It offers the framework for the way in which the participants see and meet each other in the diversity of their faith- and life-stories. In this way, the biblical text offer models (167), in which the individual persons can recognize themselves, once they have accepted them. In accordance with their current situation, participants take on certain roles from the biblical narrative. In this way, they come into contact with themselves, recognize themselves, and maybe see part of their personality that they had not been aware of. They find themselves in a situation that has a message, which expects a reply. If I accept one aspect of the model that does not mean that I will follow the narrative flow, on the contrary: the model does not dispense one from an individual personification.

In contrast to the historical-critical biblical exegesis with its proper place in science, Andriessen and Derksen locate their Bibliodrama model in the existential experience of the participants. Bibliodrama is exegesis 'in actu'. "In Bibliodrama one tries with means that can help the story of salvation have its own say in the actors and in the group, as well as having the actors themselves and the group have a say in the history of salvation." (168) At best, the story influences the actions of the players, conversely the narrative experiences a continuation in the life- and faith-story of the participants, which may also include a new interpretation.

Text, Narrative, Message

Andriessen's and Derksen's Bibliodrama model is based on the text, presented in today's different Bible translations. While the historical-critical exegesis deals with the text of the biblical story, the exegesis of the Bibliodrama deals with the story itself. "It focuses on the 'fate' of the Word of God in the people here and now." (169)

In contrast to the structuralist approach of Gerhard Marcel Martin, Andriessen and Derksen are less concerned about the text in its present literary form than about the narrative and message contained therein and meant for the participants. The actual message of a story can be very different for groups and for individuals. Because it matters to Andriessen and Derksen primarily whether and how the history of salvation is continued in the individual, they forego exegetical comments and androgenic exercises in their model. (170)

The participants and the story itself are the frame of reference for the exegesis. By engaging with the story, the participants themselves design the framework and the perspective, within which the story unfolds in the Bibliodrama. Consequently, an "exegesis in the Bibliodrama" is always unique, unrepeatable and provisionally.

Doing the Word

Bibliodramatic exegesis demands concrete actions. It brings the actors into situations, in which they have to 'show their colours' and make decisions. In contrast to the historical-critical Bible research, the Bibliodrama has mandatory character.

The text is not the objective of the Bibliodrama but rather that, which unfolds dramatically between the narrative and the actors. The story as message and the reaction, the action of the participants, are equally important. The question that is converted bibliodramatically says: what is the message of the text for me and how do I respond to it with my life? Not only the biblical story is treated from the viewpoint of exegesis, in reverse, the personal history, too, is interpreted through the biblical message.

3.6 Bibliodrama as Ecclesiogenesis

Andriessen and Derksen designed their Bibliodrama model against the background of the situation of individualization and pluralisation in society and its impact on the parish's pastoral ministry. They assume that despite the 'evaporation' of institutional religiosity, the people's questions concerning religious interpretation of life have become louder than ever. (171) This means in view of parish life that the responsible persons – we speak of full-time, part-time and voluntary personnel – endeavour to create a communitarian as well as personal awareness of faith, in order to give a certain radiance to the message of the Kingdom of God. (172) "If we do not address the faith awareness of people in our parishes, our pastoral actions reveal a deficiency." (173) For Andriessen and Derksen the Bibliodrama is a way, by which the personal awareness of faith can be strengthened and deepened.

"In our view, Bibliodrama is a form of communal pastoral action. Why? Here people enter into a dramatic situation, which is permeated with the mystery of God. [...] The special thing about the Bibliodrama is that those who participate in it are to enter into a relationship with one another as people of faith. Through this relationship we connect the different every day situations in the light of the divine mystery." (174)

We are dealing with a double purpose: on the one hand the participants make a special experience of community. On the other hand, the individual's connection of life and faith is being strengthened. The prerequisite is that the participants come together as believing people – in the different dimensions of their spiritual experience of existence, meaning, religious experience and faith (see part I, 3.3) – to reflect a biblical text and to act it out.

"'Kahal', Church means 'being gathered', to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mk 1,1); to listen to it but also to agree with it from the heart in order to react to it in a visible way. Consent does not happen in a single act. It is a growth process, in which various elements come into play: indentifying with each other, recognizing oneself in the other, defending oneself or entering into solidarity with one another. All these elements play an important role. In the process, Church becomes a reality in which the participants more consciously become members of the People of God." (175)

It becomes clear that the concept of Church that is used here sees the Church less as an institution than as a movement and process. This process includes the call of the individual and his/her answer as consent but also the corresponding every day lived witness. In the encounter with the other the call assumes a concrete form. It is the aim of the process to help people to see themselves more consciously as members God's People. By locating the Bibliodrama in the context of the Church, Andriessen and Derksen adhere to the theology of the People of God as it was presented in the Dogmatic Constitutions on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. The act of 'making visible', that is mentioned here, is an important aspect for the awakening of the 'Ecclesia', which is the aim of every Bibliodrama performance. "Ultimately all participants express their faith ,within' the small Church that is present in the situation of the Bibliodrama." (176)

Following the ecclesiological foundation, Andriessen and Derksen identify the Bibliodrama situation as a process of ecclesiogenesis. While the participants, in their encounter, make their faith 'visible', they reveal themselves to each other as people "called out by the Word" and are Church. Bibliodrama is a process which does not undo the tension of "subjectivity, community and mystery", neither to the one or the other side. In this way, the individual with her/his personal life- and faith-story is appreciated, assigned a place in the (ecclesial) community of shared faith-awareness and located in the discovery of the mystery.

