Avondale College

THE IDENTITY OF THE "I" IN THE "CONFESSIONS" OF JEREMIAH

A Thesis

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by

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Affirmation and Disclaimer

This thesis represents original work. It has not been submitted to any other academic institution. Appropriate recognition has been given for the contribution of other scholars.

D.H Thiele — 28/6/98

D.H. Thiele — Date

Preface

The confessions of Jeremiah have been of particular interest to me since I commenced teaching a class on the Old Testament prophets in 1992. I consider myself very fortunate to have had the opportunity to study them at considerable depth in the preparation of this thesis.

The chief tools used in my study have been the biblical texts themselves. For a Hebrew text I have used Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia.[1] The Rahlfs edition of the Septuagint has been used.[2] English translations have been provided by the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted.[3]

The production of a thesis like this is never a solitary activity and thanks must be given to many people who assisted me in many ways. First, I wish to thank the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for their sponsorship of my studies. Without such

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[1]K. Elliger, and W. Rudolph (eds.) Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967-77).

[2]A. Rahlfs, (ed), Septuaginta (Stuttgart: Deutsche Biblestiftung, 1935).

[3]The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version (Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, 1989).

support this thesis would never have been written. Dr Gerhard Pfandl, the Field Secretary of the South Pacific Division has been especially encouraging to me in my endeavours.

The Administration of Sonoma Adventist College have also been most considerate of my study program in allowing me to take extra time in Australia to work on my thesis. Without such kindness, completion of the thesis would have been impossible.

Paul de Ville and Jo Lloyd, successive senior librarians at Avondale College, (and their many assistants) have been wonderful. Nothing has been too much trouble for them. I also want to express my thanks to the library staff at Moore Theological College (Sydney) and Fisher Library (University of Sydney) for their helpfulness.

Another group of people at Avondale College who were especially helpful to me are the members of the Information Technology Department--especially Len Hokin, and Lyndon Harris.

My supervisor, Ed Parker--a stranger at the beginning of the process, but a friend at the end--has given unstintingly of his time and effort and made immeasurable contributions to my research. Dr Steve Thompson, the Chairman of the Theology Department has also been very helpful to me. My good friend Dr Ross

Cole of Pacific Adventist University helped me greatly in reading the entire manuscript and making numerous valuable suggestions.

Lastly, I wish to thank my wife Jillian and our children, Christopher and Sharona, who have suffered the loss of holiday time as their husband and father pursued something as obscure to them as the confessions of Jeremiah!

Fonts

This thesis utilises both Greek and Hebrew fonts. A chart of the Hebrew font used is provided below and a chart of the Greek font follows on the next page.

Hebrew Consonants

Aleph	א
Bet	בּ ב
Gimel	ג
Dalet	ד
He	ה
Vav	ו
Zayin	ז
Het	ח
Tet	ט
Yod	י
Kaph	כּ כ
(final)	ך
Lamed	ל
Mem	מ
(final)	ם
Nun	נ
(final)	ן
Samak	ס
Ayin	ע
Pe	פּ פ
(final)	ף
Sade	צ
(final)	ץ
Qoph	ק
Resh	ר
Sin/Shin	שׁ שׂ
Tav	ת

Hebrew Vowels (with Lamed)

Patah	לַ
Qames	לָ
Segol	לֶ
Sere	לֵ
Sere-Yod	לֵי
Hireq	לִ
Hireq Yod	לִי
Qames Hatup	לֳ
Holem	לֹ
Holem-Vav	לוֹ
Qibbus	לֻ
Sureq	לוּ

Hebrew Shevas

Simple (with Lamed)	לְ
Hatep Patah (with Aleph)	אֲ
Hatep Segoh (with Aleph)	אֱ
Hatep Qames Hatep (with Aleph)	אֳ

Greek Font

Alpha	A	α
Beta	B	B
Gamma	Γ	γ
Delta	Δ	δ
Epsilon	E	ϵ
Zeta	Z	ζ
Eta	H	η
Theta	Θ	θ
Iota	I	ι
Kappa	K	κ
Lambda	Λ	λ
Mu	M	μ
Nu	N	ν
Xi	Ξ	ξ
Omicron	O	o
Pi	Π	π
Rho	P	ρ
Sigma	Σ	σ, ς
Tau	T	τ
Upsilon	Υ	υ
Phi	Φ	ϕ
Chi	X	χ
Psi	Ψ	ψ
Omega	Ω	ω

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary, ed. D.N. Freedman
AJBI	Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute
AJSL	American Journal of Semitic Language and Literature
BAR	Biblical Archaeology Review
BASOR	Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research
BHS	Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia
Bib	Biblica
BibSac	Bibliatheca Sacra
BZAW	Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentlich Wissenschaft
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
EB	Encyclopedia Biblica
ExT	Expository Times
GUOST	Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society
HAR	Hebrew Annual Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
IB	Interpreter's Bible, ed. G.A. Buttrick
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, ed. G.A. Buttrick
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
Int	Interpretation
ITC	International Theological Commentary
JAAR	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTSS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
LXX	Septuagint
NCB	New Century Bible
NIB	New Interpreter's Bible, ed. L.E. Keck
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament

NRSV	Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studiën
RevExp	Review and Expositor
RSV	Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SEAJT	South East Asian Journal of Theology
SJOT	Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, ed. G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren
TynBul	Tyndale Bulletin
USQR	Union Seminary Quarterly Review
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplement
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WTJ	Westminster Theological Journal
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentlich Wissenschaft
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

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Introduction

The book of Jeremiah contains a great many puzzles and has attracted much scholarly attention in the last two hundred years.[1] Near to the heart of much of the study of the book of Jeremiah lie discussions regarding the so-called "confessions" of Jeremiah.[2] Many of the

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[1]Amongst these puzzles are text critical problems, the relationship of poetic and prose sections (source criticism), continuity of the Jeremaic tradition, relationship of Jeremiah to the Deuteronomic reform, date of Jeremiah's call, identity of the "foe from the North", structure of the book (rhetorical criticism), and relationship between the prophetic ministry of Jeremiah and the production of the book of Jeremiah (L.G. Perdue, "Jeremiah in Modern Research: Approaches and Issues", A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies, edited by L.G. Perdue and B.W. Kovacs [Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1984], 1-32).

[2]Scholars remain divided as to the exact delimitations and the number of the confessions. Four doctoral dissertations done in major American universities illustrate the diversity of thinking. D.M. Wimmer includes Jer 17:12-13 in his fourth confessions out of a total of six ("Prophetic Experience in the Confessions of Jeremiah", Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1973, 235). By contrast, W.V. Chambers begins his fourth confessions out of a total of seven with Jer 17:14 ("The Confessions of Jeremiah: A Study of Prophetic Ambivalence", Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1972, 69). K.M. O'Connor counts only five confessions by reading Jer 11:18-12:6 as one confession (The Confessions of Jeremiah: Their Interpretation and Role in Chapters 1-25, SBLDS 94 [Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars, 1988], 15-26). She also disagrees with many other scholars by not including Jer 20:14-18 as part of the confessions (O'Connor, Confessions, 75-80). A.R. Diamond counts eight

issues in the book generally come to specific focus in the confessions.[3]

Critical study of Jeremiah finds its real starting point in the work of G.H.A. Ewald[4] who relied heavily on the "dialogues" in Jeremiah--and especially that material which is now generally referred to as the confessions. The term "confessions" (*Konfessionen*) was first used for this material in 1902.[5] The isolation of this material

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confessions by separating 11:18-23 from 12:1-6 and including 20:14-18 but separating it from 20:7-13. (The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context: Scenes of Prophetic Drama JSOTSS 45, [Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1987], 21-51, 101-21).

Despite the appearance of confusion scholars are agreed on a core of material in the confessions. Disputes are at the margins. As part of the delimitation of the this thesis Diamond's listing of the confessions is accepted as a starting point. His list is very much within the mainstream except for his separation of Jer 20:7-18 into two confessions. This separation is likely to have no impact on the outcome of our investigation.

[3]For example, text critical issues relating to the confessions are explored by A.R. Diamond, "Jeremiah's Confessions in the LXX and the MT: A Witness to Developing Canonical Function?" VT, 40 (1990), 33-50; the relationship of the confessions to Deuteronomic theology is explored by E. Gerstenberger ("Jeremiah's Complaints: Observations on Jeremiah 15:10-21", JBL 82 (1963), 393-408) and the confessions are studied from the perspective of rhetorical criticism by O'Connor (Confessions, passim).

[4]G.H.A. Ewald Die Propheten des Alten Bundes, I (Stuttgart, Calwer Verlag, 1840), 23. The work of Ewald and other scholars of the earlier period is conveniently summarised in Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 13-56.

[5]W. Erbt, Jeremiah und seine Zeit (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1902), 167. See, Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 14.

was confirmed by W. Baumgartner in 1917 on form-critical grounds.[6]

The language of the confessions appears intensely personal. Whenever the confessions are studied the significance of this personal language must be assessed or assumptions must be made regarding it.[7]

In the earliest period it was generally thought that the confessions gave insight into the personality and thinking of Jeremiah. With this view the confessions were included in the book of Jeremiah out of biographical interest. This psychologising approach is given its classic expressions by J. Skinner.[8] It can be summarised in the oft-quoted words of another British scholar, A.B. Davidson:

> The book of Jer does not so much teach religious truths as present a religious personality. Prophecy had already taught its truths, its last effort was to reveal itself in a life. But though the truths in Jeremiah are old, they all appear in him with an impress of personality which gives them novelty. He is not to be read for doctrines in their general form on God and the people, but for the *nuances* which his mind gives them. Though he might not

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[6]W. Baumgartner, Jeremiah's Poems of Lament, Historic Texts and Interpreters in Biblical Scholarship, trans. D.E. Orton (Almond, Sheffield, 1988), *passim*.

[7]An analysis of the personal language of Jeremiah is the intention of T. Polk, The Prophetic Persona: Jeremiah and the Language of Self, JSOTSS 32 (Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1984).

[8]J. Skinner, Prophecy and Religion: Studies in the Life of Jeremiah (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 201-30.

> be aware of it, we can perceive that all his thoughts are coloured by the religious relation to God of which he was himself conscious.[9]

The majority of scholars in this period affirmed that the confessions were authentic expressions of the individual piety of Jeremiah and provided a window through which his own intense spiritual struggles could be observed.[10] The alternative view that saw them as later additions to the Jeremiac corpus was very much in the minority.[11]

The easy identification of the confessions with the inner psychological world of Jeremiah began to unravel

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[9]A.B. Davidson, "Jeremiah the Prophet," A Dictionary of the Bible, ed James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911) 2: 576.

[10]Wimmer's survey shows this position was assumed by such scholars as: Ewald, Die Propheten, 1:23; 2: 69-70; Julius Wellhausen, Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte (Berlin: Reimer, 1895), 140-41); C.H. Cornill, Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Freiburg: Mohr, 1892), 156; ("Prophetic Experience", 14-16). Others who might have easily been added to this list include H. Gunkel, The Psalms: A Form Critical Introduction, Facet Books: Biblical Series 19 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 36 and A.S. Peake, Jeremiah and Lamentations, Century Bible (Edinburgh: T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1910), 1:29.

[11]From the earliest period, Wimmer lists only Nathaniel Schmidt ("Jeremiah", EB [London: A & C Black, 1901], 2388) as holding to this view ("Prophetic Experience", 20).

The difficulty in this position, of course, is that a significant amount of material has be disregarded because it clearly has personal reference to Jeremiah and his situation (eg reference to Anathoth). It is very easy for a scholar to argue in a circle--deleting that which does not fit his theory in an attempt to establish his theory.

with the form-critical work of Baumgartner in 1917.[12] His conclusion was that the confessions were written in the *Gattung* of "individual laments" as found in the book of Psalms.[13] The thoroughness of Baumgartner's analysis has convinced most subsequent scholars of the correctness of his position. There have been attempts to reclassify the confessions as "lawsuits".[14] These attempts have

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[12]Baumgartner, Poems, *passim*. Although the English translation did not appear until 1988 this work was originally written in German in 1917.

[13]Baumgartner, Poems, 89-99.

[14]S.H. Blank, "The Confessions of Jeremiah and the Meaning of Prayer", HUCA 21 (1948), 331-54; D.H. Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", idem, "The Sociology of Knowledge and the 'Confessions of Jeremiah'", SBL 1978 Seminar Papers, ed. P. Achtemeier (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars, 1978), 393-406.

Significantly Blank does not see it as necessary to try and distinguish sharply between the confessions and the cultic laments. Rather he sees these laments as being the product of the judicial functions of the sanctuary. In a similar way Wimmer sees elements of the lament mixed in with the "rib-gattung" (399). W.L. Holladay entitles one of his essays on the Confessions "Jeremiah's Lawsuit With God: A Study in Suffering and Meaning", (Int 17 [1963], 280-301). Yet he explicitly categorises the confessions as "laments" (Jeremiah, Hermeneia, [Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress, 1986], 1: 358-60).

been criticised by Diamond[15] and are generally considered unsuccessful.[16]

G. von Rad's 1936 article, while accepting the dominant psycho-biographical understanding of the confessions, saw closer links between them and the ministry and message of Jeremiah than had generally been noted.[17] Most other scholars of the period simply assumed

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[15]Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 24, 38 and throughout. Diamond admits the presence of some (limited) legal terminology in the confessions but points out that the individual lament Psalms also contain legal language (p. 24)!

Diamond is dismissive of F. Ahuis' suggestion that the confessions form a special *Gattung* of "prophetic laments", although he accepts that a prophet was especially susceptible to opposition at two points: the moment of actual delivery of the message and at the time of any apparent delay in the fulfilment of the oracle (pp. 30,31).

[16]However, it must be pointed out that a thorough form-critical study of the confessions as "lawsuits" has not been done. The rejection of the "lawsuit" *Gattung* for the confessions tends to be more an unexamined assumption rather than a vigorously argued position.

[17]G. von Rad, "The Confessions of Jeremiah", A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies, ed L.G. Perdue and B.W. Kovacs (Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Ind.: 1984), 339-348. The implications of von Rad's position have been systematically developed in two unpublished doctoral dissertations which sought to integrate the confessions into the "prophetic" rather than just "human" aspects of Jeremiah's existence, (Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", *passim* and Chambers, "Prophetic Ambivalence", *passim)*.

Polk's work--although much later then that of von Rad, Chambers or Wimmer--notes the relationship of the confessions to the prophetic role of Jeremiah. However, Polk is not thinking of Jeremiah as a historical figure but as a literary one (Prophetic Persona, 8-18). Some of Polk's conclusions regarding the confessions parallel my own. However, the scope and methodology of our studies differ.

Jeremiah chose to express his inner struggle in the stylised language of the cultus.[18]

A new phase in the study of the confessions began in 1963 with the publication of G. Reventlow's Liturgie und prophetisches Ich bei Jeremia.[19] Reventlow argued that the confessions were laments and that this *Gattung* was "locked" into the cultus. He postulated mediation as a specific prophetic function. His conclusion was that the laments were corporate in reference and cultic in provenance. Thus although the confessions were authentic--in the sense that they came from Jeremiah--one could learn no more about Jeremiah from reading them than one could learn about a Catholic priest by listening to him recite the Mass.[20]

Reventlow must be credited with taking Baumgartner's findings seriously and working out their implications thoroughly. He highlights the difficulties in postulating that Jeremiah used cultic *Gattungen* to

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[18]Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 12.

19H.G. Reventlow, Liturgie und prophetisches Ich bei Jeremia (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1963).

[20]D. Jobling, "The Quest of the Historical Jeremiah: Hermeneutical Implications of Recent Literature", Prophet to the Nation, 287. Jobling refers to Reventlow's position as "thorough-going liturgiology" (286).

express his deepest personal anguish.[21] However, his own position is extreme and has not won adherents.

It is not true that *Gattungen* were "locked" into their original settings. Prophets used a multitude of *Gattungen* from a variety of sources to convey their messages.[22] J. Berridge, V. Bredenkamp, and, more systematically, J. Bright subjected Reventlow's thesis to searching and compelling critique.[23] Bright turns some of Reventlow's arguments on their head. For example, he asks why "confession"-type material only occurs in the book of Jeremiah if it reflects an integral aspect of the prophetic role.[24] He highlights various expressions

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[21]Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 13.

[22]G. Fohrer, "Remarks on Modern Interpretation of the Prophets", JBL 80 (1961), 309-12.

[23] J.M. Berridge, Prophet, People and the Word of Yahweh: an Examination of Form and Content in the Proclamation of the Prophet Jeremiah (Evz-Verlag, Zurich: 1970), 114-169; V. Bredenkamp, "The Concept of Communion with God in the Old Testament with Special Reference to the Individual Laments in the Psalms and the 'Confessions' of Jeremiah", (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 1970), *passim*; J. Bright, "Jeremiah's Complaints: Liturgy, or Expressions of Personal Distress?", Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honour of Gwenne Hendon Davis, ed. J.I. Durham and J.R. Porter, new corrected edition (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1983), 189-214.

W. McKane also critiques Reventlow's approach--although on a much smaller scale. His case study is Reventlow's exegesis of Jeremiah 12:1-5 (W. McKane, "The Interpretation of Jeremiah xii.1-5", GUOST 20 [1963-64], 38-48).

[24]Bright, "Jeremiah's Complaints", 196.

within the confessions that are impossible to understand corporately or in a liturgical sense.[25] Most telling is his analysis of three confessions that Reventlow does not discuss (Jer 18:18-23; 20:7-13; 20:14-18).[26]

Reventlow succeeded in overturning the scholarly consensus regarding the confessions that existed in 1963. Some have continued to follow an essentially biographical approach.[27] (However, there does seem to be general acceptance of the fact that we do not have access to sufficient information to be able to provide psychological interpretations of the data).[28] On the

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[25]Bright argues that (a) the unanswered accusation found in 15:18b and 20:14-18 could "never" be found in a liturgical text ("Jeremiah's Complaints", 205); (b) יָבוֹא נָא ("Let it come"), (17:15) must refer to the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophetic oracles (*op. cit.*, 206); (c) that 12:6 certainly refers to Jeremiah and should not be excised, as done by Reventlow, because without it verse 5 is atypically obscure (*op. cit.*, 207-08); and (d) that פִּתָּה ("enticed"), (20:7a) is "unthinkable in a liturgical text" (*op. cit.*, 212).

Bright's objections, while generally cogent, may be somewhat overstated. Wimmer points out that Jeremiah 20:7-13 has, in fact, been incorporated into the Roman Catholic liturgy (Wimmer "Prophetic Experience", 36).

[26]Bright, "Jeremiah's Confessions", 211-14.

