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**TEOLOGIA BÍBLICA DO ANTIGO E DO NOVO TESTAMENTO**

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# SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC READINGS ON JEREMIAH SCROLL: IN SEARCH OF A METHODOLOGY FOR JEREMIANIC STUDIES<sup>1</sup>

## Part I

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### RESUMO

Esse artigo desafia a dicotomia entre leituras sincrônicas e diacrônicas do rolo de Jeremias, propondo uma metodologia que combina ambas as abordagens. Esse ensaio começa esclarecendo as definições dos termos sincrônico e diacrônico na área das ciências bíblicas, seguido pela apresentação das fontes usando a crítica textual e a análise literária. O artigo argumenta que embora a evidência textual-literária ofereça forte embasamento para uma abordagem diacrônica, ela não é suficiente para a datação do texto, nem responde questões sincrônicas.

**Palavras-chave:** Jeremias. Metodologia. Sincrônica. Diacrônica.

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**ABSTRACT**

*This paper challenges the dichotomy between synchronic and diachronic readings of Jeremiah scroll, proposing a methodology which combines both approaches. The essay starts by clarifying the definitions of synchronic and diachronic in biblical studies, followed by the presentation of the sources using text criticism and literary analysis. The paper argues that although the textual-literary evidence strongly supports diachronic approach, it is not sufficient to date the text or to answer synchronic questions.*

**Keywords:** *Jeremiah. Methodology. Synchronic. Diachronic.*

*“Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the scribe Baruch, son of Neriah, who wrote on it according to Jeremiah’s dictation all the words of the scroll that Jehoiakim, King of Judah, had burned in the fire; and many similar words were added to them” (Jr 36.32).*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

The passage above gives a clue about how prophetic literature might have achieved its present form; however, each biblical writing presents its own challenges, and the case of the scroll that bears the name of the prophet Jeremiah<sup>3</sup> is not different; scholars have spent a significant amount of ink discussing the details of this process. In general, scholarly debate in Jeremianic studies has revolved around two main issues in Jer namely the nature of the relationship between **Ⲯ** and **Ⲛ**, and the interrelation between prose and poetry. However, the emergence of new literary theories alongside social scientific methods with their focus on synchronic readings has added an extra component to debate regarding the dynamics between author, text and reader, which has direct consequences in Jeremianic studies. Those who are more optimistic have even argued that the field of biblical studies is facing a phase of transformation from a historical to a literary paradigm. Thus, frequently it is possible to detect a certain “dichotomy” between “diachronic” approaches, traditionally dominated by historical critical methods, and “synchronic” readings stimulated by newer literary critical approaches<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Hereafter Jeremiah.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. STONE, Lawson G. Redaction Criticism: Whence, Whiter, and Why? Or, Going Beyond Source and Form Criticism Without Leaving Them Behind. In: CARPENTER, Eugene E. (Org.). **A biblical itinerary**: in search of method, form and contend: essays in honor of George W. Coats. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997, p. 78 and BARSTAD, Hans M. What Prophets Do. Reflections on Past Reality in the Book of

The use of inverted commas for selected words in the paragraph above is not a mere accident as such polarity seems unnecessary considering that biblical exegesis involves a dynamic process which alternates between synchronic and diachronic approaches. In this sense, this dichotomy reflects an optical illusion rather than the reality of the exegetical process in itself.

The objective of this paper, therefore, is to challenge the premise that synchronic and diachronic approaches are completely independent of each other. This essay will propose a methodology that combines synchronic and diachronic methods to the reading of Jer. The first part of this article will be divided into the following sections: (2) synchronic and diachronic approaches in biblical studies; (3) sources; (4) literary analysis; and (5) conclusion.

## 2 SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC APPROACHES IN BIBLICAL STUDIES

The meanings of synchronic and diachronic approaches in biblical studies are not the same of that of their origins. The distinction between them goes back to Saussure, whose lectures were published posthumously, within the context of linguistics<sup>5</sup>, where the former is contrasted with the latter as:

[...] nous préférons parler de linguistique *synchronique* et linguistique *diachronique*. Est synchronique tout ce qui se rapporte à l'aspect statique de notre science, diachronique tout ce qui a trait aux évolutions. De même *synchronie* et *diachronie* désigneront respectivement un état de langue et une phase d'évolution.<sup>6</sup>

Whilst the former aims to study the language in its static state the latter focuses on the developmental aspect. For Saussure, history must not interfere with the understanding of the present state of language, in this regard he says:

[...] Aussi le linguiste qui veut comprendre cet état doit-il faire table rase de tout ce qui l'a produit et ignorer la diachronie. Il ne peut entrer dans la

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Jeremiah. In: BARSTAD, Hans M. & KRATZ, Reinhard G. (Orgs.). **Prophecies in the book of Jeremiah**. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009, p. 14-20.