"Faith is not only knowledge; it means primarily that before our eyes we clearly perceive a path, which we want to follow and which each one will walk in a very personal way. This respect, which grows through the contact with the other participants and this shared faith-awareness of the 'path', is considered the most important thing that a modern faith community has to learn." (177)

3.7 The Methodological Way

3.7.1 The Sequence of the Bibliodrama Process

Before every Bibliodrama session the group makes a contract about the procedure and flow, the goal and the intervention direction of the Bibliodrama. The sequence of the steps in the Bibliodrama according to Andriessen and Derksen is as follows:

1. First the text is read.
2. Based on the first listening experience, a brainstorm takes place and persons, verbs, names of places, objects etc. that are important for the story, are gathered and written on a poster.
3. This is followed by a dialogue about the text, in which everything the participants think and feel about the story is noted. There can be open questions concerning the understanding of the text, exegetical explanations, noticeable problems, and parallels with their own experiences or events in the present, emotional reactions – all these can make up the echo of the group. (178) It is the responsibility of the accompanying minister to ensure that the text will not be talked to death. The dialogue about the Scripture text does not aim at a homogeneous, obligatory perspective, according to which the narrative is to be acted out. Contradictions and open-ended questions should remain and challenge the inner reactions to the text.
4. Following this conversation, the text is once more read with the request to make sure what role the individual plays in this story.
5. After this second, more personal time of listening, the minister divides the room. Important stations of the text are given concrete places. (See part I, 3.7.2) The participants are asked to visit all "stations in the room" in order to sense, where their own place is in the context of the story and the group. Participants, who are still uncertain which role they want to take on, are helped by the floor plan in finding their place in the biblical story.
6. This is followed by the discussion about the different roles. The minister asks every actor who he/she is and where he/she stands. The aim of this interview is, on the one hand, to clarify the connection between the role and the person. In this situation, the conscious awareness of where and how I am standing in my chosen place is of help. On the other hand, it should become obvious for all with whom they are dealing in this play and from what perspective the individuals are looking at the text.

Personal experiences with the method of the pastoral Bibliodrama and conversations with Nicolaas Derksen show that the Bible Sharing presents its own important element in the course of the Bibliodrama. It's about familiarizing oneself with the story in its presented form and in relationship with one's own biography. The reflection in the group deepens the first listening experience. Moreover, through the group's resonance to the text it becomes

clear that it is legitimate to have different perspectives regarding the understanding of the text. The participants learn from each other what kind of effects the text creates.

7. The Bibliodrama gets under way either through the initiative of one actor, who begins to move, or through the intervention of the facilitator who addresses an individual participant. (179) The action(s) of a participant bring to light how she/he reacts to the ideas that the text offers. Movement and interaction help the individual and the group to discover the faith connection. It is the task of the minister/facilitator to structure the interaction of text, individual and group so that a deepening of faith is facilitated. (See Part I, 3.3 and 3.4) (180)

8. After the play there is a break, in which the participants distance themselves from their part and can gain a first overview over the experiences they have made.

9. At the end of the dramatic performance there is a follow-up conversation with the question, "What did you experience and what does this mean for your faith?" Everyone in the group has the chance to share about the experiences as well as about that, which could not be expressed. (181) Beyond that, the actors are explicitly invited to interpret their own experiences from the perspective of how it has deepened their faith.

In this Andriessen and Derksen stringently follow their approach, which aims at a compacted interweaving of faith and life.

3.7.2 The Arrangement of the Text in the given Space

In the Bibliodrama model of Andriessen and Derksen locating the text in the given space is an effective structural specification. This is preceded by an intensive, personal, spiritual, biblical and theological, as well as exegetical preparation of the ministers/pastors as leader and co-leader. It is "visualized exegesis". (182)

The floor plan should correspond with the following criteria:

1. It is more than a mere topographic presentation of the story within the given space. It displays tension poles of a story like salvation and damnation, guilt and forgiveness, acceptance and refusal.

2. The floor plan has to offer all parts a place without determining these beforehand as binding.

3. The floor plan has to give a place to the faith dimension, as it features in the story. In the story of Massa and Meriba in Ex 17, 1-7 this can be, for example, the place where Moses talks with God. In the sending out of the 72 in Lk 10, 1-16 the whole room, in which the Bibliodrama is acted out, could be the place that shows whether and how the Kingdom of God is near or not.

5. The floor plan illustrates the perspective of the text. Thus, for example, the healing of the blind Bartimäus (Mk 10, 46-52) is not feasible without locating it in Jerusalem, which makes it clear that Jesus is going to meet suffering and death and, therefore, passes through Jericho for the last time. Only the anchoring of these dynamics allows the encounter with one of the main dimensions of the story that is that of the 'Kairos' moment.

6. The floor plan is to help the actors to begin moving.

7. The floor plan keeps the biblical text present. (183)

These criteria explain that the floor plan has a decisive role to play concerning the whether and how the biblical story is present in the room. It supports the leader and the participants so they remember the text during the drama. In this way the floor plan helps to connect life-story and story of faith. "The topography needs to be 'seen through' with regards to its salvation-historical dimension." (184) Displaying the text in the room should motivate the participants to internalize the text. The producer supports the participants to the effect that movement and interaction are not externally theatrical or agitational, but take place in connection with the inner movements of the actors.

3.7.3 Role and Person

According to Andriessen and Derksen biblical texts offer many roles. In the Bibliodrama the actors chose their part and shape it. "At time we choose the 'wrong part' and it happens

that in the course of a dramatic performance an actor changes the part. In this context it means that the part does not correspond with the 'life' of the actor. There is no chance to express ourselves in the particular part." (185) The authors distinguish four ways of dealing with part and person in the Bibliodrama:

1. A part is acted out. The idea how, for example, a Pharisee speaks and acts is being acted out. The person is not present in the part. The role behaviour remains something external, something on the surface.
2. The idea, which a part represents, is overstated. The person remains in the background. The participants have become over-identified with the role.
3. The participants identify inwardly with the chosen role. During the performance the role is not expressed. However, it is intensely experienced internally.
4. The person is present in the role. The part is interpreted in a personal way and expressed in the performance.