[27]Holladay is the perhaps the best--but not the only--example of this (Jeremiah, 1: 358-61). Robert Carroll, who is certainly no friend of the personal view, admits that it is the most obvious reading of the text and that it will continue to have supporters as long as the book has readers! (Jeremiah: A Commentary, OTL [London: SCM, 1986], 55-64.)

[28]See, for example, the comments of D.J.A. Clines and D.M. Gunn, "Form, Occasion and Redaction in Jeremiah 20", ZAW 88 (1976), 390-91.

Certainly views--largely based on the confessions--

other hand, scholars like R.P. Carroll locate the confessions in the exilic or post-exilic communities and virtually sever the link between them and the "historical Jeremiah"--if indeed, he existed.[29] These scholars appear to have been working out the implications of Reventlow's study in the context of the synagogue rather than the temple.[30]

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which describe Jeremiah as "weak", "vacillating" and "indecisive" are very much out of favour today. (Such view are attributed by Chambers to scholars in the first third of this century such as H. Gunkel, P. Volz and B. Duhm. "Prophetic Ambivalence", 10).

More recently, J.L. Mihelic has gone so far in the opposite direction as to draw a contrast between the passivity of Isaiah in accepting his prophetic calling and the open refusal of Jeremiah ("Dialogue With God", Int, 14 [1960], 44 cf S.M. Fettke, Messages to a Nation in Crisis, [New York: University Press of America, 1982], 2-4; J.P. Hyatt, "Introduction and Exegeis of Jeremiah", IB 5: 783, [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1956]).

[29]R.P. Carroll, From Chaos to Covenant: Uses of Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah (SCM, London: 1981), 107-35. Carroll's position is supported by P.R. Ackroyd, "The Book of Jeremiah--Some Recent Studies", JSOT 28 (1984), 47-59; and R.M. Patterson, "Re-Interpretation in the Book of Jeremiah", JSOT 28 (1984), 37-46. Essentially Carroll regards the confessions as the products of the exilic synagogues.

One might compare the way G.E. Nicholson sees the prose sermons of the book as likewise being products of the exilic synagogues [Preaching to the Exiles (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), *passim*]. The significant difference between the two treatments is that modern scholarship has generally not regarded the prose sections as being authentic works of Jeremiah whereas (as we have seen) the confessions have been closely linked to the historical prophet.

[30]Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 14. Holladay's words are relevant here: "But Reventlow's study is a reminder that the confessions were preserved not because of any biographical concern for Jrm's psychology but because Jrm spoke for his people in their corporate agony

Thus the issue of the identity of the "I" of the confessions (which appears without any antecedents) seems to have gone through four (overlapping) phases:

1. the "I" is the individual Jeremiah, conceived of as a pious individual whose faith is under enormous stress (Baumgartner, Skinner, Holladay, et al);
2. the "I" is conceived of as the individual Jeremiah but the confessions are seen as having an integral, rather than incidental, relationship to his prophetic role (von Rad, Wimmer, Chamers);
3. the "I" is Jeremiah as representative cultic figure revealing no individuality at all (Reventlow);
4. the "I" is a purely literary device which represents the nation of Israel in a literary and not cultic setting (Carroll).

The first three positions are bound together by a common acceptance of the authenticity of the confessions. Carroll's view denies the necessity or possibility of determining their authenticity. The situation is thus

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(particularly in the exile) and because Jrm's words became useful in the people's worship of God" (Jeremiah, 1: 359). R.P. Carroll would substitute the word "produced" for "preserved" but would otherwise agree totally with this statement (Jeremiah, OTG, [Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1989], 46-49).

similar to some of the discussions relating to the "historical Jesus".[31] The logic of the radical position in both cases is simple and powerful: We *know* the gospels/book of Jeremiah had relevance to those who produced them. Therefore the burden of proof falls on those who wish to argue that any particular incident also had relevance in the context of the historical Jesus/Jeremiah.[32]

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[31]This comparison is self-consciously made by some proponents of the more sceptical newer understanding of Jeremiah (eg Jobling, "Historical Jeremiah", 285-97; Carroll, Chaos to Covenant, 5-30).

The aptness of the analogy is open to question, however. The pre-conditions for the emergence of a "Jeremiah of faith" (analogous to the "Jesus of faith" found in the gospels simply do not exist (P.C. Craigie, P.H. Kelley, J.F. Drinkard, Jr, Jeremiah 1-25 WBC 26 [Waco: Tex.: Word, 1991], xxxviii-xxxix).

[32]H.K. Macarther lists the following scholars as taking essentially this position with regard to the gospels: R. Bultmann, H. Conzelmann, E. Käsemann, J.M. Robinson, G. Ebeling, R.H. Fuller, and N. Perrin ("The Burden of Proof in Historical Jesus Research", ExT 82, [1971], 116-17). The conclusion of Carroll and Jobling on Jeremiah is similar to that reached by these scholars on the Gospels. However, the methodology is different. Scepticism regarding the historicity of the Gospels was based primarily on form and redaction criticism. Carroll is using the newer literary approaches.

The date of the production of Jeremiah is a crucial issue in this new view of the book (as it is in studies of the "historical Jesus"). Thus Carroll and Nicholson are at pains to deny the most obvious reading of Jeremiah 36 which suggests that the book was produced during the life time (and under the supervision) of Jeremiah (Carroll, Chaos to Covenant, 36; Nicholson, Preaching, 39-57). If they are incorrect in their re-reading of this chapter the context of the book of Jeremiah and the context of the prophet Jeremiah overlap--at least partially. No-one suggests that Jeremiah 36 refers to the production of the complete book! However, it is possible to argue that the core of the book was

The situation with the gospels--viz, the resurrection, the birth of the church, the emergence of a corpus of nearly contemporary Christian literature--has allowed scholars to develop criteria for determining what is authentic to the life of Jesus.[33] However, such is not the case with Jeremiah. One is left to rely entirely on subjectivity in choosing what may be known of the "historical Jeremiah".[34]

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essentially completed by Jeremiah and/or Baruch. See W.L. Holladay, Jeremiah, Hermeneia, (Mineapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1989), 2: 16; J. Bright, Jeremiah, AB 21 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1958), LXIX-LXXVIII; J.A. Thompson, The Book of Jeremiah, NICOT, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980), 33-34; O. Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 355.

[33]N. Perrin lists the following criteria: dissimilarity (which he considers to be "fundamental"); coherence; and, multiple attestation (Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus [New York: Harper and Row, 1976], 39-49).

The validity of these criteria is not universally acknowledged (see for example S.C. Goetz and C.L. Blomberg, "The Burden of Proof", JSNT 11 [1981], 39-63). Thus both "minimalist" and "maximalist" approaches are taken in reconstructing what can be known about the life of Christ. For this terminology see In Search for the Historical Jesus, edited by H.K. McArthur (London: SPCK, 1970), xii.

[34]I am aware of no attempt to develop criteria for authenticity in Jeremiah. This is because the more sceptical approach to Jeremiah is not concerned with historical questions but with literary ones. The failure to be concerned with history may prove to be the Achilles heel of the synchronic approaches.

It is now being recognized that synchronic and diachronic approaches to the Bible may have a complementary and not mutually exclusive relationship. In this regard the volume Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis, edited J.C. de Moor (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995) is especially

Is there any way beyond this impasse? Is there any way of ascertaining whether the confessions have individual or corporate reference? Two avenues can be explored. One utilises the methodology of form criticism and the other a modified source criticism.[35]

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enlightening. The contribution by R.P. Carroll, ("Synchronic Decontructions of Jeremiah: Diachrony to the Rescue?", 39-51) is particularly relevant as far as Jeremiah studies are concerned.

The following comment by M. Floyd is also highly relevant: "Nowadays it is commonly asserted that such concern for the text's final form is born of literary as opposed to historical concerns. Here we have an illustration, however, of just how specious this dichotomization may be. In the case of the two texts considered above [Hab 1:2-17; Jer 15:10-18], it is precisely their final form that must be defined in terms of historical eventuality. As complaints about the fulfillment of oracles, both texts presuppose that a prophecy proclaimed in one historical situation has to be probed in order to discover the conditions of its ongoing applicability in another historical situation. Full appreciation and comprehension of these texts' final form thus invite, if they do not actually require, historical investigation. Conversely, historical investigation must proceed on the baisis of an analysis of the text's final form, if it is to be well founded ("Prophetic Complaints about the Fulfillment of Oracles in Habakkuk 1:2-17 and Jeremiah 15:10-18" JBL 110 [1991], 417-18).

[35]It is ironic that form criticism--a major tool used by "minimalist" New Testament scholars to cast doubt on the authenticity of much of the gospel account--is here suggested as a means of establishing confidence in the authenticity of the confessions.

First, the *gattung*[36] of the confessions needs to be studied further. Are the confessions laments or are they lawsuits? Work has been done in this area.[37] However, the work done has not gone far enough. The question remains: how does Jeremiah use these *Gattungen* elsewhere-

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[36]The term *Gattung* properly applies to the oral stage of the production of Old (and New) Testament and only in a secondary sense can it be applied to the written form. A *Gattung* may be defined as "*a conventional pattern, recognizable by certain formal criteria* (style, shape, tone, particular syntactic or ever grammatical structures, recurring formulaic patterns), which is *used in a particular society in social contexts which are governed by certain formal conventions*", (J. Barton, Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study, [London: Dartman, Longman and Todd, 1984], 32 [emphasis original]).

Providing an exact English translation of the term is difficult. The usual translation is "form" which is unacceptably vague. Barton suggests that "genre" is probably the best English equivalent. However, its suitability is limited by the fact that in English "genre" is typically used for *literary* types and only in very unusual cases is it applied to *oral* types (Ibid., 31). None-the-less G.M. Tucker consistently uses "genre" in his introduction to form criticism, (Form Criticism of the Old Testament, Guides to Biblical Scholarship, [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971], *passim*). In this thesis, the term is generally left untranslated.

[37]Especially Baumgartner's study of the lament *Gattung* in relation to the confessions. Significantly less attention has been paid to the suggestion that the confessions are lawsuits.

Wimmer has championed the interpretation of the confessions as lawsuits--but even he did not attempt to show that the confessions followed a specific lawsuit *gattung*. Rather he took the view that they were examples of a more general "rib-pattern" which was multifaceted in its specific manifestations ("Prophetic Experience", 104-12). In taking this approach Wimmer largely follows B. Gemser, "The *Rib*- or Controversy-Pattern in Hebrew Mentality", Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East: Presented to Professor Harold Henry Rowley, VTSup 3, ed. M. Noth and D.W. Thomas. Leiden. E.J. Brill: 1960, 134-35. ("Prophetic Experience", 104-05).

-individualistically or corporately? If the confessions are in a *Gattung* that Jeremiah elsewhere uses only individualistically it is unlikely that they should be understood corporately.

Secondly, the insights of source criticism in Jeremiah need to be further utilised. Since S. Mowinckel's work in 1914 it has been common to speak of three main sources in Jeremiah: A--poetic oracles generally regarded as being authentic to Jeremiah; B--"biographical" material relating to Jeremiah's life; and, C--prose sermons. There is debate over the degree of continuity between the prose and poetic sections of the book and over the authenticity of the prose.[38] Nevertheless, Mowinckel's "three source" theory "continues to hold scholarship in thrall".[39] The exact

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[38]S. Mowinckel, Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremiah, (Kristiania: Dybwad, 1914), *passim*. A more easily accessible pioneer work which independently came to similar conclusions to Mowinckel is T.H. Robinson, "Baruch's Roll", ZAW 1 (1924), 209-221.

In more recent times the emphasis of some scholars has moved to the degree of continuity of tradition between the prose and poetic sections of the books (eg, T.R. Hobbs, "Some Remarks on the Composition and Structure of the Book of Jeremiah", Prophet to the Nations, 175-91; W.L. Holladay, "Prototype and Copies: A New Approach to the Poetry-Prose Problem of the Book of Jeremiah", JBL, 79 [1960], 351-67; *Idem*, "A Fresh Look at `Source B' and `Source C' in Jeremiah", Prophet to the Nations, 213-28); and, Overholt, "Continuity", 457-462).

[39]W. Brueggemann, "The 'Baruch Connection': Reflections on Jer 43:1-7", JBL 113 (1994), 405 cf M.J. Williams, "An Investigation of the Legitimacy of Source Distinctions for the Prose Material in Jeremiah", JBL 112 (1993), 193-94. At least, most scholars would agree that

nature of the prose sections of the book is open to considerable debate.[40] However, such debates do not have to be fully answered in order for us to examine this material in relation to the confessions.

If the confessions are exilic (or post-exilic) creations one could expect that they would have more in common, theologically and linguistically, with the prose material of the book than with the poetic sections. Is this in fact the case? It must be acknowledged that the confessions provide a very small sample of material. However, the sample (47 verses) is larger than some Old Testament books.[41] Making the comparisons here proposed may be difficult but it is not impossible.[42]

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the poetic sections of the book are more likely than the prose to go back to the prophet Jeremiah. For example, T.W. Overholt, "Remarks on the Continuity of the Jeremiah Tradition", JBL 91 (1972), 457-58; J. Bright, "The Date of the Prose Sermons of Jeremiah", Prophet to the Nations, 193-94; J.R. Lundbom, "Jeremiah, Book of," ABD, edited by D.N. Freedman (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 3: 709; J. Muilenburg, "Jeremiah the Prophet," IDB, 2: 824 (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1962); Thompson, Jeremiah, 35.

R.P. Carroll regards this position as being based on assumptions rather than evidence (Jeremiah, OTG, Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1989, 37).

[40]They are regarded as being either authentic to Jeremiah (so Thompson, Jeremiah, 46-47); the later product of his disciples (so Bright, "Prose Sermons", 205-06); or, the later product of the Deuteronomists (so Nicholson, Preaching, *passim*).

[41]For example, Haggai and Nahum. The confessions (taken as a whole) are only slightly shorter than Habakkuk or Zephaniah.

[42]This type of approach is not unprecedented.

Once these two basic tasks are completed one task remains. The question of the function of the confessions in the book of Jeremiah must be addressed.[43] The problem for many diachronic approaches is to describe how essentially private documents may have been incorporated into the public book of Jeremiah?[44] Is their role and

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Compare the efforts of A.G. Auld to trace the development of the concept of "prophet" in ancient Israel by examining the usage of the word in the poetic sections of Jeremiah, the prose sections of Jeremiah shared by the LXX and MT, and the prose sections unique to the MT ("Prophets Through the Looking Glass: Between Writings and Moses," JSOT 27 [1983], 6). Auld's article provoked responses by R.P. Carroll, H.G.M. Williamson and later, T.W. Overholt and H.M. Barstard. Only Carroll was positive in his response but none of the three challenged the legitimacy of searching for development in Jeremiah in the way Auld had attempted (R.P. Carroll, "Prophets not Poets: A Response to 'Prophets Through the Looking Glass'," JSOT 27 [1983], 25-31; H.G.M. Williamson, "A Response to A.G. Auld," JSOT 27 [1983], 33-39; T.W. Overholt, "Prophecy in History: The Social Reality of Intermediation," JSOT 48 [1990], 3-29; H.M. Barstad, "No Prophets? Recent Developments in Biblical Prophetic Research and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy". JSOT 57 [1993], 39-60 cf B. Vawter, "Were the Prophets *nabi's*?" Bib 66 [1985], 206-19). Auld responded to his critics in "Prophets Through the Looking Glass: A Response", JSOT 27 (1983), 41-44 and "Prophets in Books: A Rejoiner", JSOT 48 (1990), 31-32.

Though the *type* of approach is not unprecedented, the comprehensive attempt to analyse the theology of the two blocks of material in Jeremiah and to compare the results with the confessions has not been undertaken.

[43]M.S. Smith points out that scholars have been much better at isolating the confessions then in reintegrating them into the book again (The Laments of Jeremiah and Their Contexts: A Literary and Redactional Study of Jeremiah 11-20, SBLMS 42 [Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars. 1990], xiii).

[44]Reventlow solves this problem by insisting that the confessions were public (cultic) proclamations from the beginning (Liturgie, 205-57). This position has not won

function in the book different to their role and function in the life of Jeremiah?

Any study of the book of Jeremiah is complicated by text-critical issues. As part of the delimitation of this study we will focus primarily on the MT and utilize the LXX only as the need arises.[45]

This thesis consists of six chapters. The present chapter gives a history of research into the "I" of the confessions and an outline of the approach to be taken in the thesis. Chapter six gives a final summary and conclusion. The main body of the thesis is found in chapters two to five.

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support. There other scholars that argue that the confessions were essentially public utterances are Wimmer ("Prophetic Experience", 74-82); Berridge (Word of Yahweh, 157); and N. Ittmann (H.E. von Waldow, "Review of Die Konfessionen Jeremias: Ihre Bedeutung für die Verkündigung des Propheten, by N. Ittmann, WMANT 54 [Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1981", JBL 102 [1983], 473-75). This position would seem to be in a clear minority, however.

A similar problem exists with the book of Psalms although in not such an acute form.

[45]One might compare Floyd's suggestion (with reference to Jer 15:10-18) that in view of the wide ranging textual discrepancies "the MT and the LXX of Jeremiah have to be regarded not merely as manifestations of textual variance but as virtually distinct compositions" ("Prophetic Complaints", 408). Floyd also concentrates his attention on the MT.

Also relevant to this issue is D.L. Christensen's conclusion that it is impossible to get behind the MT and LXX to the autograph of Jeremiah. In his view these two text traditions represent the "living tradition of Jeremiah" reduced to written form in different communities at different times ("In Quest of the Autograph of the Book of Jeremiah: A Study of Jeremiah 25 in Relation to Jeremiah 46-51", JETS 33 [1990], 145-53).

In the second chapter the confessions are analysed from the point of view of the lawsuit *Gattung*. Jeremiah's use elsewhere of this *Gattung* is examined with a view to determine both his familiarity with it and whether it primarily has a corporate or individualistic reference. This analysis shows that Jeremiah is familiar with the lawsuit *Gattung* which he uses with corporate reference. However, the confessions do not fit into this *Gattung*.

The third chapter analyses the confessions in terms of the individual lament *Gattung*. Jeremiah's use elsewhere of this *Gattung* is examined as is the question of whether it primarily has a corporate or individualistic reference in his work. This analysis shows that the confessions are best understood as individual laments. Furthermore, Jeremiah elsewhere uses this *Gattung* with individualistic reference.

In the fourth chapter the theology and linguistic characteristics of the poetic oracles and the prose sermons will be separately analysed. Each will then be compared with the theology and linguistic characteristics of the confessions taken as a whole.