<sup>5</sup> See DE SAUSSURE, Ferdinand. **Cours de linguistique générale**. Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, 1916, p. 1-10.

<sup>6</sup> DE SAUSSURE, 1916, p. 117.

conscience des sujets parlants qu'en supprimant le passé. L'intervention de l'histoire ne peut que fausser son jugement.<sup>7</sup>

This does not mean that Saussure denies the existence of the diachronic dimension; however, it seems that he prioritises the synchronic sphere in the hierarchy of his system on the grounds that it gives access to reality. According to him, “ces faits diachroniques – on le voit clairement – n’ont aucun rapport avec le fait statique qu’ils sont d’ordre différent”<sup>8</sup>.

Nevertheless, it is important to point out that Saussure did not have biblical exegesis, which works with a multi-layered text, in his mind when he proposed this distinction. In biblical studies the terms synchronic and diachronic were only employed in a symbolic sense to make reference to the final form of the text in contrast to its growing process<sup>9</sup>. This contrast in biblical studies can be clearly noticed in two diametrically polar approaches applied to Jer. Whilst Fischer proposes a synchronic reading of Jer Schmid adopts a diachronic approach, attempting to trace the literary history of the whole OT<sup>10</sup>.

The next section shall discuss whether the data provides a solid ground for any of these approaches.

### 3 SOURCES

Any methodology should come to a conclusion based on the data instead of imposing philosophical assumptions into it. In the case of the field of theology,

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<sup>7</sup> DE SAUSSURE, 1916, p. 117.

<sup>8</sup> DE SAUSSURE, 1916, p. 119-120.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. BARR, James. The Synchronic, the Diachronic and the Historical: A Triangular Relationship? In: MOOR, Johannes C. de (Org.). **Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis**. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995, p. 8-9; HOFTIJZER, Jacob. Holistic or Compositional Approach? Linguistic Remarks to the Problem. In: MOOR, Johannes C. de (Org.). **Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis**. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995, p. 98-99; STONE, 1997, p. 77-78 e BARSTAD, 2009, p. 10-20. For a detailed explanation of both approaches, see DA SILVA, Cássio Murilo Dias. **Metodologia de Exegese Bíblica**. São Paulo: Paulinas, 2000, p. 83-295.

<sup>10</sup> See FISCHER, Georg. **Jeremia 1-25**. Freiburg im Breisgau: Verlag Herder, 2005 and SCHMID, Konrad. **Literaturgeschichte des Alten Testaments: eine Einführung**. Zweite Ausgabe. Wissen verbindet: Darmstadt, 2014.

religious and biblical studies, the data is available from the respective religious texts. In terms of Jer, there are three main sources, where data is provided:  $\mathfrak{M}$ ,  $\mathfrak{G}$  and Q. Besides that, there are also ancient translations (e.g.,  $\mathfrak{G}^a$ ,  $\mathfrak{G}^s$ ,  $\mathfrak{G}^0$ , V, S and T). Some of these are no longer available and consequently do not have the same weight as those just mentioned<sup>11</sup>.

In principle, each source should be analysed in its own terms<sup>12</sup>; however, when  $\mathfrak{M}$  and  $\mathfrak{G}$  are compared against each other it is possible to detect textual evidence which possibly indicates the growth of the text.  $\mathfrak{M}$  is approximately 1/7 longer than  $\mathfrak{G}$ , which indicates the expansive character of the Hebrew version<sup>13</sup>.

| $\mathfrak{M}$              | $\mathfrak{G}$              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1-25:13 <sup>a</sup>        | 1-25:13 <sup>a</sup>        |
| <b>25:13<sup>b</sup>-38</b> | <b>32:13<sup>b</sup>-38</b> |
| 26                          | 33                          |
| <b>27</b>                   | <b>34</b>                   |
| 28                          | 35                          |
| <b>29</b>                   | <b>36</b>                   |
| <b>30</b>                   | <b>37</b>                   |
| 31                          | 38                          |
| 32                          | 39                          |
| <b>33</b>                   | <b>40</b>                   |
| 34                          | 41                          |
| 35                          | 42                          |
| 36                          | 43                          |
| 37                          | 44                          |
| 38                          | 45                          |

<sup>11</sup> This does not mean that they do not have any importance; however, because of space this paper will focus only on  $\mathfrak{M}$ ,  $\mathfrak{G}$  and Q as they cover the main aspect of this paper. For more details, see TOV, Emanuel. **Textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible**. Third edition, revised and expanded. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012, p.141-154.