"On the surface, the dissimilar texts (Bible text and life text) share basic human situations as their place of experience. In this 'place' an encounter with biblical personages is possible. The Bibliodrama 'stages' this meeting place by perceiving the biblical text as an role offer and thus opens a path for us, to meet on the deep level of experience the 'old' witnesses of faith and to live through the 'old' text beyond the cognitive understanding." (186)

In the Bibliodrama a person with her/his own faith- and life-story enters into a relationship with the chosen role, that is, the role evokes resonance, and an interior dialogue between the person and the role begins. In the performance people meet in their part, through which their personal feelings, sentiments and thoughts become transparent in their encounter with each other. If this transparency between the role and the personal movements does not succeed, the encounters during the performance remain static. The participants might be adhering faithfully to the text, but do not enter into a living relationship with each other. (187) Against the background of the ideas of Hans Urs von Balthasar in his work "Parable of the World Theatre" („Gleichnis vom Welttheater") (188), Schöttler offers the following thoughts concerning the choice of roles in the Bibliodrama:

(1.) In the Bibliodrama I find in the playful seriousness aspect of the role, God has assigned to me in the drama of my life. (2.) During the Bibliodrama performance I test certain roles offered in the "holy text" and have the chance to 'exercise myself' in them („exercitium"). (3.) In this way the Bibliodrama can help the participants to find their own unique role in life, as their life story encounters the entire width of salvation history." (189)

During the Bibliodrama performance the first meeting of person and role happens when the biblical text is read and listened to. "It is quite possible that listening to a text puts us in a certain mood: resistance, consent, melancholy, longing. It can evoke memories and associations in us, or give us the feeling of helplessness." (190)

The authors stress that the listening to the text is an indispensable element of the Bibliodrama. They point to Romano Guardini, who objects to oneself reading the text while it is read during the divine service, saying that "all the pure, wise, heartfelt and spiritual words" (192) want to be heard and not read. It is in the experience of listening that the text retains its subjectivity, when another person, and not the reader, gives his/her voice to the text. As a text that is heard it has appeal character. It calls, touches, nurtures, irritates. In this and in contrast to it, the actors recognize their part.

Heart, Interior, Flow of Experiences

Andriessen and Derksen point out that what matters, when finding one's part, is the heart, the inner self of the person. (192) Just as in Hebrew thought, they see the heart as the centre of the person. The heart reveals the awareness level of the person, his/her thinking and feeling, his/her memory and longing. The selection of the part in Bibliodrama is connected with the question whether and where the text touches my heart.

In the Bibliodrama the biblical narrative meets the stream of experiences of each participant. Under 'stream of experiences' the authors understand the sum of everything the person has experienced, just as it has settled as memory in his/her consciousness. The correspondence between text and stream of experiences influences the participants' choice of parts. Since a great part of the stream of experiences is unconscious, encountering the text can initiate a realization process, which leads to a concrete experience. "In many Bibliodrama performances – in the sphere of faith – old wounds open up again and are healed on a deeper level. Old positive situations and decisions in one's biography can be met anew in a text." (193)

Furthermore, the choice of role is influenced by the concrete situation in which a Bibliodrama takes place. Thus in a training group the educational goal has a strong influence on the choice of one's part. We can also name factors belonging to group dynamics. The choice of part is not free of the dynamic positioning, which a participant in the group holds vis-à-vis the leader and which he/she holds in everyday life. We can also mention the male and female aspect which evokes a different matching of text and participants.

Dynamic

In the course of the Bibliodrama the contact between role and person intensifies. The inner experience, that is, the contact between life and role develops from the first unidentified being touched via the reflections during the Bible sharing and the finding of the place in the room for the movements in the play. For the purposes of the authors, movement does not mean agitation but the externalization of the internal dynamics in the tension of fear and longing.

"For us the basic polarity of desire and fear is a very important category to get closer to the stream of experience. Longing and fear are, in the first place, not seen as concrete emotions, but as orientations, which form the basic dynamic of our existence and penetrate our concrete experiences in different ways." (194)

The parts that are chosen in the Bibliodrama performance are also marked by the existential poles that juxtapose fear and longing. In the Bibliodrama faith and biblical narrative become important for the movement against the background of the areas of tension described above. The authors point out that the inner movement, created through the contact of role and person, manifests itself physically. It is felt in the body, for example, as pressure, as warmth, as tingling or itching. It sets the fellow players in motion. It leads to action.

Position

In every story there are primary and secondary positions. In the Bibliodrama it can happen that a 'supporting role' receives the main position in the dramatic performance. In the floor plan the different parts are offered to different positions. These can be in harmony or in tension with one another.

"In the Bibliodrama it cannot be predicted whether the chosen parts and their position in the text can really fulfil the function they have in the text. At times a bleating sheep from

the flock is more important than the shepherd in the text. It then receives the central position in the performance ('dynamic position' or performance position'), which is not found in the text in this way." (195) The position of a part has more influence on the dynamic of the play than the part itself.

Connection of Stream of Experiences and Role (196)

The role touches the stream of experiences in a participant. During the play the chosen role connects the stream of experiences with the biblical story. However, this connection is not total but differentiated.

Part of the stream of experiences corresponds with a role that the text offers. At the beginning of the play the actor is not always aware of this. Through interaction and movement it becomes apparent. If this correspondence between stream of experiences and role does not happen, the taking on of the role remains only something external or superficial. There is no development of the role because the personal identification is missing. If the identification happens, it becomes a filter through which the stream of experiences is guided. The stream of experiences influences the embodiment of the role and the biblical role influences the personal experience retrospectively and presently.

“When a part is used in the play to retell one’s own biography, we can no longer talk about a Bibliodrama. It can, for example, be that the Peter concerned has experienced many a paralysis in the course of his life. He could tell a detailed story about it to the lame man at the Beautiful Gate – his own story. [...] The role of Peter, as it manifests itself in the biblical story, is no longer relevant in the play. It provides only an opportunity to thematise one’s own history. Bibliodrama begins only when the Peter in the text, as I understand him, really influences my life history and my way of acting it out. Only then something of my life history is connected to something out of the Great History. Only then a faith-event happens and the Great History through the part of Peter can make its influence felt in my life history and exercise its healing and transformative effect.” (197)

Development happens in the Bibliodrama only when it comes to a reciprocal interaction of role and life history. Overstressing the role leads to externalization. Overstressing one’s own life history brings about stagnation. What is needed is an intersubjective meeting of the role offered in the biblical story and the participant’s life.