The aim of the chapter is to discover whether the confessions lie closest, theologically and linguistically, to the material most likely to come from Jeremiah or to the material least likely to have come

from him. If they are closer to the poetic oracles their "I" is most likely to be individualistic--Jeremiah himself. On the other hand if they are closer to the prose sermons the "I" is more likely to represent Israel and thus be a literary device. Analysis along these lines indicates that the poetic oracles are likely to arise from the ministry of Jeremiah and the prose sermons are more likely to have an exilic setting. The confessions are more closely related to the poetic material than to the prose.

Chapter five will look at the role and function of the confessions in the book of Jeremiah with a view of ascertaining reasons for the inclusion of this material in the book. This analysis shows that the confessions function in a more corporate way in their final setting in the book. Jeremiah becomes a representative figure and a paradigm. The juridical features of the confessions receive added emphasis and the confessions become an integral part of the explanation of the exile.

Two appendices are attached to the thesis. The first outlines the distribution of vocabulary in the confessions. The second surveys work that has been done in the book of Psalms relevant to the study of Jeremiah's confessions. It will look specifically at the identity of the "I" and the significance of judicial language in the Psalms.

The *Gattung* of the "Confessions" of Jeremiah: Lawsuits

Introduction

In order to determine the nature of the "I" of the confessions it is important to establish their *Gattung* and to discover how Jeremiah elsewhere uses that *Gattung*. Considerable work has been done on the first part of this task but less on the latter.

The dominant position regarding the *Gattung* of the confessions is that they are "laments of the individual".[1] A minority position is that they are "lawsuits"--even if somewhat tinged with "lament" features.[2] Other scholars see them as a hybrid of both *Gattungen* or as belonging to a unique *Gattung* of their own.[3]

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[1]Baumgartner, Jeremiah's Poems, passim; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1:359-60; Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 114-83; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 278; W. McKane, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark) 1: xcii-xcvii; O'Connor, Confessions, 3; Smith, Laments, xiii; J.G. McConville, Judgement and Promise: An Interpretation of the Book of Jeremiah (Apollos, Leicester: 1993), 63; K. Koch, The Prophets (London: SCM, 1983), 2: 38.

[2]Blank, "Confessions of Jeremiah", 331-54; Wimmer, "'Confessions of Jeremiah'", 393-406; Holladay, "Jeremiah's Lawsuit With God", 280-301; Gemser, "The *Rib*-Pattern," 134-35.

[3]For example, F. Ahuis understands the confessions to reflect various elements of specifically "prophetic laments" (See J.M. Berridge, "Review of Der klagende Gerichtsprophet: Studien zur Klage in der Überlieferung

Choosing between these options involves three steps: 1. outlining the features of the given *Gattung;* 2. determining the use of the given *Gattung* elsewhere in the book of Jeremiah--especially in the poetic parts of the book;[4] 3. comparing each confession with the *Gattung.*

With regard to step three a word of caution is necessary: it is unlikely and unnecessary for the confessions to fit perfectly into any *Gattung.*[5] Literary

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von den alttestamentlichen Gerischtspropheten, by Ferdinand Ahuis, Calwer Theologische Monographen, A 12 [Stuttgart: Calwer, 1982", JBL 103 (1984), 452-53. N. Ittman departs from the usual understandings of the *Gattung* of the confessions by denying that they exibit any unity of *Gattung,* (J.M. Berridge, "Review of Die Konfessionen Jeremias: Ihre Bedeutung für die Verkündigung des Propheten, by N. Ittmann, WMANT 54 [Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener-Verlag, 1981]", CBQ 45 [1983], 106-8; c.f., Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 22, 199).

Neither of these possibilities should be rejected without careful examination because Jeremiah does not always confine himself to established *Gattungen.* (Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 18).

[4]The poetic sections of Jeremiah are especially important for comparison purposes because the confessions are written in poetry (with occasional prose glosses) and because the dominant view among scholars is that the poetic sections of the book are the parts that are most likely to have originated with the "historical Jeremiah". (See above, chapter 1, pp. 13,14).

[5]Dennis McCarthy observes that "pure form is an abstraction and its discussion is fruitless" (Treaty and Covenant: A Study in Form in the Ancient Oriental Documents and in the Old Testament, Analectia Biblica 21, [Rome, Pontifical Biblical Institute: 1963], 9). Insistence on the need for a perfect fit to the pure *Gattung* pattern leads to what R.R. Wilson calls "overspecification". When this happens every passage that deviates in some way from the pure *Gattung* is assigned to a new generic type causing "a proliferation of genres, some of which depend on very meagre evidence." See, R.R. Wilson, "Form-Critical Investigations of the

Gattungen are being adapted and utilised by the prophets in new settings from that in which they originally served.[6] Kirsten Nielsen goes so far as to distinguish between the "formal" *Sitz im Leben* and the "actual" *Sitz im Leben* of various *Gattungen*. By the former she means the setting in which the *Gattung* originally developed; by

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Prophetic Literature: The Present Situation", Society of Biblical Literature 1973 Seminar Papers, edited by G. MacRae, (Cambridge, Mass.: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973), 1: 113.

John Berridge has shown that Jeremiah is particularly adept at modifying and individualising the various traditional *gattungen* that he uses. Indeed, this is a central thesis in his book, Prophet, People and the Word of Yahweh.

Thus the criticism of Jack Lundbom, (Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric, SBLDS 18, [Missoula, Mont.: Scholars, 1975], 9-13) that form criticism is an inadequate tool for use in studying Jeremiah because the *Gattungen* are not fully present, is unfair. He has faulted form criticism for not being able to do something that it does not claim to be able to do and never intended to do.

[6]According to G. Fohrer, failure to recognise this fact "leads to absurd conclusions" ("Modern Interpretation," 311). Gemser, describes such an approach as "hermeneutic `transubstantiation' or substantializing of metaphor into reality" ("*Rib*-Pattern", 128).

This point highlights the crucial weakness in Reventlow's thesis that the confessions should be read not as Jeremiah's personal experience but as examples of stereotypical temple liturgy as befitted their *Gattung*, (Liturgie, 205-57). He is attacked on methodological grounds by Berridge (Word of Yahweh, 18-19).

Whatever, the confessions are they certainly cannot be understood in terms of Jeremiah literally taking God to a law court--which is generally regarded as the original setting of the lawsuit *Gattung*. The compelling criticisms of Reventlow's thesis made by J. Bright and J.M. Berridge make it unlikely that the confessions were originally uttered in a temple cultic liturgy. See, J. Bright, "Jeremiah's Complaints", 189-214; Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 114-169.

the latter the setting in which the prophet utilised the *Gattung* in his proclamation and ministry.[7] With this distinction in mind consideration will now be given to the position that the confessions should be understood as examples of the law-suit *Gattung*.

What is the "Lawsuit" *Gattung*?[8]

Establishing a *Gattung* is a notoriously difficult undertaking. No generally accepted definition exists.[9]

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[7]K. Nielsen, Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge: An Investigation of the Prophetic Lawsuit (Rîb-Pattern), JSOTSS 9 (Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1978), 2-4. James Limburg found Nielsen's use of these terms "awkward" ("Review of Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge: An Investigation of the Prophetic Lawsuit (Rîb-Pattern), by K. Nielsen, JSOTSS 9 [Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1978]", CBQ 41 [1979], 635). However she has highlighted a vital (and often overlooked) distinction.

[8]The argument of Michael de Roche that "the terms `prophetic lawsuit' and `covenant lawsuit' should be abandoned" need not detain us here. His argument is not that the *Gattung* usually designated as a lawsuit does not exist. Rather, he is denying that it can formally be described as a lawsuit when Yahweh plays the roles of both plaintiff and judge, ("Yahweh's *Rîb* Against Israel: A Reassessment of the So-Called `Prophetic Lawsuit' in the Pre-exilic Prophets," JBL 102 [1983], 563-74).

D.R. Daniels suggests that the "covenant lawsuit" *Gattung* does not exist and that all examples of it can be better understood as examples of other established *Gattungen*, including "prophecy (of disaster)" and "priestly torah" ("Is There a `Prophetic Lawsuit' Genre", ZAW 99 [1987], 339-60.) However, A. Schoors gives the matter a thorough analysis and concludes that covenant lawsuit "is a real genre, with its proper style, *topoi*, and terminology and with well-defined subgenres" (I Am God Your Saviour: A Form-Critical Study of the Main Genres in Is. XL-LV, VTSup 24, [Leiden, E.J. Brill: 1973], 185.)

[9]Daniels, "Prophetic Lawsuit", 340

Gattung is usually "established" by analysing the complex interplay of structure, content and setting.[10] These are the factors that will now be examined.

The Structure of the "Pure" Lawsuit *Gattung*

The use of form criticism as a tool in Old Testament studies goes back to the work of Herman Gunkel. His description of the lawsuit *Gattung* is summarised by Herbert Huffmon as outlined, below:

I. A description of the scene of judgement
II. The speech of the plaintiff
    A. Heaven and earth are appointed judges
    B. Summons to the defendant or judges
    C. Address in the second person to the defendant
        1. Accusation in question and answer form to the defendant
        2. Refutation of the defendant's possible arguments
        3. Specific indictment.[11]

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[10]R. Knierim, "Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered", Int 27 (1973), 435-68. McCarthy highlights the dangers of attempting to determine *Gattung* solely on the basis of structure by pointing out that all written documents follow the structural form of "Introduction, Body and Conclusion!" (Treaty and Covenant, 9.)

[11]H.B. Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets", JBL 78 (1959), 285. Huffmon outlines an alternative form which is irrelevant to our purposes because it is based almost exclusively on Ps 82 ("Lawsuit", 286 cf G.E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of God: A Form-Critical Study of Deuteronomy 32", Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg, edited by B.W. Anderson and W. Harrelson [New York: Harper and Row, 1962], 43).

The Content of the Lawsuit *Gattung*

Gemser and McKenzie suggest a number of terms that are typical of a lawsuit.[12]

The most important of these is רִיב. The exact provenance of the term רִיב is disputed. Gunkel (and many subsequent scholars) have seen the term as originating in secular law courts.[13] Other scholars have argued for a cultic setting.[14] More recently, an original setting in international treaty forms has been proposed.[15] The conclusion of Kirsten Nielsen appears to be correct: there is a basic lawsuit pattern which has been adapted

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[12]Gemser, "Rib-Pattern", 122-25. See also D.A. McKenzie, "Judicial Procedure at the Town Gate", VT 14 (1964), 100-04.

[13]Daniels, "Prophetic Lawsuit", 339-40. Arguably, "secular" is an inappropriate word to use for any aspect of the integrated ancient Israelite world. It is used here in a way analogous to R. E. Clement's distinction between "cultic" (ie, an integral part of the cult proper) and "non-cultic" (ie, an aspect of society and/or culture which functions outside of the cult as such). See, R.E. Clements, Prophecy and Covenant, SBT 43, (London: SCM, 1965), 32. Such "secular" lawsuits were traditionally conducted at the city gate, although in the monarchical period the Royal court became the venue for some suits. For a description of legal proceedings at the city gate see, McKenzie, "Judicial Procedure", 100-04.

[14]E. Würthwein, "Amos Studien", ZAW, 62 (1950), 10-52.

[15]Huffmon, "Covenant Lawsuit", 289-95; Wright, "Lawsuit of God", 53; J. Harvey, "Le `Rib-Pattern': Requisitorire prophetiques sur la rupture de l'Alliance", Biblica 43 (1962), 172-96; D.R. Hillers, Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets, Biblica et Orientalia 16 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964), 5.

to international treaty matters and local disputes and, hypothetically to cultic lawsuits. It is thus futile to try and choose one original setting from among these three options.[16]

Similar diversity of opinion exists with regard to the meaning of the term. The Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon gives the basic meaning of the verb as "strive, contend" and of the noun as "strife, dispute".[17] Other scholars have a much narrower understanding of the word's meaning (e.g., accusation, allegation, litigation) specifically tied in with a judicial setting.[18]

The other key words suggested by Gemser and McKenzie include: מִשְׁפָּט, ("judgement"), שָׁפַט,[19] ("judge, govern, judgement"), עֵד, ("witness"), צַדִּיק, ("righteous, just"),

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[16]Nielsen, Prosecutor and Judge, 40.

[17]F. Brown, S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907; corrected reprint, 1977), s.v. רִיב.

[18]J. Limburg, "The Root רִיב and the Prophetic Lawsuit Speeches," JBL 88 (1969), 292. Eiji Suganuma sees a distict turning point from a more general understanding of the word (eg "expostulate") to a more specific meaning (eg "accuse) with the publication of J. Begrich's Studien zu Deuterojesaja (BWANT 4) in 1938 ("The Covenant *Rib* Form in Jeremiah Chapter 2--A Form-Critical Study", Journal of the College of Dairy Agriculture 4 (1972), 123-25.

[19]The primary meaning of שפט is clearly judicial. It "included all the actions which accompanied a primitive lawsuit. (J. van der Ploeg, "Shaphat et Mishpat", OTS, 2 [1945], 146 as cited in McKenzie, "Judicial Procedure", 101.

הָרָשָׁע, ("the guilty"), רָשָׁע, ("wicked, criminal"), אָשֵׁם, ("guilty").[20]

The Function of a Lawsuit

The function of a lawsuit is the resolution of conflict between two parties with the arbitration of a third. McKenzie put it this way: "A lawsuit took place when two disputants presented themselves before the competent authority, each one to claim his right".[21] In the Old Testament when God is a party to a lawsuit he generally plays the roles of "prosecutor and judge".[22] This is due to the nature of Israel's covenant and her monotheistic faith.[23] If the confessions of Jeremiah are

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[20]Gemser, "*Rib*-Pattern", 123; McKenzie, "Judicial Procedure", 101-02.

[21]McKenzie, "Judicial Procedure", 101.

[22]The role of prosecutor can be assumed by the prophet standing as Yahweh's representative. The role of judge may be taken by others. For example, in the "song of the vineyard" of Isaiah 5 the men of Israel are called to judge (Isa 5:3). However, the actual judgement is rendered by Yahweh (Isa 5:5-7). Furthermore, this passage can scarcely be considered as a lawsuit: songs are not a typical feature of legal proceedings. Nor is it usual for the accused to be asked to pass judgement on himself. R.E. Clement observes that the songs "prophetic form is not entirely clear and has occasioned considerable discussion (Isaiah 1-39, New Century Bible [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987], 56). He concludes that it should be regarded as a parable which utilizes a love song (p. 57).

[23]Wright, "Lawsuit of God", 46-47; Huffmon, "Covenant Lawsuit", 293; Nielsen, Prosecutor and Judge, 74-83. de Roche uses this as a major argument for abandoning the designation "lawsuit". He insists that a lawsuit must have three key figures: a plaintiff, a defendant and a

to be considered "lawsuits", then Yahweh plays the role of defendant in them!

Does Jeremiah Use the Lawsuit *Gattung*?

Since רִיב is the most important term in lawsuits we will examine those passages in Jeremiah where this word occurs.[24] This root occurs thirteen times in nine verses in Jeremiah.[25] Of these thirteen occurrences six are nouns.[26] The four uses of the word in the confessions will be dealt with in the next section. The examination of the remaining nine passages begins with Jer 2:4-13.

Jeremiah 2:4-13

It is widely recognised that one of the clearest examples of the lawsuit *Gattung* occurs in Jeremiah 2:4-

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judge. (See, de Roche, "Yahweh's *Rîb*", 569-72).

[24]Using רִיב as our key generic indicator safeguards us from overgeneralising the *Gattung*. As R. North points out Jeremiah contains a number of Yahweh's indictments against Israel which are lacking the word רִיב "or other courtroom trappings" ("Angel-Prophet or Satan-Prophet?", ZAW 82 [1970], 54.)

[25]Jer 2:9 (two times); 2:29; 11:20; 12:1; 15:10; 20:12; 25:31; 50:34 (three times); 51:36 (two times).

[26]Jer 11:20; 15:10; 20:12; 25:31; 50:34 (one); 51:36 (one).

13.[27] Evidence derived from structure content and function support this identification.

Structure

The structure of the passage may be outlined as follows:

1. Summons to Accused (v. 4)
2. Address to the defendant in second person. (v. 5-11)
   a. Accusation in question and answer form. (v. 5)
   b. Refutation of possible defence arguments (v. 6-8)
   c. Appeal to the heavens (to be appalled) (v. [9-11]-12).
   d. Reiteration of Accusation (v. 13)

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[27]Harvey, "*Rîb*-Pattern", 188; Huffmon, "Covenant Lawsuit", 287-89; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 73-75; Thompson, Jeremiah, 159; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 25-28.

McKane does not describe the passage as a lawsuit but his discussion of it is replete with judicial language, eg the titles and subtitles in his discussion include, "The Case Against Israel", "The First Count of the Indictment", "Yahweh Presses His Charges Against Israel" (Jeremiah 1: 30-33). Surprisingly, Nielsen does not include this passage in her otherwise comprehensive survey of the lawsuit *Gattung*. (Prosecutor and Judge, *passim*).

Suganuma argues that the whole of Jer 2 is in the form of a lawsuit ("Covenant *Rib* Form", 125-128). However, he also agrees with Bright (Jeremiah, 18) that the chapter is a collection of originally independent poems which have the *rib* theme in common ("Covenant *Rib* Form", 127). Thus correct procedure would appear to be to examine the smaller units for the lawsuit *Gattung*.

Daniels lists this passage as one that is usually seen as a lawsuit, although he regards it as a "prophecy" (of disaster), ("Prophetic Lawsuit", 343-45). Carroll denies that this passage is a "lawsuit". He argues that there are no grounds for introducing the notion of the covenant (which he evidently regards as a prerequisite for a lawsuit) into the text, (Jeremiah, 123).

Huffmon admits that the lawsuit components are somewhat out of order in this passage.[28] There is no description of the judgement scene. However, all the elements of the prosecutor's speech are present. The parallels are clearly sufficient to warrant the conclusion that Jeremiah 2:4-13 is structured as a lawsuit.

Content

Most of the typical lawsuit vocabulary is missing.[29] However, רִיב occurs twice in verbal form in verse 9.[30] In the context of the passage the word indicates "the unfolding of a charge against Israel"[31]. Carroll suggests the word should here be translated "quarrel".[32] However, the NRSV's "accuse" would appear to be more correct.[33]

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[28]Huffmon, "Covenant Lawsuit", 288.

[29]The word אָשְׁמוּ ("were held guilty") occurs in the immediate context of this pericope (Jer 2:3) but it does not affirm Israel's guilt. Rather, as God outlines his graciousness to Israel he points out that he held all who harmed her, as guilty!

[30]In both cases it is a Qal imperfect.

[31]McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 33.

[32]Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 123.