<sup>12</sup> Glanz reacts against the plurality of methods in OT studies, arguing that the acceptance of these methods are based on their ability to produce results. Against this pragmatism, he points out that their philosophical assumption has rarely been questioned. In this sense, Glanz argues that the starting point should be the text (synchronic) cf. GLANZ, Oliver. **Understanding participant reference shifts in the book of Jeremiah: a study of exegetical method and its consequences for interpretation of referential incoherence**. Leiden: Brill, 2013, p.1-4. Although I agree with Glanz in the sense that the data is available in synchronic form (e.g., complete text except for Q), when the data is compared it strongly points to diachronic directions. As Tov argues, “exegetical activity is based on a text or texts and can only proceed if the nature of that text has been determined,” hence the importance of textual criticism cf. TOV, 2012, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. TOV, Emanuel. Exegetical notes on the Hebrew Vorlage of the Septuagint Jeremiah 27 (34). In: **ZAW**. Jerusalem, v. 91, n. 1, 1979, p. 73-93 and STIPP, Herman-Josef. **Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiasbuches: Textgeschichtlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte**. Freiburg: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994, p. 1.

|           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| <b>39</b> | <b>46</b>   |
| 40        | 47          |
| 41        | 48          |
| 42        | 49          |
| 43        | 50          |
| 44        | 51:1-30     |
| 45        | 51:31-35    |
| 46:1-2    | 26:2-25     |
| 46:27-28  | 26:27-28    |
| 47        | 29          |
| <b>48</b> | <b>31</b>   |
| 49:1-6    | 30:17-21/22 |
| 49:7-22   | 30:1-16     |
| 49:23-27  | 30:29-33    |
| 49:28-33  | 30:23-28    |
| 49:34-39  | 25:14-20    |
| 50-51     | 27-28       |
| <b>52</b> | <b>52</b>   |

The occurrences in bold indicate where **Ⓢ** has verses missing when it is compared to **Ⓜ**. This indicates where **Ⓜ** adds a whole new section to a chapter. Sometimes these additions are limited to small clauses (e.g., headings or additional information which can be either from other portions of Jer or new information)<sup>14</sup>; however, there are a few examples, where **Ⓢ** adds short phrases. Another major feature of **Ⓢ** is the tendency of rendering its Hebrew *Vorlage* fairly literally<sup>15</sup> (see the example of Jer 2.1-2 below).

The comparison above provides concrete evidence for the growth of Jer, but also for transmission history and translation techniques. Regarding the growth, there is strong evidence which suggests a shorter unit to a longer one added with a heading and an additional phrase (e.g. הלך וקראת באזני ירושלם לאמר and במדבר בארץ לא זרועה and ויהי דברייהוה אלי לאמר). The shorter version would work perfectly fine without an abrupt interruption linking Jer 1.19 with και ειπεν in **Ⓢ** Jer 2.2<sup>b</sup>. However, it is equally important to notice that after the bifurcation of a possible common text that generated **Ⓢ** and **Ⓜ**, each of them also has their own history of transmission as it is possible to observe a short addition in **Ⓢ** as well (e.g., λεγει κυριος). In terms of translation, **Ⓜ** presents a sequence of 2FS (אהר-אהר) whilst **Ⓢ** joins them into a single sentence

<sup>14</sup> See TOV, 1997, p. 152-158.

<sup>15</sup> Literalness can be measured through statistical analysis to attest the consistency of certain translation patterns which in Jer's case is virtually high cf. TOV, Emanuel & WRIGHT, B. G. Computer-Assisted Study of the Criteria for Assessing the Literalness of Translation Units in the Septuagint. In: *Textus*. Jerusalem v. 12, 1985, p. 152-159, 181-187.

(εμνησθην ελεους νεοτητος σου και αγαπης τελειωσεως σου του εξακολουθησαι σε τω αγιω ισραηλ)<sup>16</sup>. As it can be observed the 1PCS (יְהוָה), which refers to Yahweh, is rendered as τω αγιω ισραηλ<sup>17</sup>.

Discrepancies between  $\mathfrak{A}$  and  $\mathfrak{B}$  are not restricted to length and translation as their organisation also reveals some variation.  $\mathfrak{A}$  places the oracles against the nations at the end whilst  $\mathfrak{B}$  situates them at the middle of the scroll; moreover, the list of nations is also in a different order<sup>18</sup>.