The underlying Theory of Roles according to Sundén

Andriessen and Derksen base their understanding of roles in the Bibliodrama on the reflections of the Swedish religious psychologist Hjalmar Sundén. Sundén assumes that the religious experience is closely connected with the patterns of interpretation that are inherent in the respective religious tradition and culture. In order to analyse religious experiences, we have to examine how individuals perceive their own religion and put it into practice in their own lives.

In his theory of roles Sundén draws on the psychology of perception, saying that there are models which precede the realization and structure the perception of ambiguous information. The actualized models accelerate and influence the process of interpretation in a specific direction.

Sundén speaks about roles that are predetermined and are taken by people in order to perceive and interpret an event. These roles do not need to be socially predetermined. “If a holy narrative a report about the way an individual relates to God, this report serves as a role model with a structuring function that can be adopted in a special situation, as it promotes a particular way of experience.” (198) For the interaction between God and the human person religions have pre-shaped models. Thus, for example, the biblical narratives report how human beings have dealt with God and about God’s attitude towards humanity.

The more intense human life is in the context of a religion, the more the pre-shaped models are internalized in the lives of the individual. For the interaction between God and humanity religions present roles that structure our dealing with God. For Sundén the internalization of certain roles of God and people is the prerequisite for religious experiences. The more familiar the role offer is to a religious tradition, the more likely will be the adoption of a particular role consciousness.

If certain roles are present in a religious tradition and there is an unusual situation, it can happen that people actualize a certain role in the framework of the familiar tradition.

Sundén's perspective makes clear what happens in the Bibliodrama when roles are chosen and acted out. The actors in the Bibliodrama are in an unusual situation, which is explicitly labelled as religious. The respective Bible text offers roles that concern the devout interaction between God and people. Each Bible text actualizes the person's own biographical experiences. These can also have the character of opposite experiences. In the Bibliodrama the participants are asked to consciously identify with a role from the range of diverse roles in the text.

From now on, the role structures the experience of the person and vice versa. The participants experience an intense interaction between the chosen role and their own person. In the performance the participants interact through the roles within the framework of the specified story. Experiences are actualized that confirm or question certain happenings. Experiences are retrospectively interpreted in a new way, future events are structured in advance. It is important that by consciously taking on a role, the participants process past or present experiences by using predefined models.

“The biblical text is not a screenplay to be enacted; on the contrary, it is an offer of a role in order to sense the perceptual framework of the biblical text in confrontation with one’s life script, which is then to be taken over as the pattern of perception. In the role acquisition the role of ‘God’, as given in the biblical text, becomes the pattern of perception, which means that one’s situation is perceived in a new way and is thereby changed.” (199)

Schöttler’s statement refers to Sundén’s claim that by the acquisition of a religious role from the tradition – consciously or unconsciously – the role of God is adopted at the same time. This is plausible, since in the religious tradition, be it in the Bible or in the different rites, we are dealing with “believing roles”, that is, with parts that count on God and consequently accept or reject him. The biblical text with its role offers, structures the perceptions and action of the recipient, especially in their relationship with God. It specifies patterns of interaction of people with God and with each other ‘in the face of God’. In the Bibliodrama the often unaware patterns can become conscious and be transformed.

3.7.4 The Performance (200)

Having dealt with the roles, the performance begins and has the following intentions:

1. It is to bring the participants to greater clarity about their role. For this purpose questions are asked concerning posture, perspective or line of vision, and the inner emotional landscape of the participants. It is, for example, elicited in common whether the place, at which the participant is standing, corresponds with his/her inner disposition or whether another place is more appropriate. The participants are invited to elucidate what emotions and convictions are alive in them in connection with their role, the text and the parts the other actors play.

2. Through the performance it becomes clear which message of the text appeals to the individual actor. Where and how do the individuals feel called, troubled and challenged? How do they respond to the appeal of the text? How do they deal with the desire to stay where they are or to move?

How loud are the voices of fear, restraint, longing and desire? What is driving them towards development, what restrains them? It is the task of the minister to transform that which is alive in the individual as conscious perception and in agreement with the actors into movement, gesture and/or word. The actors are invited to consider one or the other change. It is the decision of the individual to accept or reject the invitation.

3. If the group is large, the number of participants, who do not get a chance to speak, also grows. The processes that other participants undergo, can, however, win exemplary importance for them, because some questions, emotions and experiences are aroused.

4. During the performance the participants come in contact with each other, promote and hinder each other in their parts, encourage and strengthen, provoke and irritate each other. It is the task of the minister to deepen the movements of the participants among themselves and with the text.

3.8 Critical Comments concerning the Model of Andriessen and Derksen

Drechsel (201) criticises that when Andriessen and Derksen are talking or writing about understanding of leading the Bibliodrama session they do not clearly articulate the tension between pastoral-theological and the psychological abilities. The demands on the leadership in the Bibliodrama are presented in a vague language and fuzzy methodology.

“At the same time, the reflection on the therapeutic and methodological competence of the leader remains outside of this reflection: while on the one hand the description of the process presupposes a clear therapeutic competence of the leader, the same is simply declared the “art of the minister” and thus co-opted theologically and ecclesially.” (202)

Drechsel discovers a similar fuzziness in view of the targeted religious experiences as experienced in faith. The failure to distinguish bibliodramatic methods from the working of the Holy Spirit would dissolve the paradox of “mediated immediacy of the religious experience” in favour of the feasibility of religious experiences by the imperative of “authenticity of performance”. (203)

From the perspective of Drechsel, for whom it is important that experience of Scripture – to which also counts the method of Bibliodrama – when placed in its paradox as mediated immediacy between the demands of historical-critical exegesis and the immediacy of the access to Holy Scripture, criticism achieves its own plausibility. Drechsel resists the psychologising of Scripture texts, which in his view, is done by Drewermann, who applies principles of depth psychology. He also refuses to accept the arbitrary adoption of psychological methods when working concretely with the Bible, without naming them as such. However, Drechsel ignores the fact that applied theology has already for a long time sought the dialogue with the Human Sciences and has made their expertise epistemologically and practically fruitful for his own discipline. When Andriessen and Derksen presuppose and make from their therapeutic competences for their understanding of leadership in the Bibliodrama, is this well-founded in terms of an exchange between the fields of Human Sciences, but it should – as Drechsel warns – be clearly identified and declared as such. (204)

Drechsel’s second argument seems to me rather unfounded. The restriction “when it is done authentically” is to be understood less as an indication of the resolution of the paradox of bibliodramatic methodology and freedom of faith, than as an indicator that the possibility of a faith experience depends on the disposition of the participant, in the sense of an openness between one’s own faith- and life- and the experience in the Bibliodrama.