[33]cf Holladay, Jeremiah, 1:90. Limburg suggests that "make a complaint against" is the correct translation in this setting. See, Limburg, "Root רִיב", 301.
There are four interrelated strands of evidence supporting a translation of רִיב by a legal term:

1. The context in which the word is embedded is structured in the form of a lawsuit (see previous section;
2. The parallel with verse 5 suggests that two public actions by God are in view: the exodus/conquest in verse 5 and a lawsuit which

The use of רִיב suggests that a lawsuit *Gattung* is indeed being employed.[34]

Function

The function of the passage fits with a lawsuit *Gattung*. Verse 4 indicates that Israel has found fault with God. Her unreasonableness in so doing is outlined in verses 5-8. Specific countercharges are brought in verses 10-11, 13. The dispute is "public" (v. 12--the appeal to the heavens).

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will culminate a verdict of expulsion from the land in verse 9 (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 89-90);

3. The use of עֹד ("once more") to introduce verse 9 may point to God's previous lawsuit against the Northern kingdom which culminated in the fall of Samaria (thus Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 89). The alternative view which sees the presence of the word in this passage as evidence that it has been reworded to fit a second occasion in Jeremiah's ministry flounders on the fact that the text (בְּנֵי בְנֵיכֶם, "your children's children") clearly refers to "'descendants' and not 'the next generation'" (McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 33);
4. The passage contains echos of the decalogue (covenant law) which increases it jucical tone. The word תּוֹרָה ("law") is used in verse 8. References of serving other gods (v. 11, 13) as well as worshiping idols (v. 5, 11) point to the first two commandments. The declaration that God's רִיב extends across generations echos the declaration found in the decalogue that punishment for breaking the commandments will be extended even "to the third and fourth generation" (Ex 20:5; Deut 5:9), (Jones, Jeremiah, 84). Significantly, in the decalogue this declaration is attached to the prohibition against idolatry.

[34]Compare the comments of Thompson who seems to base his conclusion exclusively on this argument: "The root of the verb is רִיב. The use of this verb suggests that ch. 2 may contain a hidden covenant lawsuit." (Jeremiah, 169.)

Assessment

The structure, content and fuction of Jer 2:4-13 is clearly suggestive of the lawsuit *Gattung*. The writer has not followed the pattern slavishly but he has used it as his primary model.

Jeremiah 2:29

Jeremiah 2:29 stands at the beginning of a pericope variously understood to conclude with verses 32 or 37.[35] The thought of the verse is that Israel has made an unjustified רִיב against Yahweh, who, in reality has ground for complaint against Israel.[36] Discussion of this verse is complicated by the difference manifest here between the MT and the LXX. The opening line in the LXX is longer: ἵνα τί λαλεῖτε πρός με; ("Why do you speak to me?").[37] This reading implies an underlying Hebrew text with תְּדַבְּרוּ

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[35]Carroll (Jeremiah, OTL, 136), Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard (Jeremiah 1-25, 39) and Bright (Jeremiah, 18) agree that verse 32 concludes this pericope. McKane (Jeremiah, 1: 49-53) and Thompson (Jeremiah, 181-82) extend the pericope to verse 37. The grammatical change in number from second masculine plural (vvs. 29-32) to second feminine singular (vvs. 33-37) suggest that there are two originally independent pericopes here although it is possible that "the more general plural has become pointed as a second singular", (Thompson, Jeremiah, 184).

[36]The complaint is brought before Yahweh and concerns him. He is both accused and judge, (Limburg, "ריב", 302).

[37]Holladay's translation, (Jeremiah, 1: 55).

("you speak") rather than the MT's תָּרִיבוּ ("do you complain").[38]

The structure of the entire pericope suggests a juridical setting:

A. Introductory question: Israel's suit with God (v. 29)
B. Defence speech by God (v. 30-31)
   1. his vain attempts to restore Israel (v. 30)
   2. request for evidence of his fault (v. 31)
C. Countercharge against Israel (v. 32)

Thus the pericope suggests a *Sitz im Leben* of the courtroom, although it is not in a lawsuit *Gattung* as described above.[39] Verses 33-37 also develop the theme of

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[38]Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard Jeremiah 1-25, 40. Reversion of the LXX to the underlying Hebrew is an inexact science and any reconstructions must remain hypothetical. For a treatment of the risks and limitations inherent in the procedure see S. Soderlund, The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis, JSOTSS 47, (Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1985), 197.

The question of which reading is the more correct is difficult to decide. Holladay considers the variation to have arisen through haplography and restores the LXX reading in addition to the MT reading, leading to his translation: "Why do you speak against me, why argue with me?" (Jeremiah 1: 55). On the other hand, McKane regards this as an "unnatural" argument and accepts the LXX reading as original (Jeremiah 1: 50). However, most commentators appear to accept the MT reading (See, for example, Thompson, Jeremiah, 181-82; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 40; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 136-37).

[39]See above, p. 23. Carroll suggests that the passage has a closer relationship with the community lament than with the lawsuit (Jeremiah, OTL, 137). However, his suggestion is not likely.

God's accusation of Israel.[40] Nevertheless, the joining of the two passages appears to be secondary.[41] There are numerous points of contact between the first half of this passage (vvs. 29-32) and Jer 2:4-13 leading Craigie to suggest that they are surviving fragments of an original oracle that was much larger.[42] When Yahweh presents his suit against Israel in Jer 2:4-13, Israel considers filing a countersuit against God (Jer 2:29).[43] The rest of the passage outlines the groundlessness of such an action and reaffirms the rightness of God's action.[44]

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[40]This pericope contains other juridical language--particularly נִשְׁפָּט ("bringing to judgement") in verse 35--which is "virtually identical with רִיב אֶל ["complain against"]" in verse 29, (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 111). Actually, "the entire chapter is dominated by this theme" (Thompson, Jeremiah, 159). The legal language and imagery is no doubt used "to create insight and self-awareness" among the people (Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 46).

[41]Bright, Jeremiah, 18.

[42]Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 40. The connections between the two passages are grammatical (use of second person suffixes), lexical (both use רִיב and מִדְבָּר ["wilderness"]) and thematic (both are concerned with the breakdown of the covenant relationship between Israel and Yahweh).

[43]The very proposal of a countersuit constitutes a rebellion (c.f., פָּשְׁעוּתָם ["rebelled"], v. 29) against God--which is the essence of God's suit against Israel!

[44]Bright, Jeremiah, 16.

Jeremiah 25:31

The pericope of which this verse forms part does not fit the lawsuit *Gattung*.[45] Rather it is a prophetic announcement of a coming lawsuit.[46] This passage does not demonstrate Jeremiah's use of the lawsuit *Gattung*, but it suggests his familiarity with it.

Jeremiah 50:34

The last two uses Jeremiah makes of רִיב (outside the confessions) are both found in the oracle against Babylon. Oracles against the nations are a common feature of the pre-exilic prophetic books.[47] Indeed, they

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[45]The precise limits of the pericope are disputed by scholars. Holladay sees it as stretching from verse 30 to verse 38 (Jeremiah, 1:678). McKane concurs but insists on the secondary nature of verse 33 (Jeremiah, 1:651). Thompson supports this view--although he only concedes the possibility that verse 33 is a gloss (Jeremiah, 518-20). Hyatt also concurs--although he feels that verses 32 and 33 are secondary ("Jeremiah", 1004). Bright sees verse 30 and 31 as forming a separate poem (Jeremiah, 164). Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard agree with Bright's assessment (Jeremiah 1-25, 372-76).

[46]Carroll translates רִיב as "quarrel" and argues that there is "no necessary connection with a covenant lawsuit" (Jeremiah, OTL, 505). However, the presence of נִשְׁפָּט ("entering into judgement") in the same verse suggest otherwise. McKane's comments summarise the situation well: "Yahweh stentorian summons reaches to the ends of the earth: he has allegations to make against the nations and he summons them to court in order that he may bring forward evidence which will establish their guilt..." (Jeremiah 1: 649-50).

[47]Gene Tucker refers to their "ubiquity in the prophetic books" but observes that they have not generated a corresponding amount of scholarly attention ("Prophecy and Prophetic Literature", The Hebrew Bible and its Modern Interpreters, ed. D.A. Knight and G.M.

are considered by some scholars to be one of the oldest forms of prophetic writing.[48] Thomas G. Smothers considers that they are written in the form of covenant lawsuits (at least in Jeremiah).[49]

Anyone studying Jeremiah's oracles against the nations is immediately confronted with an array of intractable problems.[50] A detailed study of this material would take us far from our immediate concerns. We must suffice with addressing the question of the *Gattung* of the oracle against Babylon.

Tucker [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985], 340).

[48]For example, R.E. Clements, Jeremiah, (Atlanta Ga.: John Knox, 1988), 260. Herman Gunkel considers the oracles against the nations to be the sole original (non-borrowed) prophetic *Gattung*, ("Israelite Prophecy from the Time of Amos", Twentieth Century Theology in the Making: Vol. 1: Themes of Biblical Theology, ed J. Pelikan [New York: Harper and Row, 1969], 48-75). This view is extensively critiqued by C. Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech (Louisville, Ken.: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 24-27. However, the fact that there are parallels among the prophetic documents from Mari may support Gunkel's conclusion. See, Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 751.

[49]T.G. Smothers, "A Lawsuit Against the Nations: Reflections on the Oracles Against the Nations in Jeremiah", RevExp 85 (1988), 545-54. It should be noted that neither Nielsen or Huffmon deal with these oracles in their examination of the lawsuit *Gattung*.

[50]For example, the placement of the oracles constitutes one of the key text-critical problems of the book of Jeremiah. Furthermore the unity of the collection is frequently challenged. The relationship of the oracle against Babylon in particular to the rest of Jeremiah is also a vexing problem (Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 312-14).

The oracle against Babylon is by far the longest of Jeremiah's oracles against the nations.[51] Considerable divergence is found in discussions of the unity and structure of this material.[52] However, the majority of scholars agree that Jer 50:33-34 forms a discrete unit.[53] The question of the authenticity of the passage (and the oracle against Babylon generally) is also vigorously

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[51]Duane L. Christensen points out that it takes up 110 verses in the MT whereas all the rest of Jeremiah's oracles against the nations take up only 121 verses (Transformations of the War Oracle in Old Testament Prophecy, Harvard Dissertations in Religion 3 [Missoula, Mont.: Scholars, 1975], 249).

[52]It is generally acknowledged that the oracle consists of a series of poems which were originally independent. A good survey of the discussion can be found in G.L. Keown, P.J. Scalise and T.G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52, Word Biblical Commentary 27 (Dallas, Tex., Word: 1995), 357-364.

[53]Keown, Scalise, Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52, 361; Christensen, War Oracle, 258; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 830; Thompson, Jeremiah, 743; D.R. Jones, Jeremiah, New Century Bible (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich.: 1992), 522; K.T. Aitken, "The Oracles Against Babylon in Jeremiah 50-51: Structure and Perspectives", TynBul 35 (1984), 40. A significant minority position is that a new unit begins with verse 34 (although there is no unity regarding the proposed end of the unit). This position is taken by Bright, Jeremiah, 350-51, who sees the unit as consisting of Jer 50:34-40 and Holladay, Jeremiah 2: 414, who extends that unit to verse 44. The majority position appears to be correct as verses 33 and 34 are bound together by "contrastive repetition and play on the root חזק ["strong"]" (Aitken, "Oracle Against Babylon", 42). Jones tentatively suggests that these verses may form a prose island in a sea of poetry (Jones, Jeremiah, 522). None of this speculation negates the possibility of these two verses being closely associated with the unit which follows, and indeed this link is affirmed by some scholars who see them as a unit, (eg Aitken, and Christensen).

debated.[54] However, Holladay's recent thorough analysis favours the authenticity of some eighty percent of the oracle, including verses 33-40.[55]

Neither Jer 50:33-34 nor the longer poetic passage it introduces (Jer 50:33-40) is structurally a lawsuit *Gattung*. Apart from the use of the root ריב three times, in differing forms, in verse 34 (רִיב יָרִיב אֶת־רִיבָם, "He will surely plead their cause") the passage is not typified by the vocabulary of a lawsuit.[56] However, the use of גֹּאֲלָם ("Their Redeemer") does suggest a legal background to the passage.[57] Rather than describing a lawsuit, these verses

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[54]Even Bright who is generally quite conservative in his judgements concludes that the oracle against Babylon (Jer 50-51) consists mainly of originally anonymous poems (Jeremiah, 359).

[55]Holladay, Jeremiah, 2:402-411, especially 404. Similar conclusions are reached by Christensen, War Oracle, 276-279.

[56]The three-fold use of ריב, however, is "legal terminology" (W. McKane, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996], 2: 1285). W. Brueggemann also recognises the judicial background of this verse: "The Redeemer goes to court to secure the right of the one illicitly held captive," (Jeremiah 26-52: To Build, To Plant, International Theological Commentary [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991], 267). Nicholson links this passage back to the lawsuit in Jer 2 and notes that "the imagery is of a strong and successful counsel for the defence in a court case", (E.W. Nicholson, Jeremiah 26-52, Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975], 209-10).

[57]With specific reference to Jer 50:34, McKane declares that "however that word [גאל, redeemer] is translated the function assigned to him is that of fighting their case as an advocate would in a law-court" (Jeremiah, 2: 1285). He goes so far as to suggest that

assure Israel of a victorious outcome and the following verses (vv. 35-40) summarise the verdict that issues from the suit.

Jeremiah 50:34, like Jer 2:29 and 25:31, does not demonstrate Jeremiah's use of the lawsuit *Gattung* but does suggest his familiarity with it. We may now examine

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גאל should here be translated "advocate" (p. 1286).

Numerous other scholars have recognised the responsibility of the גאל ("redeemer") to ensure that מִשְׁפָּט ("justice") was maintained or restored for people in his care. H. Ringgren describes the גאל as "a man's brother, uncle, cousin, or some other kinsman who is responsible for standing up for him and maintaining his rights" (H. Ringgren, "גאל *ga'al; גאל go'el; גְּאֻלָּה g^{e}'ullah*", TDOT ed G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren [Grand Rapids, Mich. Eerdmans: 1975], 2: 351). A specific "legal" role for the גאל was that of "blood avenger" (R.C. Denton, "Redeem, Redeemer, Redemption", IDB ed. G.A. Buttrick, [Nashville, Tenn., Abingdon: 1965], 2: 22).

There is neither legislation nor narrative dealing with the role of the גאל ("redeemer") in lawsuits but in a number of places the term is metaphorically applied to Yahweh in legal contexts. J. Unterman declares the "God redeems (*g'l*) by prosecuting (Heb *ryb*) enemies ..." (J. Unterman, "Redemption [OT]", ABD 5: 652 [New York: Doubleday, 1992)]; cf D.J.A. Clines, Job 1-20, Word Biblical Commentary 17, [Dallas, Tex., Word: 1989], 459).

In Prov 23:11 Yahweh is declared to be the גאל of the fatherless and widows who pleads their cause (ריב) and in Job 19:25, Job expresses confidence that his גאל ("redeemer") is alive and clearly anticipates his help in a lawsuit to establish his own innocence, (Ringgren, "גאל", 353,355). גאל ("redeemer") is also associated with ריב in Lam 3:58 and Ps 119:154. H-J. Kraus' comments on the latter passage are informative: "Typical forms of a lament are determinative in vv. 153ff. The petitioner is involved in a court case (v. 154) against the ungodly and is sure of Yahweh's help (vv, 155f.). Self-description and a solemn affirmation of love for Yahweh's Torah are the sure foundation for the petition advanced in v. 159b." (Psalms 60-150: A Commentary [Minneapolis, Min., Augsburg: 1989], 419).

Thus the use of גאל ("redeemer") as evidence of a law suit background for Jer 50:34 is justified.

the other pericope using רִיב in the oracle against Babylon--Jeremiah 51:36.

Jeremiah 51:36

The precise limits of the pericope of which Jer 51:36 is part are disputed. However the majority view seems to be that this verse forms a unit with the next verse (v. 37), a unit which in turn is part of a larger "cluster" found in verses 34 to 44.[58]

Neither the smaller unit (vv. 36-37) nor the larger cluster (vv. 34-44) is structured as a lawsuit. However, there are clearly elements of legal process alluded to throughout the cluster. Verse 34 is a statement of accusation against Babylon.[59] Verse 35 presents an appeal

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[58]Aitken, "Oracles Against Babylon", 50; Keown, Scalise, Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52, 361; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 847, Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 414. Dissenters from this view include Christensen who sees verses 36-40 as a discrete sub-unit of a section stretching from verses 25-40 (War Oracle, 270-71). C.L. Feinberg makes no attempt to subdivide the unit stretching from verse 34-44, ("Jeremiah", The Expositor's Bible Commentary, edited by F.E. Gaebelein [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1986], 683-84). Jones sees verses 34-40 as a unit, (Jeremiah, 523).

[59]Brueggemann adopts legal categories to express the meaning of the cluster. He describes Jer 50:34-35 as an "indictment", which "constitutes a lament concerning Babylon's maltreatment of Jerusalem". Nebuchadnezzar is the "perpetrator" who has incurred "bloodguilt". He describes verses 36 to 40 as the "juridical sentence". (To Built, To Plant, 275-276). In using such language, Brueggemann seems to have appropriately translated the meaning intended by Jeremiah into modern idiom.

to the judge for vindication and vengeance.[60] Verse 36 contains the Lord's assurance that he will defend Israel in this case (בִּיר) and that vengeance will be effected in the manner described in verses 36b-44. Thus we may conclude that while Jeremiah has not used the lawsuit *Gattung* here he does show familiarity with it.

Evaluation

Jeremiah's clearest use of the lawsuit *gattung* is Jer 2:4-13. There are no other explicit uses of the *Gattung* in the book of Jeremiah. However, legal processes are at the heart of many other passages in the book.[61] It is significant that Jer 2:4-13 clearly has corporate reference. So do *all* the other passages that appear to show legal processes as part of their background.

It is clear that Jeremiah was familiar with the law and legal process. It is therefore not unlikely that he may have used the lawsuit *Gattung* in writing his "confessions". If he did so a corporate interpretation

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[60]The appeal is couched in legal language similar to Lev 20:9-27. See, Keown, Scalise and Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52, 371.

[61]The role the legal processes play varies from passage to passage: Jer 2:29-32 deals with the groundlessness of Israel's proposed countersuit against God; Jer 25:31 announces a coming lawsuit; and Jer 25:31-34 assures Israel of victory in her suit against Babylon. Only in Jer 51:34-44 is the judicial background more general.

would certainly be appropriate for these passages. The question of whether or not the confessions are lawsuits will now be addressed.

Are the Confessions "Lawsuits"?

Almost half of the uses Jeremiah makes of the word רִיב are found in the confessions. This fact, along with the writer's obvious familiarity with legal process suggests that the confessions may be examples of the lawsuit *Gattung*. The only way to establish whether this is in fact correct is to examine each of the confessions and to compare each of them with the lawsuit *Gattung*.