The debate on the nature of the relationship between  $\mathfrak{A}$  and  $\mathfrak{B}$  has lasted for over a century, and the suggestions vary between two editions of Jer and proposals that  $\mathfrak{B}$  reflects an abridged version of  $\mathfrak{A}$ <sup>19</sup>. However, Janzen advanced the discussion based on Q evidence, concluding that  $\mathfrak{B}$  represents an older text than that of  $\mathfrak{A}$  on the grounds that  $\mathfrak{B}$  presents less editorial layers than  $\mathfrak{A}$ <sup>20</sup>.

Since then there has been a consensus amongst scholars regarding the priority of  $\mathfrak{B}$ , although some scholars still argue that  $\mathfrak{A}$  provides a better text<sup>21</sup>. In this sense, Bogaert refers to  $\mathfrak{B}$  and  $\mathfrak{A}$  respectively as *rédactions A et B*, and points out that the second redaction intends to “canonize” the prophet attributing him as the author of the scroll whilst the first redaction gives more space to Baruch<sup>22</sup>. Tov,

<sup>16</sup> Literalness does not mean that literal translation reproduces exactly the same content of the one in the original language as Hebrew has grammatical elements that are not present in Greek, and the reverse is also applicable. In this sense, translation technique aims to assess the relationship between both languages in terms of “grammatical categories, and etymological exegesis” (e.g., τελειωσεως σου) cf. TOV, Emanuel. *The Nature and Study of the Translation Technique of the Septuagint*. In: TOV, Emanuel (Org.). **The Greek and Hebrew Bible**. Collected essays on the Septuagint. Atlanta, GA: SBL, 1999, p. 239-240.

<sup>17</sup> This might indicate the influence of  $\mathfrak{B}$  Isa in  $\mathfrak{B}$  Jer as the “the Holy One of Israel” is a recurrent theme in Isa (see G Isa 43.3, 14; 45.11; 47.4; 48.17 and 49.7) cf. OSWALT, John N. **The Holy One of Israel**. Studies in the book of Isaiah. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2014, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. TOV, 1997, p. 168-173; TOV, 1979, p. 73-93 and STIPP, 1994, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> See JANZEN, J. Gerald. **Studies in the text of Jeremiah**. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973, p. 1-9.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. JANZEN, 1973, p. 1-9.

<sup>21</sup> See FISCHER, G. Zum Text des Jeremiabuches. In: **Biblica**. Innsbruck, v. 78, n. 3, 1997, p. 305-328.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. BOGAERT, P.-M. De Baruch à Jérémie. Les Deux Rédactions Conservées du Livre de Jérémie. In : BOGAERT, P.-M. (Org.). **Le Livre de Jérémie: Le Prophète et Son Milieu Les Oracles et Leur Transmission**. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997, p. 168-173.

likewise, attributes the *Vorlagen* of both editions respectively as editions I and II and suggests that textual criticism can be an important tool in the evaluation of literary history<sup>23</sup>. McKane incorporates this textual evidence to support his *rolling corpus* idea, arguing that:

[...] small pieces of pre-existing text trigger exegesis or commentary. MT is to be understood as a commentary or commentaries built on pre-existing elements of Jeremican *corpus*<sup>24</sup>.

Although it is possible to detect significant growth through the comparison between  $\mathfrak{G}$  and  $\mathfrak{H}$ , some caution is still required because there are some instances where  $\mathfrak{G}$  clearly reflects an abbreviation of  $\mathfrak{H}$ <sup>25</sup>. In addition, there are other occurrences in which  $\mathfrak{G}$  and  $\mathfrak{H}$  indicate two different textual traditions (e.g., Jer 2.15)<sup>26</sup>.

In both cases, expansion or abbreviation, there are solid grounds for a diachronic approach, which makes the sharp distinction between lower and higher criticisms unsustainable<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> See TOV, Emanuel. Some aspects of the textual and literary history of the book of Jeremiah. In: BOGAERT, P.-M. (Org.). **Le Livre de Jérémie: Le Prophète et Son Milieu Les Oracles et Leur Transmission**. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997, p. 168-173 and TOV, 1979, p. 73-93. Person partially accepts Tov's and Bougaert's proposals of two editions of Jer, suggesting that an interface between oral and literary dimensions also must be taken into account to explain the nature of the relationship between  $\mathfrak{G}$  and  $\mathfrak{H}$  cf. PERSON, Raymond F. Jr. A rolling corpus and oral tradition: a not-so-literate solution to a highly literate problem. In: DIAMOND, A. R.; O'CONNOR, Kathleen M. & STULMAN, Louis. **Troubling Jeremiah**. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999, p. 263-271.