The model of Andriessen and Derksen is repeatedly challenged by the alleged overemphasis on leadership which is tied up with the method of the questioning dialogue between minister and participants. In fact, we could call the Bibliodrama according to Andriessen and Derksen a guided dialogue. Unlike other models, for example the models of Stangier and Warns, the leader in the Bibliodrama according to Andriessen and Derksen does not withdraw to a place outside of the room. He/she is constantly “in the play” as advocate of the text or in the role of the pastor, who supports and challenges the movements and encounters of the actors in the direction of more and deeper awareness. When participants in a Bibliodrama are experienced, they themselves often take on this function for each other. Leadership can be less direct then.

It seems to me that the developments in the play, associated with the lack of a clear line, should be assessed more critically than the dangers of excessive leadership. In plays that lack clear leadership the participants are often exposed to the complex interplay of text- and group dynamics. Consequently there is a pure acting out of emotional reactions and transfers to other players, which do not do justice neither to the text nor the integrity of the participants that is to be protected.

The extensive freedom from directions in the so-called “great play” often makes the dynamics of the encounter coarse and trims down the text, especially in its religious dimensions. It remains important that the role of the leader is clearly and transparently defined for all participants prior to the play. The quality of a bibliodramatic play is not served well, if for fear of too great an influence, one dispenses with the role of leadership in the play. Even experienced Bibliodrama players ask for leadership, when it comes to elicit one’s own contradictions, emotions and sensibilities and to give them sufficient space without being prematurely forced to change. The understanding of leadership as pastoral care in the model of Andriessen and Derksen exposes one consciously to the balancing act between the freedom of the participant and the simultaneous influence of the leader.

Unlike many other Bibliodrama-models, the approach of Andriessen and Derksen foregoes the special use of eutony, be it in the warming up phase of the group, the phase of approaching the text or as a creative element when editing the text. The expression in the Bibliodrama according to Andriessen and Derksen is primarily the tone of the language with its non-verbal connotations. Admittedly, Andriessen and Derksen know the embodiment of internal processes through para-language visualizations in the given space. (205)

Apart from the deceleration effect, eutony sharpens the awareness of the participants with regards to the physical, emotional, and cognitive level. (206) The sensitivity to the movements within themselves, the presence in the room, and the sensitivity with regards to the text and the other participants grows. The effects of body-oriented work (eutony) correspond with the objectives of Andriessen and Derksen to connect the biblical text with the life- and faith-experiences of the participants and demand a conscious integration in the model of the pastorally-orientated Bibliodrama. This applies also to the elements of the aesthetic Bible reception as it is especially developed by Else Nathalie Warns (Part I, 1.3). In this way one's own experiences can be internalized and worked through by using creative media, for example, during the follow-up phase. The processes of aesthetic design as well as the product itself, which illustrates the experiences, contribute to deeper awareness, classification and appreciation of the experience.

The Bibliodrama model of Andriessen and Derksen may be described as an exercise in faith. On the one hand, it foregoes the prerequisite of faith in the sense of believing in advance in the contents of the Judeo-Christian tradition and, on the other hand, it demands of the participants that they meet one another in the role of believing persons, also in the sense of persons, searching for faith. A post-modern world view, however, is characterized by a wide range of plural interpretation systems standing side by side in our society, between which the individual person can choose. Against this background the question arises, whether the pastoral Bibliodrama, which wants to be an instrument of faith communication, is sufficiently open and companionable? This is especially important given the localization of the pastoral Bibliodrama in the context of a parish, which presents a reflection on the plural reality-determination of people.

1 Martin 1979, 41-56.

2 Wink 1976.

3 Wink 1976, 20.

4 cf. Wink 1982.

5 Schramm 1992.

6 cf. Schramm 1975.

7 Barth/Schramm 1983.

8 Warns Eberhard 1999, 209.

9 It was translated from Portuguese to German and published in 1983. At the same time as Carlos Meesters proposed his method, Marty Voser Käppeli and Markus Friedli Saner, both involved in Switzerland in adult formation, presented the *Three Step Method* stressing personal experience, cf. Voser/Friedli 1979.

10 Meesters 1983

11 cf.. Dohmen 1992, 54ff.

12 Teichert 1999,

13 The statement can refer to Bibliodrama-concepts, which have not been explicitly quoted, like the models of Heidemarie Langer, Yorick Spiegel, Samuel Laeuchli and Evelyn Rothschild Laeuchli.

14 cf. Martin 1995, 33: When characterizing the claim and function of Biblical texts, Martin refers to Josuttis 1983.

15 Martin 1995, 33.

16 This refers to the text-theory cf. Barthes 1976.

17 Martin 1995, 38: Here Martin draws on the teaching of the fourfold meaning of Scripture, interpreting it a) literally, b) related to the faith - allegorically, in the direction of Christian charity (topologically or morally) and

in view of hope (anagogical or eschatological) meaning. Regarding the teaching of the fourfold meaning of Scripture see Dohmen 1992, 13-74.

18 For linguistic-structuralistic Exegesis cf. Egger 1987.

19 The Marxist reading of the Bible adopted the definition and analysis of text-codes from Roland Barthes as indices for the identification of defined complexes of meaning.

20 Martin 1995, 42.

21 Bubenheimer 1993.

22 Martin 1995, 45.

23 cf. Warns/Fallner 1999, 29-31; 36f.