Jeremiah 11:18-23[62]

Like so much of Jeremiah this pericope is not structured as a lawsuit but clearly has a legal background. Verse 19 contains an accusation against the opponents of Jeremiah.[63] This fact is made especially

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[62]This confession (along with several other confessions) has been the subject of frequent attempted reconstructions and textual re-orderings which are summarised in O'Conner, Confessions, 12-15. However, two recent studies of the confessions have persuasively argued against such hypothetical reconstructions in any of the confessions (See O'Conner, Confessions, 15-23; Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 22-28). Other recent commentaries (eg McKane, Holladay, Carroll) and monographs (eg Smith, Laments) have manifest a strong disinclination to rearrange the text. Consequently, the text as it reads is here regarded as essentially correct.

[63]W. Brueggemann, Jeremiah 1-25: To Pluck Up, To Tear Down, International Theological Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich., Eerdmans: 1988), 110.

clear by the heavy use of legal terminology in verse 20[64]--שֹׁפֵט ("judge"), צֶדֶק ("righteously"), נְקָמָה ("retribution"),[65] רִיב ("my cause").[66] This verse serves as Jeremiah's petition or appeal to the court.[67] Verses 21-23 serve as the promise[68] of a favourable verdict from the court with a two-fold use of the root פקד ("punish, punishment").[69]

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[64]Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 111. Commenting on the vocabulary, McKane declares that the "forensic character of the entire representation is clear." However, he omits נְקָמָה ("your retribution") from his list of "forensic" words, (Jeremiah 1: 258).

[65]Jones points out that vengeance "is quite simply the satisfaction of strict justice" (Jeremiah, 188).

[66]O'Conner's comments are relevant to our investigation: "Jeremiah's petition for vengeance (אֶרְאֶה נְקָמָתְךָ, ["let me see your retribution"]) upon his enemies is expressed in *lawsuit language*, (Confessions, 16 [emphasis added]; cf Jones, Jeremiah, 189).

[67]Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 110.

[68]Brueggemann goes further than this when he writes, "The *divine response* indicates that the court of Yahweh *has* [emphasis added] heard and accepted the claim of the speaker as a righteous one. The response of Yahweh is a court verdict". He goes one to describe the content of verses 22-23 as the "sentence" (Pluck Up, Tear Down, 111).

[69]Carroll stresses the Deuternomic character of these verses (Jeremiah, OTL, 281). Blank suggests that the background in the law code for this passage is Deut 19:16-19, which specifies that false witnesses should suffer the same fate as they had intended for the accused, ("Confessions", 333). This position is rejected by Diamond who argues that the two passages "sustain no material connections" beyond "the common sharing of the general principle of *lex talionis*. Their immediate connection is remote", (Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 24).

Brueggemann points out that the background for the sentence is the "covenant curses". (Pluck Up, Tear Down, 112. The general nature of these curses (see Deut 28) makes it difficult to assess the significance of such

Thus although this pericope is not structurally a lawsuit *Gattung*, it is remarkably legal in content.

Jeremiah 12:1-6

The legal background of the second confession is clearer than that of the first.[70] The opening verse explicitly evokes images of the law court.[71] Jeremiah declares his intention of bringing his "charge" (רִיב) against God.[72] He acknowledges the righteousness (צַדִּיק) of God[73] but is concerned about the prosperity of the guilty (רְשָׁעִים) and wishes to discuss מִשְׁפָּטִים ("my case", lit. "judgements") with God.[74] The charge is developed in

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apparant parallels. For example Hillers sees the parallels as very significant (Treaty-Curses, passim). However, R.E. Clements is much more cautious in his evaluation (Prophecy and Tradition, [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975], 16-17).

[70]Even Carroll refers to "forensic as well as lament overtones", (Jeremiah, OTL, 284).

[71]McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 261.

[72]He also acknowledges the hopelessness of winning such a case against God, (Bright, Jeremiah, 86).

[73]Cf שֹׁפֵט צֶדֶק ("judge righteously") in Jer 11:20.

[74]Brueggemann comments: "This complaint is a serious suit filed by a righteous petitioner to a righteous judge. The two of them, so the poem claims, should agree about the accused wicked, who surely must be judged" (Puck Up, Tear Down, 113).

Baumgartner and McKane point out that the phrase את דבר משפטים ("I will utter my judgements against them"; "I who speak in judgement against them") is elsewhere used by Jeremiah (1:16; 4:12) to refer to the activities of God as judge, (Poems, 65; Jeremiah 1: 261). Here the phrase is used against God.

detail in verses 2-4.[75] Verses 5-6 portray the dismissal of the charges by the judge.[76]

It is difficult to see that Jer 12:1-6 fits formally into the lawsuit *Gattung*. However, it seems that fragments of this *Gattung* have been woven together in a new and creative way.

Jeremiah 15:10-14[77]

The third lament contains little evidence of a lawsuit background for the confessions.[78] Verse 10 begins

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[75]McKane points out the close affinities of Jer 12:3 with Jer 11:20, the verse in the first confession with the heaviest concentration of legal language and imagery (Jeremiah, 1:254). Brueggemann describes Jer 12:4 as being "in the form of a complaint, designed to support the charge of guilt already asserted" (Pluck Up, Tear Down, 113).

[76]Note McKane's helpful comment: "Jeremiah earns no sympathy from Yahweh and is advised that the apparent unevenness of Yahweh's justice, of which he has complained, is no more than a pin-prick in comparison with the strains and pressures which he will have to withstand in the future", (Jeremiah, 1: 263).

[77]The text of this passage is badly preserved in places which has encouraged a plethora of competing hypothetical reconstructions. Carroll's comments are very wise: "Such a wide divergency of opinion on how the text should be translated must encourage the exegete to be modest in advocating any particular line of interpretation", (Jeremiah, OTL, 325).

[78]In the opening half verse there are two words which may have some legal background, viz., רִיב and מָדוֹן ("contention"). Bright declares that both words indicate that "Jeremiah is like one who is perpetually at law with his people", (Jeremiah, 109; cf Feinberg, "Jeremiah", 475). However, this line of thought is not developed in this confession. Furthermore, Bright's linguistic evidence is disputed (see footnote 81, below).

with a clear lament formula: אוֹי־לִי ("Woe is me").[79] There is no explicit charge, although verse 10b does contain an assertion of innocence, which would have been appropriate if Jeremiah had been defending himself in court.[80] However, a legal defence does not appear to be in view in this context.[81] Yahweh immediately responds to Jeremiah with a declaration of his involvement with Jeremiah (and Israel).[82] This response (verses 11-14) is devoid of legal language.[83]

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[79]Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 209.

[80]In all the previously noted passages that appear to have been influenced by lawsuits, the prosecution of the lawsuit has been in focus--not the defence.

[81]The word רִיב does occur in verse 10 in the phrase "man of strife" (אִישׁ רִיב), but the overall context does not suggest that a lawsuit is in view. Rather רִיב, here seems to point to confrontation of a more general kind. Holladay points out that רִיב is here parallelled by מָדוֹן ("contention") and that מָדוֹן "is never used forensically" (Jeremiah, 1: 452).

Brueggemann suggests that רִיב might best be translated "litigation" in this context (Pluck Up, Tear Down, 137). Reventlow agrees that רִיב and מָדוֹן originally had a forensic meaning but insists that they later became stylised elements of the individual lament and in this passage illustrate how elements from the individual lament were pressed into the service of the collective laments, (Reventlow, Liturgie, 210-11). Clearly, Reventlow here assumes what he needs to prove.

[82]Reventlow, Liturgie, 210.

[83]Clements suggests that verses 13-14 are later editorial additions and do not represent God's original response to Jeremiah (Jeremiah, 98).

Jeremiah 15:15-21

With the fourth confession a juridical background becomes evident again. Verse 15a contains a call for retribution (נקם), i.e., for a verdict by the judge being appropriately executed on the guilty.[84] Verse 15b contains a veiled accusation against God, which is followed by the declaration of Jeremiah's innocence (verses 16-17). This "court-speech" ends with an unveiled and pointed accusation against God (verse 18b).[85] The specific charge laid against God concerns his failure to keep the promises made in connection with Jeremiah's call.[86]

The fourth confession ends with a response by God (verses 19-21). This response is not couched in courtroom language. Indeed, the specific accusations made by Jeremiah are ignored. Rather, he is warned and

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[84]In the Old Testament "vengeance" must be understood in terms of normal legal process, (See, G.E. Mendenhall, "The 'Vengeance' of Yahweh", The Tenth Generation [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1973], 69-104). Numerous writers on Jeremiah agree with this assessment, and suggest that Jeremiah is motivated by a concern for God's honour, (eg, Bright, "A Prophetic Lament and its Answer: Jeremiah 15:10-21" Prophet to the Nations, 328-29; Baumgartner, Poems, 47-48). On the other hand, McKane stresses on the personal nature of the vengeance that Jeremiah is calling for (Jeremiah 1: 351).

[85]Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 140. Clements observations are acute: "There is no hint of passive submission nor any suggestion that having done all he could do Jeremiah was prepared to leave the outcome to the will of God, (Jeremiah, 99).

[86]McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 351.

rebuked for bringing the charges in the first place (verse 19).[87] Finally, God reiterates the promises that Jeremiah is accusing him of breaching (verses 20-21; cf Jer 1:8, 17-19).[88]

Jeremiah 17:14-18

Judicial language is absent from this passage. Neither the elements of petition (verses 14,16) or self-justification (verse 16) appear to be addressed to a judge. It is clear that the confession is occasioned by opposition that Jeremiah is experiencing (verses 15, 18) but there is no indication that the conflict is being resolved through any sort of court procedure.[89]

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[87]Clements, Jeremiah, 100; E.W. Nicholson, Jeremiah 1-25, Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 141, Bright, Jeremiah, 112. Baumgartner suggests that the sharpness of Yahweh's response in verse 19 alludes to the sharpness of the indictment in verse 18 (Baumgartner, 51).

[88]H.H. Rowley, "The Early Prophecies of Jeremiah in their Setting", A Prophet to the Nations, 51-53; M. C.-C. Wang, "A Theology of Frustration--An Interpretation of Jeremiah's Confessions", SEAJT 15 (1974), 37-38.

[89]Brueggemann suggests that this confession is perhaps linked to the "harsh lawsuit speech of 17:1-4". That pericope announced a catastrophic future. The reasons for this announcement are explicated in Jer 17:5-13, a passage which gives rise to the passionate prayer found in the confession which follows in verse 14 to 18, (Pluck Up, Tear Down, 156). In arguing this way Brueggemann is focusing on the final redaction of the text and not uncovering for us the original occasion, meaning or function of the fifth confession.

Wimmer who argues that all the confessions are lawsuits, can only do so with regard to this confession by insisting that it starts in verse 12 ("Prophetic

Jeremiah 18:18-23

The sixth confession is in many ways similar to the fifth. Again, judicial language is absent from a pericope occasioned by conflict. However, Jer 18:18-23 lends itself more readily than Jer 17:14-18 to an interpretation highlighting a judicial background. Verse 18 outlines the actions of Jeremiah's opponents.[90] This outline prepares the way for an appeal for justice to be accorded him (verse 19).[91] This appeal is supported by

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Experience", 235-37). It may be more plausible to argue that the confession has been redactionally placed after verses 12-13 in order to heighten the judicial feeling of a passage which spoke powerfully to the needs of corporate Israel in the exilic period. This issue is discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

[90]The phrase וְנַכֶּהוּ בַלָּשׁוֹן ("lay charges against him") in verse 18 may suggest formally laying suit against Jeremiah in court, (Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 164; Jones, Jeremiah, 263). This understanding can be harmonised with both the MT and LXX rendering of the next clause. The MT declares וְאַל־נַקְשִׁיבָה אֶל־כָּל־דְּבָרָיו ("and let us not heed any of his words") suggesting charges were being laid because of the complete rejection of Jeremiah's message. The LXX reads δεῦτε καὶ πατάξωμεν αὐτὸν ἐν γλώσσῃ καὶ ἀκουσόμεθα πάντας τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ ("Come, and let us strike him with the tongue, and we will hear all his words") perhaps suggesting that Jeremiah's accusers were listening to him carefully--in order to gain evidence to use against him, (Nicholson, Jeremiah 1-25, 159).

[91]The root רִיב is again used, but its import in this setting is disputed. Brueggemann declares it to be the language of the court, (Pluck Up, Tear Down, 166). However, McKane insists that Jeremiah "is not here constructing a legal argument with a view to establishing his innocence" (Jeremiah, 1:438).

The issue is complicated by slight textual differences between the MT and the LXX. The MT הַקְשִׁיבָה לְקוֹל רִיבָי favours the translation "to what my adversaries say", whereas the LXX καί εἰσάκουσον τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ δικαιώματός μου--the

assertions of his own innocence (verse 20) and an appeal for the punishment of his opponents (verses 21-23).[92] Thus, there may be a judicial background to this passage. However, given the paucity of judicial language, one cannot be certain.

Jeremiah 20:7-13

Jer 20:7-13 may be divided into two parts: vss 7-10 and vss. 11-13. The first part of the seventh confession (Jer 7-10) forms a single prolonged accusation against God.[93] The language Jeremiah uses is bold. Indeed, it borders on the blasphemous. He utilises words that are otherwise used to signify seduction (פָּתָה, "entice") and

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Vorlage appears to have read וְשִׁמְעָ לְקוֹל רִיבִי--supports the translation "to my plea/case". The LXX reading is more favourable to a juridical setting but the MT reading does not exclude it. Bright adopts the LXX reading, arguing that it "yields a slightly better parallelism" (Jeremiah, 123).

[92]Again the punishments are derived from the "covenant curses", (Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 165).

[93]Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 174.

rape (חָזַק, "overpower").[94] Thus a judicial background is possible for this material.[95]

The last half of the seventh confession (Jer 20:11-13) is an affirmation of Jeremiah's confidence in God.[96] It seems devoid of any judicial material beyond a call for God to exact retribution on Jeremiah's enemies.[97]

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[94]פָּתָה ("entice") is used to signify seduction in Ex 22:15 and חָזַק is used to signify rape in Deut 22:25-27; II Sam 13:11). Some scholars stress the sexual nature of Jeremiah's vocabulary, arguing that he is using an especially powerful metaphor (e.g. A. Hershel, The Prophets [New York: Harper and Row, 1962], 113-14; J.L Crenshaw, A Whirlpool of Torment, OBT 12 [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984], 38-40; McKane, Jeremiah 1: 470; Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 151-55).

Others deny any sexual reference and insist that Jeremiah is using the words with an extended meaning (D.J.A. Clines and D.M. Gunn, "'You Tried to Persuade Me' and 'Violence! Outrage!' in Jeremiah 20:7-8", VT 38 [1978], 21-23). Still others insist that Jeremiah is deliberately using ambiguous wording with both extended and sexual reference (E.D. Lewin, "Arguing for Authority: A Rhetorical Study of Jeremiah 1:4-19 and 20:7-18", JSOT 32 [1985], 113). Jones points out that the most significant usage of פָּתָה ("entice") is with reference to the deception created by a lying spirit in false prophets (I Kings 22:20-22; Ez 14:9), (Jones, Jeremiah, 272).

[95]McKane describes פָּתָה ("overpower") as "legal vocabulary" (Jeremiah 1: 470).

[96]The disjunction between the content of the two sections is very marked, bordering on contradiction, (Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 175).

[97]There are also echoes of the call narrative of Jer 1:17-19, (Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 175). This is a significant point because the charge made by Jeremiah in other confessions is that God has not kept the promises he made when he called him.

Jeremiah 20:14-18

The eighth and final confession is different from all the others in that it begins with a self-imprecation (v. 14). This self-imprecation quickly broadens into a curse on the messenger that announced Jeremiah's birth, before the passage returns to the theme of the self-curse in the form of a question (vv. 15-17). Judicial language and structure appear to be absent.[98]

Conclusion

It is clear that the confessions of Jeremiah are not lawsuits as such. However, that they have been strongly influenced by judicial process is evident from both their structure and their vocabulary. The influence is not evenly spread throughout the confessions, being especially concentrated in Jer 11:18-12:6 and 15:15-21, but virtually absent from Jer 15:10-14; 17:14-18; 18:18-23; and 20:7-18. The confessions which most strongly reflect a judicial background are those where the activities of Jeremiah's opponents are most prominent. In these confessions the opponents form a third corporate party.

Certainly, the judicial contribution to most of the confessions is on a lesser level to that evident in other

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[98]The only real parallel in the Old Testament to this remarkable outburst is Job 3:3-12, (Nicholson, Jeremiah 1-25, 171).

parts of Jeremiah.[99] Accordingly, their judicial background cannot be used as evidence of a corporate understanding of the "I" of the confessions. The question remains as to whether they are laments of the individual, and as to what such a classification may suggest about the identity of the 'I' within them?"[100]

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[99]In most of the other passages interest in legal proceedings is focal. In the three relevant confessions the legal sphere provides valuable background without taking centre stage.

[100]Reventlow postulated that they were community laments but this position is thoroughly untenable, as shown by the thorough going rebuttals by Bright, Berridge and McKane (See references in Chapter 1, footnote 21).

The *Gattung* of the Confessions: Individual Laments

Introduction

Far more scholarly work has been done on the lament *Gattung* then on the lawsuit *Gattung*[1]. Walter Baumgartner has examined Jeremiah's use of the lament *Gattung* in an unsurpassed study.[2] Thus it is not necessary to discuss this issue in as much detail as it has been to discuss the issue of the lawsuit *Gattung*. However, the question of the corporality or individuality of the reference of Jeremiah's laments still needs to be addressed in a systematic way.

What is the "Individual Lament" *Gattung*?[3]

Tremper Longman III identifies the following elements in laments: 1. invocation; 2. plea to God for

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[1]For example, a recent evangelical work on Biblical *Gattungen* contained a chapter on laments but none on lawsuits, (D.B. Sandy and R.L. Giese, Jr., Cracking Old Testament Codes [Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman and Holman, 1995]).

[2]Baumgartner, Poems, *passim*.

[3]The distinction between "individual" and "communal" laments cannot be absolutised. Many scholars consider that at least some of the "individual" laments in the Psalms are really national laments with the "I" being a representative figure for the entire nation (Jones, Jeremiah, 186). However, there is clearly a greater scope for interpretation in the case of most individual laments.

help; 3. complaints;[4] 4. confession of sin or assertion of innocence; 5. curse upon enemies; 6. confidence in God's response; 7. hymn or blessing.[5] The mood of laments is melancholic although there is often an abrupt change to praise and confidence before the lament finishes.[6] The

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[4]The complaint is the central feature of the lament *Gattung*. It must occur in all examples of it. Other elements are more optional. Baumgartner suggests that the "main part" or "corpus" of the lament consists of the "lament" (ie, the complaint) and the "petition" (Poems, 21). He further declares, "*After the lament*, the petition is the most important part of the song. (Poems, 29, emphasis added).