<sup>24</sup> MCKANE, William. **Jeremiah**. v. 1. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986, p. lxxxiii.

<sup>25</sup> See LEVIN, Christoph. **Die Verheißung des neuen Bundes: in ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt**. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985 and SCHMID, Konrad. **Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches: Untersuchungen zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer 30-33 im Kontext des Buches**. Zürich: 1996.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. MCKANE, 1986, p. 36-37.

<sup>27</sup> See SÆBØ, Magne. **On the way to Canon**. Creative tradition history in the Old Testament. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998, p. 36-46. There is a strong resistance regarding higher criticism in some evangelical circles with the objective to protect the authority of the Scripture; however, this over protection should not ignore important findings in academia. In this regard I believe that Pope Pius XII's Papal encyclical letter, *Divino Affalante Spiritu*, provides an insightful contribution in this respect. I also recommend the following reading of SPARKS, Kenton L. **God's Word**



is not restricted to textual criticism. The next section will point to other evidence to support diachronic readings based on literary and linguistic analysis.

#### 4 LITERARY ANALYSIS

Whilst the previous section supported a diachronic perspective based on a comparative approach, this section will present some literary hints in the sources that also favour a diachronic direction.

The relationship between prose and poetry is, alongside the relationship between  $\mathfrak{H}$  and  $\mathfrak{E}$ , an object of extensive debate in Jeremianic studies due to the resemblance between the prose material and the so-called Deuteronomistic literature<sup>29</sup>.

Inspired by the Pentateuchal documentary hypothesis, Duhm<sup>30</sup> applied source criticism to Jer using metrics in Hebrew poetry as a criterion to establish genuine material, arguing that the scroll evolved slowly without a clear compositional process. For him, only 280 verses could be considered authentic (*die echte Prophetie, Dichtungen Jeremias* and/or *Die prophetischen Gedichte Jeremias*) whilst the other 220 verses were credited to Baruch (*die Lebensgeschichte, Buch des Baruch* and/or *Das Buch Baruchs*) and the remaining 880 verses were considered to be derived from a Deuteronomistic source from the post-exilic period (*die Ergänzungen* and/or *Die Ergänzungen zu den Schriften Jeremias und Baruch*)<sup>31</sup>. About a decade later, Mowinckel advanced Duhm's contribution, under the influence of Gunkel's form criticism and oral tradition, and presented the classic A-B-C division<sup>32</sup>. This division influenced later scholars

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<sup>29</sup> The term Deuteronomistic covers a broader concept than the term Deuteronomist. The former is employed in a wider sense, and it refers to the line of thought usually associated with the work of the Deuteronomists whilst the latter tends to be more narrowly linked to Deut cf. COGGINS, Richard. What does 'Deuteronomic' Mean? In: SCHEARING, Linda L. & MCKENZIE, Steven L. (Org.). **Those elusive Deuteronomists: the phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism**. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999, p. 23.

<sup>30</sup> DUHM, Bernhard. **Das Buch Jeremia**. Tübingen & Leipzig: J.C.B. Mohr, 1901, p. x-xx.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. DUHM, 1901, p. x-xx, 48-9.

<sup>32</sup> Like Duhm, Mowinckel also excluded some later insertions, but his influence of oral tradition allowed him to include some prose within his A source, which he considered as *ipsissima verba Jeremiae*. In his view, these oracles lack organised structures because they were the product of ecstatic visions e.g., they were brief, fluent and enthusiastic.

with some variation regarding the verses that fit under each category. For example, Rudolph proposed some changes, but he still operated under the premise of source criticism, which had a negative view about the redactor, and consequently mistook introductory formulas as part of the C source<sup>33</sup>.

However, negative perceptions about the redactor, which was predominant in source criticism, shifted to positive ones. The redactors were then considered as creative writers/theologians, whose role was more than simply copying and pasting or preserving material/traditions<sup>34</sup>. Under the impact of redaction criticism which strongly influenced the work of Noth<sup>35</sup> scholars started think in terms of a Deuteronomistic redaction of Jer based on the resemblances between the material in prose and Joshua-2 Kings. Hyatt was a pioneer in terms of suggesting a Deuteronomistic redaction of Jer despite using the term Deuteronomic instead of Deuteronomistic, where he pointed the links between Jer and Deut, proposing that Jer was synchronised to Josiah's time in order to portray the prophet as a supporter of Josiah's reform<sup>36</sup>. Working along similar lines, Thiel rejected source-critical explanations, suggesting that Jer 1-25 emerged from a series of editorial activities and subsequent re-editions under the Deuteronomists<sup>37</sup>. The ultimate consequence of Jer's Deuteronomistic redaction has led to a significant scepticism regarding the possibility of identifying the historical Jeremiah on the grounds that all the information about Jeremiah is provided by the prose section<sup>38</sup>.