(24) That does not mean that in the practice of Bibliodrama, the danger of textual positivism does not exist in reality. **(Für „Ungeschichtlichkeit des Text- und des Rezeptionsverständnissen“ findet kein mir bekanntes Wörterbuch eine Übersetzung!!!)**

(25) It is the model of Jürgen Kreft, which Werner Ingendahl has further developed in the sense of praxis orientation: The first phase of the encounter with the text is the text presentation, the clarifying of the understanding, the phase of motivation, association and incubation, as well as the development of an initial interpretation of the text.

The second phase deals with objectification. Pre-conception and excessive subjectivity are being corrected through focussed work with the text. Other interpretations are discussed. In the third phase of the text approach we deal with the appropriation of the text and the discovery of reflected subjective attitude the text. The recipient reflects and gives reasons for his personal understanding of the text, which he/she then develops further through new insights and cognition. The text is consciously applied to the person's own situation and he/she then designs, as the case may be, his/her own texts or scenes. The fourth phase serves the application on the level of theory and praxis (social analysis, meaning according to the science of literature). New questions are being posed. Kreft points out that in every phase the elements of interpretation, application, subjectivity and creativity are involved and complement each other.

(26) When Martin deals with the Bibliodrama process, the main focus is on the text rather than on the participants: during a Bibliodrama workshop of two and a half day in the year 2000 in Haus Gutenberg in Balzers, Liechtenstein I had the opportunity to be part of Martin's work with the Bibliodrama. On the level of text Martin proposed various approaches: body work, dialogue and play, in which all three approaches interfuse, for example, two words from a Biblical text can be acted out through gestures and then be interpreted in the dialogue. This can be followed by a brief acted out scene. In connection with the perspective of playing a text, Martin mentions scenes which have developed by small groups and further the work with individual text codes. In order to discover how broad the text's space can be, Martin likes to transpose the Biblical text into the genre of tragedy, comedy and theatre of the absurd. In this way, the text can stand out more, also with regards to its contradictions and complexity. Thus a premature and one-sided interpretation can be prevented. Through the de-familiarization of a Biblical text, which rather frequently shows tragic, comical or grotesque traits, the participants are to discover so far overlooked or new accents of the text. Aside from the experience that Martin uses very different forms of working with the text, the impression was created, that the emphasis lies more on the experience of the text and less on the connection of the participants' personal history and faith experiences with the text. Elements, which dealt with a more personal perception of the text – e. g. in form of a guided fantasy journey through the text –, changed frequently and very abruptly with rather discursive procedural steps. The participants' personal experiences were less reflected than the perception of the text with its multiple perspectives.

27 Else Natalie Warns is not the only representative of an aesthetical reception of the Bible. On the level of operationalization many Bibliodramatist use the inclusion of aesthetical media in the Bibliodrama work, like Stangier 1997, 105ff, Martin 1995, 55ff.

28 cf. Warns/Fallner 1999, 22.

29 Warns/Fallner 1999, 22.

30 Warns/Fallner 1999, 25; Berger 1988.

31 Warns Eberhard 1999, 210.

32 Warns/Fallner 1999, 23.

33 In presenting this, I follow the model used by Martin 1995, 25-31; Martin 1990, 44-64 and Kessler, 1996

34 Gadamer 1960, 109.

35 cf. Especially Laeuchli 1987 and Laeuchli/Rothschild-Laeuchli 1992.

36 cf. Kessler 1996.

37 Martin 1995, 30.

38 cf. du Bois, 1990

39 Brook 1994: Brook understands 'deadly theater' as theater that touches the spectator neither emotionally nor appellatively. It historicizes and has no life. The bawdy and the holy theatre, on the contrary, make the stage into a place that becomes transparent for what cannot be depicted. In this way the theatre takes on the function of interrupting the daily routine and pointing out the transcendence of the invisible.

40 Martin 1995, 29.

- 41 cf. Martin 1995, 30f.
- 42 cf. Kessler, 1996, 23-68.
- 43 cf. Kessler 1996, 69-187.
- 44 Kessler 1996, 177.
- 45 Kessler 1996, 181.
- 46 cf. Naurath 2002, 268-273: Naurath re-constructs the Bibliodrama as integrative hermeneutic of biblical texts in the „Body-exegesis“, which is to complement the “intellect-focussed exegesis“. In this way we can do justice to the Biblical text in its complexity of Biblical experiences by using approaches of more than one dimension.
- 47 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 172-180.
- 48 Regarding working with gestures, see Stangier 1997, 94-104.
- 49 About the Bibliodrama process cf. Warns/Fallner 1999, 150-190.
- 50 Aldebert 2001, 172.
- 51 Warns/Fallner 1999, 140.
- 52 Aldebert 2001, 173.
- 53 I understand religious experiences as an experiences of one’s personal faith, as well as numinous experiences, experiences with particular character of evidence (Evidenzcharakter).
54. In the second edition (2001) of the non-fiction book about the, pages 93-104 Martin deals for the first time with the question how and in what way „God“ can be acted out in the Bibliodrama. Martin theologically locates the God-event in the Bibliodrama within the dialectic of the God who is revealed and yet hidden.
- 55 re the spiritual and liturgical context see Kubitzka/Schramm 2003.
- 56 cf. Josuttis: “In central Europe and Scandinavia the Bibliodrama has developed in a very Protestant form. It has defined itself through its relationship with the text rather than through the design of the cult.” Quoted according to Kubitzka/Schramm 2003, 9.
- 57 The faith connection as precondition for participation in Bibliodrama is specifically dealt with in the work of Andriessen/Derksen.
- 58 Warns Eberhard 199, 217.
- 59 Drechsel 1994, 304.
- 60 cf. Drechsel 1994, 344f.
- 61 Panitz 1996, 230.
- 62 cf. Drechsel 1994, 107-113; Radeck 1999, 25-29; Radeck 2002, 164.
- 63 Kiehn 1987.
- 64 Kiehn 1987, 99.
- 65 Kiehn 1987, 100.
- 66 Kiehn 1987, 101.
- 67 Kiehn 1987, 101.
- 68 Drechsel 1994, 110-113.
- 69 Drechsel 1994, 112.
- 70 Radeck 1999, 26.
- 71 Stangier 1997.
- 72 Stangier 1997, 10.
- 73 Stangier 1997, 3.
- 74 cf. Stangier 1997, 11-16.
- 75 Stangier 1997, 14.
- 76 Stangier 1997, 14.
- 77 Stangier 1997, 10.
- 78 Stangier 1997, 139/14 In contrast to the goal of leading to a “human-divine“ encounter in the Bibliodrama of Stangier, the Judeo-Christian tradition knows a multitude of God-experiences, which have meaning and are justified though they occur side by side and are prone to tensions.
- 79 The Bibliodrama-concept of Stangier seems to postulate the “God of mysticism“ to be the ideal experience for the participants. She risks thereby at the same time the connection of the context with the life-story, diversity and freedom of experiences and the biblical text.
- 79 cf. Werbick 1992.
- 80 Drechsel 1994, 113.
- 81 Kreller 2002, 148.
- 82 Eberhard Warns 1999, 216.—
- 83 Brandhorst 1999, 257.
- 84 Aldebert 2001, 183f.
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- 85 Aldebert 2001, 184.
- 86 Rahner 1986, 496.
- 87 Kollmann 1996, 38.
- 88 Kreller 2002, 149.
- 89 Kreller 2002, 149