[5]Tremper Longman III, "Lament", Codes, 199-200 cf E. Gerstenberger, "Psalms", Old Testament Form Criticism, ed. J.H. Hayes (San Antonio, Tex.: Trinity University Press, 1974), 200; Baumgartner, Poems, 19-40; A. Weiser, The Psalms, Old Testament Library, London: SCM, 1962, 67; W.H. Bellinger, Jr, Psalmody and Prophecy, JSOTSS 27 (Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1984), 22-24.

This structural analysis of the lament *Gattung* goes back to the work of H. Gunkel (Psalms, *passim*). Gerstenberger, acknowledges the need for "minor corrections" to Gunkel's structural analysis but points out that it is foundational to the work of scholars as diverse as H.-J. Kraus, G. Widengren, S. Mowinckel, C. Westermann, L. Sabourin, A. Deissler and J.W. Weavers ("Psalms", 201).

[6]The abrupt mood change has provoked considerable discussion with numerous attempts being made to explain it (with meagre success). The lack of evidence means that any explanation is bound to be hypothetical.

From the earliest form critical studies it has been suggested that the laments preserved in the Psalms actually bracketed a priestly oracle of response in the temple setting. This posited response is not recorded in the Psalm, which generally contains only the petitioner's words. This view is given classic expressions by J. Begrich, ("Das priesterliche Heilsorakel", ZAW 52 [1934], 81-92) and has more recently been defended by Bellinger (Psalmody, 78-82). Floyd acknowledges the plausibility of this proposal but also highlights its crucial weakness: "there are actually no clear-cut examples of oracular responses to individual complaints--only

laments are usually written in poetry and many (but not all) are characterised by a distinctive meter, called the qinah.[7] The laments express complaints against enemies, the lamenter himself and/or God.[8]

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alledged derivative adaptations of this convention", ("Prophetic Complaints", 401-02). The weakness of this proposal is that not one example of such a priestly oracle can be produced. Its very existence is hypothetical.

J.W. Wevers' view is similar. He posits that the power of the invocation of God's name by the worshipper was sufficient to inspire confidence without any response from the priest ("A Study in the Form Criticism of Individual Complaint Psalms", VT 6 [1956], 86-87).

Other scholars have suggested that the change of mood may be accounted for by positing the merging of originally independent Psalms (e.g., Weiser, Psalms, 70,80). Such a view may be likely in some cases but is scarcely adequate for a general explanation.

A good summary of the issues involved and the variety of hypotheses suggested is given in T.W. Cartledge, "Conditional Vows in the Psalms of Lament: A New Approach to an Old Problem", in The Listening Heart: Essays in Wisdom and the Psalms in Honour of Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm., JSOTSS 58, ed. K.G. Hoglund, E.F. Huwiler, J.T. Glass, and R.W. Lee (Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1987), 77-94. Cartledge's own view that the element of praise was actually intended as a motivation for God to act--would seem to be no stronger then others that have been proposed.

[7]The meter of the qinah is 3:2. Material written in this form was intended to be sung, especially as dirges. Such material not only contains a distinctive meter but is also characterized by syntactical perculiarities: e.g. the verb does not stand at the beginning of the sentence, (W. R. Garr, "The Qinah: A Study of Poetic Meter, Syntax and Style", ZAW 95 [1983], 54-75). H.W. Robinson suggests that this metrical form is "far and away the favourite metre of Jeremiah (The Cross in the Old Testament [London: SCM, 1955], 135).

[8]Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 278-79.

Does Jeremiah Use the Individual Lament *Gattung*?

It is universally accepted that Jeremiah makes extensive use of the lament.[9] Baumgartner lists the following passages as being influenced by the lament *Gattung* in Jeremiah: 4:19-21;[10] 8:18-9:1; 13:17; 14:17-18;[11] 23:9;[12] and 45:3.[13] Scholars have generally accepted

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[9]In none of the examples examined below is the lament *Gattung* reproduced in full. Rather Jeremiah appears to incorporate fragments of the *Gattung*--particularly the complaint.

[10]Recent scholars have often extended this pericope to 4:22 which is best understood as Yahweh's response to the lament (eg Brueggemann, Pluck Up, 54-56; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 102-06; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 166-67; and, Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 78-80). Jones thinks the passage should be interpreted in conjunction with 4:23-26, although he acknowledges that this passage may have originally been a separate unit of material, (Jeremiah, 115).

Regardless of the exact delimitations of the pericope, Jer 4:19-21 is especially important to our study. Some scholars list it as one of the confessions (eg, Thompson, Jeremiah, 227; and, more tentatively, Craigie, Kelley and Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 78). However, this classification is not helpful. The confessions are laments putatively dealing with the failure of the people to respond positively to Jeremiah. This lament is a reaction to the threatened invasion of the land.

[11]Although the structure and unity of Jeremiah 14-15 is variously understood, Jer 14:17-18 is generally thought to form a discrete unit or sub-unit, (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 423, Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 315-16, Bright, Jeremiah, 103). Jones and Brueggemann disent from this opinion and sees verses 17-22 as forming a unit (Jeremiah, 211; Pluck Up, Tear Down, 132-35). McKane extends it further--to Jer 15:4 (Jeremiah, 1: 328-29). There is however unanimity in seeing verse 17 as the start of a new unity or sub-unit.

[12]McKane is not persuaded by Baumgartner's suggestion that Jer 23:9 is comparable to Jer 4:19, (Jeremiah, 1:

Baumgartner's list. Mark Smith points out that there are a number of divine laments recorded in Jeremiah (12:7-12; 15:5-9; 9:9).[14] The degree of individuality or corporality in these lament passages is vital to our discussion.

Jeremiah 4:19-21

This passage is certainly individualistic in style. Singular verbs and nouns with singular pronominal suffixes predominate. But who is the speaker? The predominant view is that it is Jeremiah himself.[15] However, Carroll suggests the land of Judah or the city of Jerusalem as the most likely "speaker".[16] Such a reading seems forced.[17] Verse 20 is especially difficult

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[13]Baumgartner, Poems, 83-86.

[14]M.S. Smith, "Jeremiah 9:9--A Divine Lament", VT 37 (1987), 97-99. These passages do not need to be studied in detail here because a divine lament is by its very nature individualistic in reference.

[15]Holladay, Jeremiah 1: 19; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 79; Thompson, Jeremiah, 228; Brueggemann, Pluck Up, 54; McKane, Jeremiah, 104; Bright, Jeremiah, 34; Polk, Prophetic Persona, 49-53; Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 169-70.

[16]Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 167.

[17]Carroll declares that "If the hypothesis behind Reventlow's [interpretation] is not accepted, then the case for making Jeremiah the speaker here is much weakened" (p. 167). However, one does not need to accept Reventlow's thesis of Jeremiah as a cultic prophet in order to accept that he had a role as an intercessor in Israel. The fact that he is repeatedly commanded *not* to intercede (Jer 7:6; 11:14; 14:11) presupposes this role.

to fit into this view.[18] Would the city of Jerusalem speak of "my tents"?[19] Would the land itself declare that

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His double allusion to Moses and Samuel points in the same direction (Jer 15:1; 18:20). Zedekiah and the assassins of Gedaliah clear regard intercession as part of Jeremiah's role because they ask him to intercede for them (Jer 37:3 cf 21:2; 42:1-3), (Barstad, "No Prophets?", 56).

Even if one accepts Carroll's sceptical conclusions regarding the possibility of uncovering the historical Jeremiah, it is clear that the editors of the book portrayed him as one who was expected to act as an intercessor and who did, in fact, do so on occasions. S.E. Balentine--who rejects the notion of intercession as a characteristic feature of prophetic ministry--admits that evidence for intercession is strongest in the case of Jeremiah ("The Prophet as Intercessor: A Reassessment", JBL 103 [1984], 161-73).

[18] שֶׁבֶר עַל־שֶׁבֶר נִקְרָא כִּי שֻׁדְּדָה כָל־הָאָרֶץ פִּתְאֹם שֻׁדְּדוּ אָהָלַי רֶגַע יְרִיעֹתָי ("Disaster overtakes disaster, the whole land is laid waste. Suddenly my tents are destroyed, my curtains in a moment"). Holladay suggests that this verse actually contains a citation of the panicked shouts of refugees (Jeremiah, 1: 147).

[19] Jones suggests that this reference is perhaps an allusion to Jeremiah's own simplicity of lifestyle (Jeremiah, 115). However, this interpretation remains very uncertain. It is strengthened if we accept the LXX singular reading, ἡ σκηνή ("the tent", from אָהֳלִי, "my tent"), rather than the MT plural, אָהָלַי ("my tents"). Holladay accepts the LXX reading but understands the "tent" to be a metaphoric reference to the temple rather than to Jeremiah's abode (Jeremiah 1: 143). His position is supported by F.K. Kumaki, "A New Look at Jer 4,19-22 and 10:19-21", AJBI 8 (1982), 113-22.

"the whole land is laid waste"?[20] Nevertheless Jeremiah may speak here to some extent in a representative role.[21]

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1[Heb 8:23][22]

The situation in Jer 8:19-9:1 [Heb 8:23] is more complicated than in Jer 4:19-21. Once again first person singular verbs predominate and first person singular pronominal suffixes are common. However, the speaker changes throughout the passage. Verse 19b is clearly attributed to God[23]; verses 19a,20 by the people;[24] and the

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[20]It is interesting to notice the conclusion that R.P. Carroll draws in another setting using the same logic as we are using to identify the speaker in the Jeremaic laments. In dealing with the question of the identify of the speaker in Jer 5:1-6 Carroll raises two possible answers: Jeremiah or Yahweh. While assessing the first possibility he makes the following revealing comment: "This interpretation however does not account for the phrase in verse 1 'that I may pardon her.' In some views of prophecy the prophet may speak as or for God (cf Ex. iv 16), but *such an explanation will not serve here. In verse 3 the speaker refers to Yahweh in the second person, so must be distinguished from Yahweh. If the speaker of verse 3 is the prophet, then the person speaking in verse 1 is not*" ("Theodicy and the Community: The Text and Subtext of Jeremiah V 1-6", Prophets, Worship and Theodicy, OTS 23, [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1984], 21 [emphasis added]).

[21]Jones, Jeremiah, 115.

[22]Jones and Holladay begin this passage with verse 14 (Jeremiah, 161-164; Jeremiah, 1: 287-295).

[23]This divine speech has provoked considerable discussion. Baumgartner affirms that it fits into the structure of the Lament as the divine answer (Poems, 84). Holladay thinks the verse is original on stylistic and linguistic grounds ("The So-Called 'Deuteronomic Gloss' of Jer viii:19b" VT 12 (1962), 494-98. McKane is unpersuaded by such arguments and regards this material as a secondary Deuteronomic addition (Jeremiah, 1: 194).

rest by a single individual, presumably Jeremiah.[25] Once again, Carroll suggests the "speaker" is the city or community.[26] However, certain stylistic features make this suggestion unlikely. If the individual speaker (8:19a) represents the city/community why do we find them speaking for themselves in verse 20? Why is the speaker distinguished from the people in verse 21?. The whole pericope is bound together by the theme of "my poor people" (8:19; 21; 22; 9:1).

Jeremiah 13:17

Baumgartner refers to Jer 13:17 as a "short song".[27] Recent scholars have tended to treat it in connection

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An earlier scholar with the same view as McKane is Hyatt ("Jeremiah", 887).

[24]McKane argues that these verses have their background in the Autumn New Year Festival (McKane Jeremiah 1: 194). Craigie, Kelley and Drinkard concur (Jeremiah 1-25, 139-40). Holladay argues they are from a communal lament (Jeremiah 1: 290).

[25]Jones points out that sometimes in the lament Jeremiah identifies himself with the people and at other times he identifies with the grief of God to such an extent that identifying the speaker with certainty is often impossible (Jeremiah, 162). Holladay concurs that "the specification of speaker is not in every instance easy". His own understanding is that Jeremiah speaks in 8:19aα,21, 22b; 9:1; the people speak in 8:19aβ, 20; and, Yahweh speaks in 19b, 22a (Jeremiah, 1: 289).

[26]However, he acknowledges that this is a metaphorical understanding. "In reality somebody has to do the speaking". (Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 235). His point is that the grief being expressed is corporate and not merely individualistic.

[27]Baumgartner, "Poems", 84.

with the preceding two verses.[28] Clearly a verse of this size can be no more than a fragment of a lament.

Jeremiah 13:17 abounds with difficulties. In addition to a number of text variants between the MT and the LXX, various scholars have proposed conjectural emendations of the text.[29] Grammatical difficulties further complicate the issue. Is בַּמִּסְתָּרִים[30] ("in secret") to be taken with לֹא תִשְׁמָעֻהָ ("you will not listen"), (so

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[28]Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 299-300; Holladay, Jeremiah 1:405-07; Jones, Jeremiah, 199-200; Thompson, Jeremiah, 368-70; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 192; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 298-302; Nicholson, Jeremiah, 1: 124-25. Brueggemann sèes a single pericope extending from verse 15 to verse 19 (To Pluck Up, 124-26).

[29]For a summary of the textual difficulties see Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 405. Particularly significant is the choice between the MT's נִשְׁבָּה ("has been taken captive") and the LXX's συνετριβη ("was broken")--presumably translated from נִשְׁבַּר ("was broken"). The reading chosen effects the perspective of the verse. Carroll notes that "the shift [in the verse] between G [ie LXX] and MT is from a communal response to an individual reaction", (Jeremiah, OTL, 300). However, Thompson points out that even if נִשְׁבַּר ("was broken") is accepted as the correct reading, the authenticity of the passage is not necessarily compromised. Jeremiah did work and prophesy after some of his countrymen had been taken to Babylon (Jeremiah, 369-70).

Jones argues that נִשְׁבָּה ("has been taken captive") should be understood as a prophetic perfect and understood in the sense of "will be taken captive", (Jones, Jeremiah, 199). In the same way נִשְׁבַּר ("was broken") can be understood as a prophetic perfect which would be translated "will be taken broken" (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 405).

[30]The BHS editors suggest the conjectural emendation בְּמַסְרֵרִים ("in rebellion") for the MT's בַּמִּסְתָּרִים ("in secret"), (BHS, textual apparatus on Jer 13:17; c.f., Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 405).

Holladay)[31] or with תִּבְכֶּה־נַפְשִׁי ("my soul will weep"), (so NRSV)[32]? Fortunately, all these problems do not need to be solved for the purpose of this study. It is sufficient to note the distinction that is drawn within the text between the speaker and the people as a whole, identified in the third person as "the LORD's flock." The natural reading of this lament is that it is uttered by an individual.

Jeremiah 14:17-18[33]

Jeremiah 14:17-18 is set in the context of the aftermath of invasion. The speaker is explicitly contrasted with "my people",[34] "men", "prophet and

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[31]Holladay's translation reads "But if in rebellion you do not hear it, my soul will weep in the presence of pride", (Jeremiah 1: 405).

[32]The NRSV translation reads: "But if you will not listen, my soul will weep in secret for your pride".

[33]Nicholson (Jeremiah, 1: 133-35), McKane (Jeremiah, 1: 328-36) and Thompson (Jeremiah, 384-88) extend this pericope to Jer 5:4, but Jones (Jeremiah, 211-14) and Brueggemann (To Pluck Up, 133) only to Jer 4:22. McKane notes that the longer passage forms a communal lament but feels that "Verses 17-18 will not pass for a constituent part of a communal lament. They may have been pressed into service in order to provide a description of distress which triggers the appeal to Yahweh in vv. 19ff., but this is not their original function. They describe the grief awakened in the prophet ..." (Jeremiah, 1: 331). Significantly, Baumgartner sees two communal laments in this same chapter of Jeremiah, viz 14:2-10 and 14:19-5:2 (Poems, 88).

[34]The full phrase here is בְּתוּלַת בַּת־עַמִּי. The LXX does not translate the word בְּתוּלָה ("virgin"). The NRSV translates the phrase "the virgin daughter--my people" understanding the two nouns to be in apposition. By contrast the RSV translates "the virgin daughter of my people". The RSV

priest", "city" and "field". Given this intense disjunction between speaker and people, a corporate understanding of this passage is unlikely.[35]

Jeremiah 23:9

Jeremiah 23:9 is generally seen as the beginning of a pericope which ends in verse 12.[36] However, there appears to be a change in speaker between verse 9 and verses 10-12.[37] The pericope is linked thematically to the material which follows it.[38] Holladay suggests that the entire section may have originally been appended to a collection of confessions.[39] Unfortunately, the fragment

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rendering is grammatically more likely, but the NRSV captures the contextual meaning better. The focus of the passage is on the entire population of the city.

[35]Jones suggests a degree of representativeness on Jeremiah's part. However, he views the passage as part of a longer pericope which is in fact communal in reference (Jeremiah, 211). Carroll is conspicuously silent as to the identity of the speaker in this passage (Jeremiah, OTL, 316).

[36]Thompson, Jeremiah, 492-94; Brueggemann, To Pluck Up, 201-02; Jones, Jeremiah, 304-06; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 567-73; Nicholson, Jeremiah, 1: 193-94; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 334-37; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 451-54; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 624-29.

[37]Verse 9 ends with a reference to the words of Yahweh which forms an introduction to the following verses (Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 335); verses 11 and 12 end with a declaration that what has proceeded was spoken by Yahweh.

[38]Jer 23:9-40 focuses on the issue of false prophets.

[39]Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 624 cf Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 335.

of individual lament found in verse 9 is so small that it is difficult to come to any firm conclusions about it.[40]

Jeremiah 45:3

Jeremiah 45:3 is at the heart of the "confession of Baruch" (Jer 45:1-5).[41] As such it is extraordinarily significant for any discussion of the confessions of Jeremiah.[42] Verses 1 and 2 provide an introduction; verse

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[40]Carroll observes that Jer 23:9 cannot be referred to any historical occasions and that the links between it and the confessions are too general to allow any easy identification of speakers. He leaves open the question of whether the speaker is an individual or a figure representing the community (Jeremiah, OTL, 452).

The relationship of verses 10-12 to verse 9 also remains problematical. If verse 9 is voiced by an individual, verses 10-12 provide the speaker with an explanation for his predicament. However, if verse 9 is uttered by a representative figure, the divine response forms a repudiation of his complaints. Unfortunately, it cannot even be ascertained if the connection between verse 9 and verses 10-12 is original or redactional.