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His original proposal included source D (the oracles of salvation), which he considered "*sie ist ursprünglich anonym gewesen*" *vaticinia ex eventu* (see MOWINCKEL, Sigmund. **Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremia**. Kristiania: Jacob Dyward, 1914, p. 3-4, 21-7, 46-7, 66-8, *passim*). However, he abandoned this suggestion later, and considered D more in terms of traditional circles (cf. MOWINCKEL, Sigmund. **Prophet and tradition**: the prophetic books in light of the study of the growth and history of tradition. Oslo: Jacob Dywad, 1946, p. 136).

<sup>33</sup> See RUDOLPH, Wilhem. **Jeremia**. Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr, 1947, p. xiii-vii.

<sup>34</sup> STONE, 1997, p. 77-90.

<sup>35</sup> NOTH, Martin. **Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien**. Halle: Niemeyer, 1943.

<sup>36</sup> HYATT, J. Philip. Jeremiah and Deuteronomy. In: **JNES**. Chicago, IL, v. 1, n. 2, April/1942, p. 156-173), but he already indicated this direction in another article two years earlier (see HYATT, Philip J. The Peril from the North in Jeremiah. In: **JBL**. Wellesley, MA, v. 59, n. 4, Dec/1940, p. 499-513.

<sup>37</sup> THIEL, Winfried. **Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1-25**. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlag, 1973, p. 32-42.

<sup>38</sup> See CARROLL, Robert P. **From Chaos to Covenant**: uses of prophecy in the book of Jeremiah. London: XPress, 1981, p. 5-30 and FISCHER, 2005, p. 39-47, 120-122.

Naturally Jer's redactional perspective did not remain unchallenged as some scholars working on philological grounds have argued that the prose material reflects the style and rhetoric of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. Bright rejected the view that the Deuteronomists intended to portray Jeremiah in favour of Josiah's reform, arguing that some of the oracles (e.g., Jer 2.4-13, 18-19; 3.1-5, 19-25 and 4.1-2) could be dated before 621 BCE<sup>39</sup>. Likewise, Holladay believes that Jeremiah used prose sermon in a Deuteronomistic style and argued that poetic features could also be found in the prose<sup>40</sup>. In the same manner, Weippert also argues: "[...] weist der Sprachgebrauch der Prosareden in mehreren Formulierungen immer wieder auf Jeremia als ihren Verfasser hin."<sup>41</sup> Although this perspective has lost some followers, there are still a few scholars who continue to work along similar lines<sup>42</sup>.

Even from a diachronic perspective, as Carroll<sup>43</sup> correctly observes,

<sup>39</sup> Although Bright did not suggest that poetry and prose were both written by Jeremiah, he proposed that the prose section, essentially present the same message of Jeremiah preserved by his disciples cf. BRIGHT, John. The date of the prose sermons in Jeremiah. In: **JBL**. Richmond, VA, v. 70, n. 1, Mar/1951, p. 13-35.

<sup>40</sup> See HOLLADAY, William L. Prototype and Copies: a new approach to the poetry-prose problem in the book of Jeremiah. In: **JBL**. Elmhurst College, IL, v. 79, n. 4, Dec/1960, p. 351-367 and HOLLADAY, William L. Style, Irony and Authenticity in Jeremiah. In: **JBL**. Elmhurst College. v. 81, n. 1 Mar/1962, p. 44-54. However, it is important to notice that Holladay presents a different chronology as in his view 627 BCE was the year of Jeremiah's birth cf. HOLLADAY, William L. A Coherent Chronology of Jeremiah's Early Career. In: BOGAERT, P.-M. (Org.). **Le Livre de Jérémie: Le Prophète et Son Milieu Les Oracles et Leur Transmission**. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997, p. 58-73. For Holladay, the young prophet grew up exposed to the Josianic Reform which had some early form of Deut read every seven years cf. HOLLADAY, William L. A proposal for reflections in the book of Jeremiah of the Seven-Year recitation of the law in Deuteronomy (Deut 31.10-13). In: LOHFINK, Norbert **Deuteronomium, Entstehung, Gestalt und Botschaft**. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1985, p. 326-328.