- 91 Söding 1992, 83.
- 92 Dohmen 1992, 31.
- 93 Dohmen 1992, 32
- 94 Only the Bible encyclical of Pius XII. "*Divino afflante Spiritu*" tentatively opened for Catholic exegesis the door to critical exegetical methods. *DV* further developed the acceptance of the historical-critical method within Catholic exegesis in accordance with the instruction of the Pontifical Bible Commission of 1964 by including "Formgeschichte".
- 95 With regards to the debate between historical and theological understanding of a text in connection with the statements of *DV* see Kosch 1991.
- 96 Dohmen 1992, 36.
- 97 Söding 1992, 86.
- 98 Söding 1992, 88.
- 99 In the following reflections I will follow Schmitz 1985, 23-28.
- 100 Söding 1992, 100.
- 101 cf. Venetz 1998, 55.
- 102 Pontifical Bible Commission 1993, 106-113.
- 103 cf. Pontifical Bible Commission 1993, 30-64
- 104 Pontifical Bible Commission 1993, 100
- 105 From the very beginning the Church maintained the possibility of actualising Scripture interpretations. In this way the School of Antiochia founded the „Doctrine of the fourfold Meaning of Scripture“, which in one way made the different ‚hermeneutics‘ of the Bible text possible, and beyond that, preserved the relationship between the Word of God in Scripture and the meaning of God’s Word in the here and now. cf. Dohmen 1992, 16-27.
- 106 At this point I do not agree with Hermann-Josef Venetz, who in dealing with the Bible talks about “respectful distance“ and in principle prefers those methods that are “scientifically verifiable and allow the great riches of the Bible to come into play as freely as possible ...” However, I share his understanding of the “Word of God“ as an event: In a simple and communicative model Venetz differentiates between the words of the biblical author and the Word of God, which he relates with the written testimony that is at the bottom of the event: “Strictly speaking the community does not simply acclaim a text as the ‘Word of God’, but rather a text, of which it is said that has addressed orally or in writing a unique, proper and certain situation. The acclamation „Word of God“ refers strictly speaking to the whole situation, the total event: Paul wrote this text for the Christian community in Corinth.” Venetz 1998,48.
- 107 cf. Schöttler 1998, 97-125: Schöttler’s theological-hermeneutical reflections are based on the dynamic interpretation of the theological concept of Hans Urs von Balthasar’s theo-dramatic art. His remarks refer explicitly to the understanding of the Bibliodrama according to Andriessen and Derksen, which I will introduce in the following chapter.
- 108 Schöttler 1998, 103.
- 109 Schöttler 1998, 103.
- 110 Schöttler 1998, 105.
- 111 Schöttler 1998, 106f.
- 112 Schöttler 1998, 110.
- 113 Schöttler 1998, 122.
- 114 Schöttler 1998, 118/119.
- 115 Kreller 2002, 148.
- 116 Werbick 1992, 330.
- 117 Andriessen/Derksen 1986.
- 118 Andriessen/Derksen 1991.
- 119 Drechsel 1994, 109-110.
- ~~120 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 120-162.~~
- 121 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 138.
- 122 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 138.
- 123 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 140.
- 124 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 140.
- ~~125 cf. Drechsel 1994, 107-113.~~
- 126 Andriessen 1995b, 144.
- ~~127 Schöttler 1995, 138-143.~~
- 128 Andriessen/Nolet/Derksen 1997b, 24: In his reply, Andriessen refers to Schöttler 1995. In the presentation of Schöttler, 2000 (see also Part I, 2.4 in this dissertation) Schöttler expands the christological narrowing down of Balthasar, which he considers theologically unjustified when we look at the Old Testament. Cf. Schöttler 2000, 26f.
- 129 Andriessen 1995a, 133-134; see also Andriessen 1995c, 18-25.
- 130 Andriessen 1995a, 133.

131 Unlike Andriessen and Derksen, Radeck differentiates between experiences of evidence and faith in Bibliodrama. While she can claim experiences of evidence as possible quality of the Bibliodrama „when a story “happens” in Bibliodrama, this experience is not necessarily identical with faith.” “The text does not dissolve, nor does it turn into faith.” Radeck 1999, 29.

132 Andriessen 1995a, 133.

133 Andriessen 1995b, 144.

134 Andriessen/Derksen/Nolet 1997a, 13.

135 Drechsel’s allegation that Andriessen and Derksen, in their Bibliodrama model, would not give sufficient importance to the hiddenness and unfeasibility of faith experiences is here refuted by pointing at the „inviolability of the sacred space.”

136 Andriessen 1995b, 146-147.

137 Andriessen 1995b, 147.

138 cf. Stenger 1993.