[41]Keown, Scalise, Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52, 271. P.A.H. de Boer sagely observes that "the number of problems in Jeremiah 45 is inversely proportional to the brevity of the chapter" ("Jeremiah 45, Verse 5", Symbolae Biblicae et Mesopotamicae Francisco Mario Theodoro de Liagre Böhl Dedicatae, ed. M.A. Beek, A.A. Kampman, C. Nijland and J. Ryckmans [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973], 31). Fortunately, not many of them have to be dealt with in this study.

[42]Keown, Scalise, Smothers, Jeremiah 26-45, 273; Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 308.

It is noteworthy that God's response to Baruch starts with a reaffirmation of the themes present in the call of Jeremiah (Jer 45:4 cf 1:10). The call of Jeremiah is recognised as foundational to any study of the confessions of Jeremiah.

It is also noteworthy that God's promise to Baruch parallels the promise given to Jeremiah in the prose tradition (Jer 45:5 cf 39:18).

The content of the Baruch's lament both thematically

3 gives Baruch's lament, which is not originally addressed to Yahweh but presumably to Jeremiah;[43] and, verses 4 and 5 provide Yahweh's response. There are few text critical problems in the pericope.

The identity and role of Baruch are of vital importance for this study. The Baruch confession is explicitly linked to chapter 36 by the dating in verse 1.[44] Some scholars suggest that verse 3 reflects the trauma of Baruch in light of the finality and certainty of judgement expressed in the second scroll.[45] Chapters 36 and 45 would thus form an inclusio of sorts for the "Baruch document" (Jer 36-45).[46] Others scholars have

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and linguistically parallels that of Jeremiah's confessions. For example, the cry, "Woe is me", is found in both (Jer 45:3; cf. Jer 15:10) as are the themes of Yahweh bringing ceaseless pain to his servant (Jer 45:3; cf. Jer 15:18; 20:7).

[43]Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 309.

[44]J.R. Lundbom, "Baruch, Seraiah and Expanded Colophons in the Book of Jeremiah", JSOT (1986), 100.

[45]Keown, Scalise, Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52, 272; Thompson, Jeremiah, 683; A. van Selms, "Telescoped Discussion as a Literary Device in Jeremiah", VT, 26 (1976), 99-103. Holladay suggests that one of the prime differences between the first and second scroll is that the possibility of judgement in the first had hardened into the certainty of judgement in the second ("The Identity of the Two Scrolls of Jeremiah", VT 30 [1980], 465-66.) Of course, it is impossible to do more than speculate about the state of Baruch's mind and the reasons for it (Bright, Jeremiah, 185-86).

[46]Bright thinks that chapter 45 originally adjoined chapter 36 and relocates it there in his commentary (Jeremiah, 176-86). However, in so doing he is confusing the issue of the historical timing of the event and that of the incorporation of the pericope recording the

regarded the date in Jer 45:1 as secondary and have suggested that the pericope comes from the end of Jeremiah's ministry--possibly even from his deathbed.[47] It has been suggested that chapter 45 was originally a colophon at the end of an early edition of the book of Jeremiah.[48]

An alternative view links Baruch's confession with the account given in Jer 44 in which Baruch is accused of having unduly influenced Jeremiah. Brueggemann suggests that Baruch may be representative of those who took a pro-Babylonian position.[49] Jones suggests that the placement of the pericope speaks to the fate of the Jews who had fled to Egypt.[50] However, the links in Jer 45:1

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incident into the book (McKane, Jeremiah, 2: 1103).

Carroll points out that chapter 45 also has thematic parallels with chapter 1, especially verse 10 which contains the four main verbs of Jer 45:4. Thus a type of inclusio is formed around a larger block of material (Jeremiah, OTL, 747; cf. Lundbom, "Colophon", 101). The same verb cluster recurs elsewhere in Jeremiah, viz 12:14-17; 18:7-9; 24:6; 31:21; 31:38,40; 42:10, suggesting its thematic importance in the book. See, M.A. Taylor, "Jeremiah 45: The Problem of Placement", JSOT 37 (1987), 90-91.

[47]Skinner, Prophecy, 346; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 1101-02. This position is unlikely: It faces the difficulty of explaining the origin of the date in verse 1. There is no sign in verses 4 and 5 that the "predicted" destruction has already occurred (Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 308).

[48]Lundbom, "Colophons", 99-101. The passage comes at the end of the book in the LXX.

[49]Brueggemann, To Build, To Plant, 205.

[50]Jones, Jeremiah, 482. See also Carroll Jeremiah, OTL, 745-50.

to Jer 36 should be taken seriously.[51] Originally, the pericope dealt with Baruch in the setting of his writing of the scrolls in chapter 36. It is the later redactional arrangement of material that makes Baruch into a representative figure here.[52]

Results

This survey of Jeremiah's use of individual laments outside of the confessions shows that Jeremiah was familiar with the *Gattung*--although in no case does he utilise the complete *Gattung*. Of the six passages examined four explicitly make a contrast between the speaker and the people as a whole (Jer 4:19-21; 8:18-9:1[Heb 8:23]; 13:17; 14:17-18). This fact strongly suggests that the speaker should be understood in a genuinely individualistic way and not as a representative figure. Of the two final passages, the first (Jer 23:9)

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[51]There are no good grounds for regarding the date as secondary. It is interesting to note the structural and functional parallels between Jer 36 and 45 which are highlighted by R.D. Patterson ("Of Bookends, Hinges, and Hooks: Literary Clues to the Arrangement of Jeremiah's Prophecies", WTJ 51 [1989], 118-19). He argues that both chapters form a "bookend" which signals the close of a major section of material (Jer 25-35 and Jer 37-45, respectively) while at the same time forming a "hinge" between the block of material which they close and the block which follows (Jer 37-45 and 46-51, respectively).

[52]Carroll draws attention not only to the parallels in content between Jer 45 and Jer 39:15-19, dealing with Ebed-Melech, he also suggests that the placement of both pericopes ("technically out of place") after accounts of great destruction suggests a similar function for both pericopes in the book as a whole, (Jeremiah, OTL, 748).

is too short and the redactional questions too intractable to be able to come to any definite conclusions. The second (Jer 45:3) clearly points to an individual and takes on a representative character only because of its redactional placement within the book as a whole. The individual speaker in the first five instances appears to be Jeremiah; in the last it is Baruch.

Are the Confessions Laments?

Baumgartner argues that five passages from the confessions (11:18-20, 21-23; 15:15-21; 17:12-18; 18:18-23; 20:10-13) are laments.[53] He further argues that an additional four passages (12:1-6; 15:10-12; 20:7-9; 20:14-18) are "related" to the songs of lament.[54] It is difficult to dispute these conclusions--although none of the confessions have all the lament elements.[55] The evidence that each of the confessions is an individual lament will now be summarised.

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[53]Baumgartner, Poems, 41-62.

[54]Ibid., 63-78.

[55]K.M. O'Connor points out that few scholars would agree with Baumgartner on an array of issues such as the exact delimitations of the confessional units and the sole sufficiency of form criticism as a tool to uncover their meaning, ("Review of Jeremiah's Poems of Lament, by W. Baumgartner, Historic Texts and Interpreters in Biblical Scholarship [Sheffield: Almond, 1988]," CBQ 52 [1990], 710).

Jeremiah 11:18-23

Jeremiah 11:18-23 contains the following elements of an individual lament: plea (11:20);[56] complaint (11:18b-19);[57] and, confidence in being heard (11:21-23).[58] The *Gattung* is not only incomplete but in disorder as well. In addition to these structural elements Baumgartner lists numerous linguistic and thematic parallels between this confession and the individual laments of the Psalms.[59]

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[56]The expression בֹּחֵן כְּלָיוֹת וָלֵב ("who try the heart and the mind") occurs only in the confessions and in Ps 7:10 and 26:2 (G.P. Couturier, "Jeremiah", Jerome Biblical Commentary, ed. R.E. Brown, J.A. Fitzmyer and R.E. Murphy [London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1970], 315). Both Psalms are individual laments (L. Sabourin, The Psalms: Their Origin and Meaning [New York: Alba House, 1974], 215)--although S.J.L. Croft sees the petitioner in both as a representative royal figure (The Identity of the Individual in the Psalms, JSOTSS 44 [Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1987], 90-91; 94-95).

[57]Some commentators regard these verses as being written in prose (eg McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 253-56). Others feel that they are in poetic form (eg Jones, Jeremiah, 186). The lament *Gattung* would generally be written in poetry.

[58]These verses do not express the worshipper's confidence, as would normally be expected in an individual lament. Rather they express the direct response of Yahweh to Jeremiah assuring him that he has been heard. (O'Connor refers to these verses as an "oracle of assurance", [Confessions, 24-25]). They thus serve a purpose comparable to the declaration of confidence in a pure lament.

[59]The image of the lamb, the "poignant self-description", the allusion of the secret plans of enemies, the "verbatim citation of the evil plan", the alternation between "and I" and "and Yahweh" to introduce a new thought, as well as the hope in the divine judge who is not deceived by appearances and who executes

The final section of the confession certainly points to an individual lamenter, and indeed, identifies him as Jeremiah.[60] Carroll argues that this prose piece is secondary. By means of its insertion in the text, the lament which originally referred to the nation is concretised to Jeremiah.[61] However, such a development is

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justice faithfully are specifically mentioned by Baumgartner, (Baumgartner, Poems, 43-45).

[60]Baumgartner--while accepting the authenticity of this section--denies that it is organically connected with what precedes it and declares that it "does not belong to the 'poems of lament' at all" (Poems, 45-46). Others stress the secondary nature of this material, often perceiving a contradiction between Jeremiah's ignorance of the plot against him in verse 19 with his clear knowledge of it in verse 21 (Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 280-82 cf Jones, Jeremiah, 186). Early scholars often resorted to rearranging the text to ease the difficulties (H.H. Rowley, "The Text and Interpreation of Jer 11:18-12:6", AJSL 17 [1926], 220; Couturier, "Jeremiah", 313; Paterson, "Jeremiah", 547; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 912; Bright, Jeremiah, 89). So conservative a scholar as Thompson allows for the possibility of textual disturbance (Jeremiah, 349).

However, none of these arguments are compelling. Verses 19 and 21 should not be related to one another in terms of contradiction but in terms of development: in the past Jeremiah did not know of his enemies' plot but now it has been revealed to him (Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 178; Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 136; cf McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 258--"The threat of v. 21 follows naturally on the revelation [v. 19] that Jeremiah's enemies have designs on his life and are set on his destruction"). A.S. Peake suggested a different kind of progression, from thwarted secret plotting to open threatening by the Jeremiah enemies in Anathoth (Jeremiah, 183 cf Chambers, "Prophetic Ambivalence", 44).

[61]Carroll, Jeremiah, 280-81. His essential argument is that this postscript functions analogously to the secondary headings לְדָוִד ("of David") in the Psalms. The analogy may be valid.

However, it must be recognised that this prose

unlikely. It is easier to envisage how a confession with an original life setting in the suffering of Jeremiah could come to be applied to the suffering of the nation in the exile than vice versa.[62] Other evidence of the degree of corporality is more problematical. The lamenter is clearly distinguished from his enemies but no clear indication is give (until verse 21) that his opponents are fellow Israelites. Likewise, the images of "sheep" and "tree" are capable of both corporate and individual reference.[63]

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section is considerably more elaborate than the Psalm headings. Furthermore, it is widely recognized that the Psalmonic לְדָוִד does not necessarily mean "by David". It may carry the sense of "for the use of the Davidic King [in the cultus]" or "dedicated to David". It is therefore unneccessary to assume that it must always be secondary (P.C. Craigie, Psalms 1-50, WBC 19, [Waco, Tex.: Word, 1973], 33-35 cf S. Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967], 1: 77-78; Weiser, Psalms, 95-97; A.A. Anderson, Psalms (1-72), NCB, [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1981], 43-45; W.S. McCullough, "The Book of Psalms: Introduction", IB edited by G.A. Buttrick [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1955], 8; J. Limburg, "Psalms, Book of", ABD, edited by D.N. Freedman, [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1992], 5: 528).

[62]See the discussion of the meaning of the confessions in their context in the book of Jeremiah in chapter 5, below.

[63]Carroll points out that the tree imagery is elsewhere used of the nation's destruction and that this makes this confession look like "a lament for what is about to happen to the people". He adds that the communal use of "I" has already occurred in Jer 4:19-20; 8:18-9:1: 10:23-24, (Jeremiah, OTL, 276). This argument is not compelling. The image can also have an individual reference. Although the book of Jeremiah often uses such imagery corporately (Jer 8:13; 11:16; but see Jer 17:7-8), it is frequently used in Psalms with an individualistic meaning (eg Ps 1:3; 37:35; 52:8).

Jeremiah 12:1-6

The elements of a lament found in Jer 12:1-6 are: invocation (12:1a); complaint (12:1b,2,4);[64] confessions-assertion (12:3a); curse on enemies (12:3b);[65] and,

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With regard to the sheep imagery, even Baumgartner points to examples in communal laments in the Psalms (Poems, 43). However, he notes that the use of the image in the confessions is different to that in such laments, stressing as it does the animal's "trust and innocence" (Ibid., 43). Similarly, C.F. Keil here translates כֶּבֶשׂ אַלּוּף as "a tame pet-lamb" ("The Prophecies of Jeremiah", Commentary on the Old Testament, by C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980], 8: 218)

[64]Jones points out that the questions "How long?" is frequently found in the laments (Jeremiah, 190, 116, citing Ps 74:10; 79:5; 90:13; 94:3). However, Baumgartner points out that another aspect of the confession is atypical of this *Gattung*: in the individual laments of the Psalms the question "Why" is always asked with לָמָּה and not מַדּוּעַ as here (Poems, 27).

[65]This couplet is actually a prayer for God to destroy the enemies. However a curse could be given in the form of a prayer (S.H. Blank, "The Curse, Blasphemy, the Spell, and the Oath," HUCA 23/1 [1950/51], 82-83. In any case--ancient belief in the power of the spoken word not withstanding (Blank, "Curse", 78; S. Gevirtz, "Curse", IDB edited by G.A. Buttrick [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1962], 1: 750)-- a curse was not seen as something independent of Yahweh (W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, OTL [London: SCM, 1961], 1: 173-74; Blank, "Curse", 95). Several lament contain curses in the form of prayer (eg Ps 5:10; 7:9; 31:17b-18; 35:26; 39:11).

Reventlow sees this couplet as significant evidence for his thesis. Jeremiah, he asserts, was not calling for personal revenge, but prayed for the community in need using standard cultic liturgical *Gattungen* (Reventlow, Liturgie, 246-48, as cited in McKane, "Interpretation", 43). However, it is not necessary to interpret the couplet collectively in order to harmonise its call for vengeance with Jeremiah's status as Yahweh's messenger. Holladay declares "The prayer of Jerm's is not so much an expression of his own vengeance as his wish that Yahweh exercise his sovereignty over those who

confidence in being heard (12:5,6).[66] The *Gattung* is thus incomplete and in some disarray.

Indications of the individuality of the speaker are somewhat more evident here than in the first confession (Jer 11:18-23). Reference is made to family (Jer 12:6).[67] The speaker is distinguished from the "guilty" and the "treacherous", (Jer 12:1), who are clearly Israelites. This is the implication of Jeremiah's declaration to Yahweh that "you are near in their mouths yet far from

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challenge that sovereignty" (Jeremiah, 1: 378).

[66]Strictly speaking, this element is replaced by the divine answer itself. However, the answer is not the type of answer that characterises laments. There are no comforting words of assurance that might lead Jeremiah to praise and thanksgiving. Rather the answer consists of reprimands and warnings (Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 114). Jones suggests that Jeremiah has adapted an already existing lament in verses 1-4 and further individualised it by adding verses 5-6 (Jeremiah, 187). Verse 5 may have been originally derived from proverbial wisdom (p. 190).

[67]There is considerable discussion regarding verse 6. It is often affirmed that it is either a secondary addition to the confession (eg Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 380; O'Connor, Confessions, 22)or that the material in Jer 11:18-12:6 has suffered severe textual dislocation and verse 6 has been misplaced (eg Rowley, "Text", 221). Others see the confession as exhibiting an organic unity (eg Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 40).

Textual rearrangement is generally rejected today but the question of the redactional nature of verse 6 is more difficult to answer. Certainly, the verse adds little that is new to the confession, beyond making explicit what is implicit in verse 5. The reference to "family" directly parallels the reference to the "people of Anathoth" in 11:23. However, this association depends entirely on the redactional linking of the two confessions which were originally independent of one another.

their hearts" (Jer 12:2).[68] The "guilty" and "treacherous" are presumably the same people who cause the "land [of Israel]" to suffer by their wickedness (12:4).

Jeremiah 15:10-14[69]

The elements of a lament evidenced in Jer 15:10-14 are complaint and confessions-assertion. Indications of the individuality of the lamenter are evident. He refers to his "mother"[70] and speaks of the individual activities of lending and borrowing (15:10). He is distinguished from "them" (15:10)--an anonymous term, but one which suggests Israelites.[71]

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[68]McKane speaks of their "profession of faith" which is defective because of a "lack of underlying reality beneath their words" ("Interpretation", 42).

[69]Brueggemann lists this passage as a prose unit (Pluck Up, Tear Down, 137). However, McKane appears to regard it as poetic, (Jeremiah 1: 343-34).

[70]Carroll understands the reference to "mother" as possibly indicating a communal lament, with Jerusalem as the "mother" of the nation, (Jeremiah, OTL, 326). While this interpretation is possible, the reference is capable of being read in a more literal way which better accommodates other feature of the context (e.g., the reference to being born).

[71]It is difficult to read the text so that the opponents of verse 10 are identified with the clearly foreign enemies of verse 14.

It must be acknowledged that distinguishing between the lamenter and other Israelites does not *necessarily* indicate that the lamenter is an individual. He may in fact represent a group within Israel as distinguished from other groups. This would not appear to be the situation here.

It must be acknowledged that this confession contains marked evidence for a corporate reading. The reference to "iron from the North" (15:12), although subject to numerous interpretations,[72] certainly reminds the reader of the enemy from the North, the invading Babylonians.[73] Likewise, verses 13 and 14 appear to have

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[72]The symbol of "iron from the North" is variously thought to refer to a) the especially strong iron from Chalybes mentioned by Virgil in I Georg 5:58 (Baumgartner, Poems, 73); b) the region the Israel generally imported iron from (F.W. Winnett, "Iron", IDB [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon] 2: 725; c) the people of Israel in opposition to Jeremiah (Peake, Jeremiah, 1: 211; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 940); d) Jeremiah and his prophetic ministry (Diamond, Confessions, 61; J. Muilenburg, "A Confession of Jeremiah", USQR 4 [1949], 17); e) the "foe from the North" (Keil, Jeremiah, 261-62; O'Connor, Confessions, 35-36; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 210; Jones, Jeremiah, 221; Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 199; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 455; Thompson, Jeremiah, 393: McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 348-49; Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 138; Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints", 413). Others things that the whole section should be excised from the text (Bright, Jeremiah, 109-10; Couturier, "Jeremiah", 315).