<sup>41</sup> WEIPPERT, Helga. **Die Prosareden des Jeremiabuches**. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973, p. 25, 228-229.

<sup>42</sup> Lundbom comes up with similar conclusions through the use of rhetorical criticism cf. LUNDBOM, Jack R. **Jeremiah 1-20**. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1999, p. 64-65.

<sup>43</sup> See CARROLL, Robert P. Arguing about Jeremiah: recent studies and the nature of the Prophetic Book. In: EMERTON, J. A. (Org.). **Congress Volume**. Leuven 1989. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991, p. 222-235 and CARROLL, Robert P. Radical clashes of will and style: recent commentary writing on the book of Jeremiah. In: **JSOT**. Glasgow, v. 45, n. 1989, p. 99-114. Brueggemann observes a contrast between historical and ideological perspectives in which in his words "Whereas Holladay is concerned in some way with 'the quest of the historical Jeremiah'". Carroll, so to speak, is engaged in a "quest for the Deuteronomic Jeremiah". Cf. BRUEGGEMANN, Walter. **A commentary on Jeremiah: Exile & Homecoming**. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing

there is a polarisation between literary and autobiographical approaches. On the one hand, the identification of different layers should not conclusively (dis)qualify historical claims<sup>44</sup>. On the other hand, a biographical perspective does not do justice to the nature of prophetic writings<sup>45</sup>, making little (or even no) distinction between prophet and prophetic writings<sup>46</sup>.

There is, however, a middle ground between the literary and biographical approaches. McKane's rolling *corpus* is not confined to the relationship between  $\mathcal{C}$  and  $\mathcal{A}$  as he also extends the concept to the relationship between prose and poetry to track the development of Jer. In his words:

Where the argument is that poetry generates prose there is an assumption that the poetry which has generated prose comment is attributable, for the most part, to the prophet Jeremiah. Where the thesis is that the prose generates prose, the kernel may not be regarded as giving access to the period of prophet Jeremiah and preserving the sense words which he spoke. In general, the theory is bound up with the persuasion that the rolling *corpus* 'rolled' over a long period of time and was still rolling over in the post-exilic period<sup>47</sup>.

Like McKane, Stipp<sup>48</sup> also attributes most of the poetic material to the prophet. Apart from the editorial insertions, Stipp works on linguistic grounds and makes a distinction between sociolect and idiolect<sup>49</sup>, pointing out to the fact that

Company, 1998, p. 10.

<sup>44</sup> In this regard Carroll and Fischer seem to be over agnostic regarding historical Jeremiah.

<sup>45</sup> See WILSON, Robert R. **Prophecy and society in Ancient Israel**. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, Press, 1980, p. 89-133; COLLINS, Terence. **The mantle of Elijah**. The redaction criticism of the Prophetic Books. Sheffield: JSOTS Press, 1993, p. 11-36; CLEMENT, Ronald E. **Old Testament Prophecy: from oracles to Canon**. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996, p. 10-17; NISSINEN, Martti. **Prophets and prophecy in the Ancient Near East**. Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2003, p. 1-11 and TROXEL, Ronald L. **Prophetic Literature: from oracles to books**. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, p. 1-18.

<sup>46</sup> In this sense, Bright, Holladay and Weippert seem to minimize the silence of the Deuteronomistic literature concerning Jeremiah. They also play down the different styles between prose and prophecy and seem to claim too much to the historical Jeremiah.

<sup>47</sup> MCKANE, 1986, p. Lxxxiii.

<sup>48</sup> STIPP, Herman-Josef. Sprachliche Kennzeichen jeremianischer Autorschaft. In: BARSTAD, Hans M. & KRATZ, Reinhard G. (Orgs.). **Prophecies in the book of Jeremiah**. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009, p. 148-186.

<sup>49</sup> Whilst idiolects are connected to peculiar linguistic characteristics attributed to

the poetic material in Jer is significantly homogeneous<sup>50</sup>.

Although some scholars have argued for an earlier stage in which the prophetic oracles were available in oral form before gradually achieving their written form<sup>51</sup>, recent research in the Ancient Near East and in Israel/Judah<sup>52</sup> has convincingly demonstrated that prophetic sayings were not in oral form for a long space of time, which suggests that they more likely were converted into written form virtually immediately by scribes<sup>53</sup>. Despite the idea that an oral tradition precedes a written one is something reasonable as an older generation of scholars have proposed<sup>54</sup> it is not possible to track back. This challenge in the search for orality in biblical texts have shifted to traditionality, which believes that texts available might never have existed orally; nevertheless, they work in a traditional manner, using cultural contours, expressions, and communicative conventions, *e.g.*, features that resemble those methods employed by folklorists<sup>55</sup>. Moreover, recent scholars have revisited the interface between oral and written tradition, suggesting that even with the rise of literacy the presence of oral tradition continued to coexist alongside the written one<sup>56</sup>.