139 cf. Andriessen 1995b, 147.

140 cf. Andriessen 1995b, 147.

141 cf. Andriessen 1995a, 130-132.

142 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 101.

143 Derksen/Andriessen 1993, 164.

144 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 47.

145 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 55.

146 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 55.

147 cf. Steinkamp 1999: In his critical re-reading of the French philosopher Michel Foucault Steinkamp examines in how far the “pastoral power” of the ministers prevents a subjective community formation. Stressing a “common pastor” in the concept of Andriessen and Derksens, that equally apply to facilitators and participants and is presupposed, is in line with the ideological-critical approach of Steinkamp, who uncovers the power relations within the Church and their prevented potential for the subjectification and the practice of solidarity in the community/parish.

148 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 56.

149 During a conversation in September 2002 Nicolaas Derksen justified the identity of the pastor with the interpretation of Lk 10, 1-16: the pastors in the Bibliodrama are like the disciples, who are sent out. Like the disciples they take the initiative and care for the bodily and religious concerns of the people. They bring Shalom that means, they bring something that can open up a space for religious experiences. However, the basic disposition of the disciples is to go to places to which Jesus would still come. That is a relief. They do have to do everything themselves, because someone will come to bring to completion what they have begun.

150 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 39.

151 With regards to the client-centered, non-directive dialogue see Weber 1991.

152 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 54.

153 cf. Andriessen 1995b, 148.

154 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 53.

155 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 52-57.

156 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 53.

157 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 156.

158 Re Professional competence see Andriessen /Derksen 1991, 155-156.

159 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 158.

160 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 158-160.

161 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 160.

162 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 61.

163 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 90-100, especially 100.

164 For the understanding of universal human stories cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 62-65.

165 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 74.

166 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 61.

167 Regarding the thoughts of the text as model, see Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 66-71.

168 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 161.

169 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 161.

170 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 165-166.

171 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 18-20.

172 For understanding the common faith awareness cf. Derksen/Andriessen 1993, 157-161.
For understanding the personal faith awareness cf. Derksen/Andriessen 1993, 164-187.

173 Derksen 1995, 124.

174 Andriessen/Derksen/Nolet 1997a, 16-17.

175 Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 102.

176 Andriessen/Derksen 1991,
 177 Andriessen/Derksen/Nolet 1997a, 130.
 178 The conversation about the text as an independent step in the process of the Bibliodrama is not found in Andriessen/Derksen 1991.
 179 Regarding the dramatic interaction cf. Andriessen/Derksen/Nolet 1997a: The authors try to describe the mutual influence of actors, group, text and ministers through dramatic control and to clarify the effect on the connection of faith- and life-experience
 180 In their publication of 1991 the authors differentiate between the interview in the play and the acting out of possible scenes. In the praxis of the Bibliodrama according to Andriessen and Derksen one has agreed to see both as elements of one phase, namely the phases of the play. Unfortunately the revised sequence of the Bibliodrama of Andriessen and Derksen has not been published anywhere. The author of this work draws her knowledge from her own praxis and her collaboration with Nicolaas Derksen. In a brief contribution under the title "Bibliodrama as Pastoral Care", Derksen confirms this development: Derksen 2003.
 181 Andriessen and Derksen see in their publication a difference between the exchange about personal experiences and the exchange about the importance of the experience for the personal faith biography. They point out that many times both flow into each other. For this reason, in this work the personal and the spiritual reflection are taken together under one point.
 182 cf. Sieben 1995, 160.
 183 The criteria for the floor plan came about in the course of a training session for Bibliodrama leaders in Switzerland 2000-2002 in collaboration with Sabine Tscherner-Babl and Nicolaas Derksen.
 184 Sieben 1995, 160.
 185 Andriessen/Nolet/Derksen 1997b, 15.
 186 Schöttler 1995, 139.
 187 A concrete example which describes in detail the relationship between the role and the person in the Bibliodrama performance can be found in Brink/Derksen/Sieben 2002.
 188 von Balthasar 1973.
 189 Schöttler 1995, 141.
 190 Andriessen/Nolet/Derksen 1997b, 27-28.
 191 Guardini 1988, 33-34.
 192 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 90f.
 193 Andriessen/Nolet/Derksen 1997b, 31.
 194 Andriessen/Nolet/Derksen 1997b, 40.
 195 Andriessen/Nolet/Derksen 1997b, 25.
 196 cf. Andriessen/Nolet/Derksen 1997b, 42f
 197 Andriessen/Nolet/Derksen 1997b, 43.
 198 Holm 1990, 44.
 199 Schöttler 1995, 140.
 200 In their publication of 1991 Andriessen and Derksen differentiated under the term play or performance the pastoral interview from the acting out of certain scenes. In practice, it is so that both flow into each other. The more the participants are familiar with the steps and goals of the Bibliodrama, the more vivid and deeper becomes the performance. The guiding function of the minister/facilitator then grows weaker.
 201 cf. Drechsel 1994, 109-110.
 202 Drechsel 1994, 109.
 203 Drechsel refers to Andriessen/Derksen 1989, 118: "In the Bibliodrama there happens ...- if authentically acted – an encounter with God. This is the ultimate reason for its profound impact on the participants. They make authentic experiences of God, and their own lives are shared in faith with one another and with God. Therefore, the one who leads the drama is a minister; and, therefore, the Bibliodrama is a form of ministry in the full sense of the word. In addition it is a form to pass on the faith and to introduce people to the faith, because all, who participate, the minister included, discover and experience how real and effective God's Word is still alive."
 204 In 2001 Nauer attempts to display elements of theories that are outside of theology. She succeeds in verifying theoretical elements of Freudian depth Psychology also in the kerygmatic pastoral model, representatives of this are for her Hans Asmussen and Eduard Thurneysent. But these elements are branded as 'satanic dangers'; on the other hand they are transferred into theological categories and adapted in her model. cf. Nauer 2001, 27f.
 205 cf. Andriessen/Derksen 1991, 172-177.
 206 cf. Martin 1995, 30f.