In terms of the prose tradition, without making a distinction between sermon and narrative, Nicholson develops Bright's view and considers the prose tradition as a homiletical actualisation of the message of the prophet to the next

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individuals, sociolect are linked to common features shared by groups of people cf. LLAMAS, Carmen & STOCKWELL, Peter. Sociolinguistics. In: SCHMITT, Nobert (Org.). **An introduction to applied linguistics**. Second Ed. Routledge: London, 2010, p. 144.

<sup>50</sup> STIPP, 2009, p. 150-154, 176-180.

<sup>51</sup> See Collins suggestion of pre-oral phase cf. COLLINS, 1993, p. 24.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. NISSINEN, M. How prophecy became literature. In: **SJOT**. Helsinki, v. 19, n. 2, 2005, p. 153-172 and NISSINEN, M. Das Problem der Prophetenschüler. In: PAKKALA, J. & Nissinen, M. (Orgs.). **Houses full of all good things: essays in memory of Timo Veijola**. Helsinki/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008, p. 337-353.

<sup>53</sup> NISSINEN, 2005, p. 153-72 and NISSINEN, 2008, p. 337-353.

<sup>54</sup> *E.g.*, MOWINCKEL, 1914; MOWINCKEL, 1946 and NIELSEN, Eduard. **Oral tradition: a modern problem in Old Testament introduction**. London: SCM Press, 1954.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. NIDITCH, Susan. **Folklore and the Hebrew Bible**. Reprinted Ed. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004, p. 9-12.

<sup>56</sup> See NIDITCH, Susan. **Oral world and written word: Ancient Israelite Literature**. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996; MILLER II, Robert D. SFO. **Oral tradition in Ancient Israel**. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011 and PERSON, 1999, p. 263-271.

generation during the exile<sup>57</sup>.

The different opinions amongst scholars regarding the dates of different portions of Jer attests some degree of subjectivity; moreover, distinction between prose and poetry is not a sufficient criterion to determine authorship of a biblical text considering the complexity of defining clearly what distinguish prose from poetry based on alien conventions<sup>58</sup>, though it is possible to allude to some parallel conventions (e.g., rhythm) in other Ancient Near Eastern texts<sup>59</sup>, which suggests that the textual and literary analyses are not sufficient to date these texts with precision. In this sense, perhaps the major contribution of the literary analysis is the indication of primary and secondary material built from pre-existent textual units. Therefore, dates and historical context should not be exclusively established by the text/literature in itself, but it needs to be supplemented with external factors in order to avoid a circular argument.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to call into question the dichotomy between diachronic and synchronic approaches applied to Jer based on evidence drawn from the data available from the primary sources. Although the data is presented in synchronic format, a simple comparison of the different sources through the aid of textual criticism attests the growth of Jer. In most cases, it is possible to detect expansions from **⓪** to **Ⓜ**; however, there are some cases in which **⓪** abbreviates **Ⓜ**. This growth of Jer is not restricted to textual analysis as the literary analysis of each source individually also reveals different layers based on the dependence of prose text on poetic texts. However, neither textual nor literary evidence is sufficient to date the text. This task needs to be combined with external evidence.

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<sup>57</sup> NICHOLSON, E. W. **Preaching to the Exiles**. A study of the prose tradition in the book of Jeremiah. Oxford: Oxford Basil Blackwell, 1970, p. 34-7, 134-135.

<sup>58</sup> See PETERSEN, David L. & RICHARDS, Kent Harold. **Interpreting Hebrew Poetry**. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992, p. 1-16 and GILLINGHAM, S. E. **The poems of the Hebrew Bible**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 18-43. It is important to point out that some scholars are more optimistic about finding sharp distinction between prose and poetry (see FREEDMAN, David Noel. Another look at Biblical Hebrew Poetry. In: FOLLIS, Elaine R. (Org.). **Directions in Biblical Hebrew Poetry**. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987, p. 11-28.).

<sup>59</sup> PETERSEN, 1992, p. 37-47 and GILLINGHAM, 1994, p. 44-68.

Nevertheless, this textual-literary evidence provides strong support for diachronic approach. However, this still does not answer important synchronic questions, which along with dating shall be explored in the second part of this paper.

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