Interpretation of the the phrase is complicated by the textual and syntactical difficulties which abound in the verse as a whole. (A good summary of the difficulties is found in Holladay, Jeremiah, 1:447, 455). Wimmer approvingly cites R.A. Condamin to the effect that Jer 15:11-12 are the most difficult verses in the entire book. Skinner and Couturier more bluntly declare the verse to be "untranslatable" (Prophecy and Religion, 204; "Jeremiah", 315).

Not suprisingly this passage has suffered from numerous attempts at rearrangement and conjectural emendation--which again highlights its obscurity and difficulty. A good survey (and critique) of these attempts is found in O'Connor, Confessions, 28-39.

[73]The view of earlier scholars that the "foe from the North" originally refered to the Scythians in Jeremiah's early proclamations and was latter reapplied to the Babylonians (H. Cazelles, "Zephaniah, Jeremiah and the Scythians in Palestine," Prophet to the Nations, 144-49;

numerous corporate references.[74] However, many scholars regard verses 12 to 14 as secondary intrusions.[75]

Rowley, "Early Prophecies", 39-49; Peake, Jeremiah, 10-11; Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, 38-44; Davidson, "Jeremiah", 570; cf Patterson, "Jeremiah", 542) has now been decisively rebutted (R.F. Vaggione, "Over All Asia? The Extent of the Scythian Domination in Herodotus," JBL 92 [1973], 523-30).

Today those who understand the "foe" historically generally understand it to be Babylon (eg Bright, Jeremiah, lxxi-lxxxii; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 43; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 18-21; Brueggemann, Pluck Up, Tear Down, 27; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 106; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 779), although some suggest Jeremiah had a variety of unspecified enemies in mind (eg Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 17). Others understand the foe "mythically" (eg B.S. Childs, "The Enemy From the North and the Chaos Tradition," Prophet to the Nations, 151-61 cf Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 70-71). D.J. Reimer suggests that צָפוֹן ("north") should be taken as a reference to the mountain of God, rather than a direction, and interprets the foe as the "foe sent by God" ("The 'Foe' From the 'North' in Jeremiah," ZAW 101 [1989], 230-32).

[74]Note the references to "wealth" and "treasure" being taken as "plunder"; to sins being committed "throughout all your territory"; and to the lamenter serving his enemies in a foreign land as the result of Yahweh kindling an everlasting fire (cf Jer 17:27). Floyd observes that "If we imagine the addressee to be Jeremiah himself, then we must also imagine that Yahweh is responding to his mournful outcry in v. 10 with a promise to send in a whole host of foreign thugs just to beat him up" ("Prophetic Complaints", 412). Even such a conservative source as the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary suggests that Jeremiah is a representative figure in these verses. [E. Hilgert, W.G. Wirth, W.F. Specht], "Jeremiah", Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, ed F.D. Nichols (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1955), 4: 417. (The material on Jeremiah 11-45 was written by Wirth).

[75]Holladay declares that "almost all commentators since [Ferdinand] Hitzig [1866] have excised them [vvs 13, 14]", (Jeremiah, 1: 455). Baumgartner, Berridge and Lundbom delete the verses and continue to regard the rest of Jeremiah 15:10-21 as two separate confessions (Poems, 46-51, 71-73; Word of Yahweh, 114; Jeremiah, 28). However, most of the other scholars who excise the verses

Jeremiah 15:15-21

The elements of an individual lament found in this pericope are: invocation (15:15a); plea (15:15b); complaint 15:18; confession-assertion (15:15c-17); and confidence in being heard (15:19-21).[76]

There are several indicators that the lamenter did not represent the nation as a whole. He is distinguished from the "merrymakers" (15:17), and it is difficult to understand them as being anything other than a group within Israel. Furthermore, he is distinguished from "this people" (Israel) to whom he is to speak (15:20). The "wicked" and the "ruthless" (15:21) taken in isolation could refer to Gentiles or Israelites but in the context of verse 20 would clearly seem to refer to a group within Israel.

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see a single confession in the remaining material (Bright, Jeremiah, 109-10; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 941).

Scholars give two reasons for excising verses 13 and 14: they do not harmonise thematically with their context (Jer 15:10-12,15-20), and they are closely related in content and structure to Jer 17:3-4 (and are often rewarded as a misplaced corruption of that passage).

A significant minority of recent scholars, while noting the strengths of the arguments for excising the verses, defend their authenticity (e.g., O'Connor Confessions, 33; Jones, Jeremiah, 219; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 210; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 455).

[76]The final section is actually a divine answer rather than a human affirmation of confidence. However, it may serve the same purpose form-critically (Jones, Jeremiah, 222).

Nothing in this confession necessarily points to an individual (as opposed to a group) within Israel as the lamenter. Furthermore, there is some evidence of community reference. The image of the incurable wound is elsewhere used for the devastation of the community (10:19;[77] 30:12). This leads Carroll to suggest that this confession is an "individual lament for the community".[78]

Jeremiah 17:14-18

The lament elements found in Jer 17:14-18 are plea (17:14, 16-18) and complaint (17:15). Even Wimmer--the most prominent proponent of the thesis that the confessions are lawsuits--declares that "This lament [Jer

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[77]Thompson suggests that Jer 10:19-21 is a lament of Jeremiah as a representative figure utterly identifying himself with the suffering of the people (Jeremiah, 335 cf Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 176; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 230; Bright, Jeremiah, 73; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 163). Carroll suggests the lament is uttered by a personified Jerusalem (Jeremiah, OTL, 261, cf Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 901; Jones, Jeremiah, 180). The use of הָרֹעִים ("the shepherds") in verse 21 with the meaning "rulers" (Bright, Jeremiah, 72) may suggest that the lament is put in the mouth of the king (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 342).

There are subtle textual variations between the MT and LXX in this pericope which touch upon the question of the speaker. In verse 20a the MT reads אָהֳלִי שָׁדַד וְכָל־מֵיתָרַי נִתָּקוּ ("My tent is destroyed, and all my cords are broken") while the LXX has ἡ σκηνή σου ἐταλαιπώπησεν ὤλετο, καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ δέρρεις σου διεσπάσθησαν ("Your tent is severly damaged, and all your curtains have been torn"). Thus the LXX differentiates between Jeremiah and the people in a way that the MT does not. However, the LXX does not maintain the differentiation throughout the rest of the verse and its reading of the first line must be regarded as secondary (McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 231).

[78]Carroll, Jeremiah, 331.

17:12-18] uses the ancient and common *Gattung* of the lament of the individual as modified by the cosmic hymns where God is judge".[79] The lamenter is distinguished from those who say "Where is the word of the LORD? Let it come" (17:15). Such mockers must refer to a group within Israel.[80] He calls himself a "shepherd" in the following verse. An individual reference is highly probable. The same is true of his assertion that he had not "desired the fatal day" (17:16; cf. "day of disaster" in 17:18). Under what circumstances would Israel (or even a group within it) have ever desired national catastrophe?

Jeremiah 18:18-23

The lament elements found in Jer 18:18-23 are plea (18:19), complaint (18:20), and curse (18:21-23). The lament qualities of this confession are particularly strong. Jones comments that it is "in all respects in the style of the laments of the Psalter, often echoing

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[79]Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 259.

[80]The identity of the "they" in this verse is subject to two possible interpretations. They are usually regarded as the opponents of the lamenter who are expressing blasphemous scepticism (Baumgartner, Poems, 54; Peake, Jeremiah, 224; Jones, Jeremiah, 246; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 236; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 409; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 505; Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 138; Thompson, Jeremiah, 425; Bright, "Jeremiah's Complaints", 206-07). However, it is possible--although unlikely--that they are part of the lamenter's "support group" (Carroll, Jeremiah, 362-63).

the phrases as well as the sentiment of these Psalms".[90] The clearest indication of an individual reference in the passage is found in verse 18, where the lamenter's opponents clearly distinguish him from other influential groups within Israel (prophets, priests, wise men). It must be admitted that this fact demonstrates no more than that the lamenter did not represent the entire nation. It leaves open the possibility that he represents a specific group within the nation--although the identity of such a group is difficult to imagine. Similarly, verses 20-23 distinguish the lamenter from others in Israel--without necessarily showing the lamenter to be an individual rather than a factional group within the nation.[91]

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[90]Jones, Jeremiah, 263-64 cf Carroll, Jeremiah, 381. The specific verbal parallels with various individual laments that he lists (using the RSV) are

1. "Give heed to me, O LORD";
2. "my plea";
3. "Is evil a recompense for good?";
4. "I stood before thee";
5. "deliver up their children to famine ... let their wives becomes childless and widowed";
6. "marauder";
7. "they have dug a pit for me";
8. "yet, thou, O LORD, knowest";
9. "forgive"; and,
10. "nor blot out their sins".

[91]T.W. Overholt, takes a more definite stance: "The 'I' of 18:20 *must* refer to a single individual who interceded with God on behalf of a larger group, with which he now finds himself in conflict ("Jeremiah", Harper's Bible Commentary, ed. J.L. Mays [San Francisco, Cal.: Harper and Row, 1988], 619). This is certainly the most natural reading of the passage.

Jeremiah 20:7-13[92]

The elements of the lament *Gattung* found in this pericope are plea (20:12), complaint (20:7-10), confession-assertion (20:11),[93] and confidence in being heard (20:13).[94] The only explicit indicator of individual reference is the mention of the lamenter's "close friends" (20:10). However, it is difficult to imagine a corporate setting for several of the other comments. When did God entice and overpower Israel (20:7)? When did Israel proclaim "violence and destruction" (20:8)? And when did she unsuccessfully resolve to stop such proclamation (20:9)?

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[92]J. Magonet argues that any generic analysis of Jer 20:7-13 as a lament is misleading ("Jeremiah's Last Confessions: Structure, Image and Ambiguity", HAR 11 [1987], 303-11). However, his tightly argued position is damaged if פָּתָה ("entice") and חָזַק ("overpower"), (Jer 20:7) do not mean "seduction" and "rape" (see our discussion of Jer 20:7-13 in chapter 2, above). Acceptance of the dubious sexual reference leads Magonet to make almost allegorical exegesis, suggesting that the "rape" of Jeremiah results in his "pregnacy" with the word of God--which he cannot prevent from being "born" ("Last Confession", 310-11). This reading may be possible but it is less likely than the more prosaic alternatives.

[93]This verse is formally an assertion of confidence in God rather than an assertion of Jeremiah's innocence. However, Jeremiah's confidence that God is for him is implicitly based on his confidence that he is innocent before God.

[94]The positive note found in this verse seems discordant to modern ears but is typical of the laments generally, (Jones, Jeremiah, 275).

Jeremiah 20:14-18

The lament features of this passage are plea (20:16) and complaint (20:14-15, 17-18).[95] The individual reference in this passage is very strong. Mention of "mother" and "day of birth" (20:14), as well as "father" (20:15) and "womb" (20:17-18), are extremely difficult to interpret corporately.[96] The allusion to Sodom and Gommorah (20:16a) *may* suggest a corporate reference.[97] However, even this is part of a curse on an individual--the messanger who announced Jeremiah's birth.[98]

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[95]These verses do not so much form a "complaint" as a "self-curse". For this reason O'Connor feels that they do not belong in the confessions at all (O'Connor, Confessions, 80). Most scholars do not accept this position although there is openness to the suggestion that the final confession is not written in the lament genre (Baumgartner, Poems, 77; Clines and Gunn, "Jeremiah 20", 393; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 277). However, Holladay points out that there are laments (eg Ps 22:7-11; 71:6 cf 51:7) that focus on the lamenters life from birth onwards, (Jeremiah, 1: 564).

[96]Clines and Gunn point out that the individualising features of this pericope are so strong that features which could be interpreted collectively *must* be understood individualistically. Thus בשׁת ("shame") is generally used of the people's shameful behaviour, the shameful objects of non-Yahwistic worship, or the shameful fate of the people. It is never elsewhere used of the subjective shame of the prophet. Nevertheless, "the curse of v. 14-18 must surely express the prophet's personal experience of despair" ("Jeremiah 20", 406). However, they also insist that the passage goes beyond biography.

[97]Magonet, "Last Confession", 314.

[98]Magonet argues that וְיִשְׁמַע זְעָקָה בַּבֹּקֶר תְּרוּעָה בְּעֵת צָהֳרָיִם ("let him hear a cry in the morning and an alarm at noon") in Jer 20:16b has an individualistic reference in view of

Conclusion

The confessions all contain various elements of the individual lament *Gattung*. The complaint is the constant feature in all of them. Just as Jeremiah's individual laments outside the confessions generally have individualistic reference, so most of the laments clearly contain individualistic features. In two cases, the evidence for individualistic reference in the laments is ambiguous and weak (15:15-21 and 18:18-23). However, even here, it is clear that the lamenter does not represent the entire nation. Given Jeremiah's use of the individual lament *Gattung* throughout the book (within the confessions and without) it is highly probable that an individual reference should be seen in these two confessions as well.

It must be admitted that there are some clear corporate references in the confessions (e.g., Jer 15:10-14) and other references that may be corporate (e.g., Jer 15:15-21; 18:18-23). Thus, although the original

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Jeremiah's comments elsewhere--cf Jer 4:19-22, ("Final Confession", 314). However, this clearly refers to the time of the capture of Jerusalem (cf the allusion to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah in Jer 16:a). Thus the individual refered to is a representative figure, as Magonet himself acknowledges ("Final Confession", 314). Significantly Jer 4:19-22 also gives a reaction to the fall of the city and is thus also "representative" in nature (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 159-64; Kumaki, "New Look", 113-22).

individual reference is generally clear, there is some ambiguity in the text as it now stands.

Any understanding of the confessions which posits the speaker as a figure representing Israel as a whole is ruled out by the evidence. If the speaker is a corporate figure, he must represent a group within Israel. In such a scenario, the confessions would be regarded as exilic or post-exilic productions. Is there in fact any evidence to indicate whether their "life setting" is the time of Jeremiah or a latter period? It is this question which will be addressed next.

Theological Development in the Confessions

Introduction

The competing views regarding the "I" of the confessions revolve around one basic issue: when were the confessions composed? Were they composed in the time of Jeremiah or were they composed in the exilic/post-exilic period? The first option would suggest an individualistic reference while the last two would suggest a corporate reference.

One means of testing the date of the composition of the confessions is to compare them with the material in the rest of Jeremiah. Specifically theological developments, and linguistic changes may indicate a shift in the time of composition between blocks of material. It is generally agreed that the poetic oracles of Jeremiah[1] (Mowinckel's A-source) are basically authentic

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[1]The distinction between poetry and prose should not be absolutised. Even in English some poetry is more "prosaic" than others and some prose is more "poetic" than others. (See F. Landy, "Poetics and Parallelism: Some Comments on James Kugel's *The Idea of Biblical Poetry*," JSOT 28 [1984], 67-68; R. Alter, The Art of Biblical Poetry, [New York: HarperCollins, 1985], 6-7). James Kugel argues that the distinction is utterly foreign to the Old Testament and that it should be abandoned (The Idea of Biblical Poetry [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981], 59-95). Certainly, he is able to demonstrate the presence of "parallelism"--generally regarded as the *sine qua non*--of "biblical poetry" in the

to Jeremiah.[2] The origin of Jeremiah's prose sermons[3]

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prose sermons of Jeremiah (Ibid., 77-80). His work, on the whole has been well accepted but his rejection of the poetry/prose distinction has generally been felt to be overstated (see Reviews by W.R. Bodine, BibSac 140 [1983], 277-78; R.C. Culley, CBQ 45 [1983], 288-90; S.A. Geller, JBL 102 [1983], 625-26; L.G. Perdue, JAAR 50 [1982] 622-23; W.G.E. Watson, Bib 64 [1983], 134-36, and at greater length, JSOT 28 [1984], 89-98; P.D. Miller, Jr., JSOT, 28 [1984], 99-106). Kugel, himself admitts that his view may appear "perverse" (Idea, 85).

It seems that there is a core of material that is generally accepted as being poetic surrounded by material that is subject to more dispute. The delimitation of the common core of material in Jeremiah can easily be established by comparing the NRSV with the translations made in the commentaries of William Holladay and John Bright. The following verses are regarded as prose in the NRSV but rendered as poetry by at least one of the commentators: 1:11-19; 3:15-18, 24-25; 4:9-12; 9:23-24; 11:15-16, 22b-23; 12:14b; 14:13b; 15:10-14; 16:21-17:4; 20:4a, 6; 21:11; 23:5-6, 16-17, 28-29; 25:33; 31:24, 33b-34; 46:1-2; 47:1; 48:12, 25, 37; 49:18b-19, 21-22, 35-36a; 50:3-10, 17a, 19-20, 28-30, 33-34, 39-40, 44-46; 51:11, 28, 46, 49-57. Conversely, the following passages are regarded by the NRSV as being poetic but are regarded as prosaic by at lease one of the commentators: 26:18b; 31:35-37; 33:11b; 43:11b; 46:13; 47:1; 48:47; 51:28, 46. Thus of the 1364 verses of the book of Jeremiah (MT) only 106 are subject to dispute as to their status as poetry or prose. This is a mere 7.8 percent

A number of disputed passages are theologically insignificant and thus irrelevant for our discussion in this chapter. The methodology adopted here is to initially accept the poetry/prose divisions encapsulated in the NRSV and note the relevant areas of dispute as they occur.

Comparing the older views of Bright with the newer views of Holladay and the NRSV shows that over the last 40 years the classification of most verses in Jeremiah has not changed.

[2]For example, Overholt, "Continuity," 457-58; Bright, "Prose Sermons," 193-94; J.R. Lundbom, "Jeremiah, Book of," ABD, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, ed. D.N. Freedman, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1992 3: 709; Muilenburg, "Jeremiah", 824; Thompson, Jeremiah., 35. Carroll regards this agreement as being based on assumptions rather than evidence, (Jeremiah, OTG, 37). See discussion on pages 14 and 15, above.

(Mowinckel's C-source) is more hotly disputed.[4] The relationship between the two blocks of material is complex.[5] However, if a time gap exists between the composition of both blocks the relationship of the theology of each should be open to analysis. Some differences would be expected.[6] This development will be

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[3]Bright has demonstrated a consistency of style and vocabulary throughout the prose sermons suggestive of a single source, ("Prose Sermons", 195).

[4]It is regarded as being either authentic to Jeremiah (so Thompson, Jeremiah, 46-47), the later product of his disciples (so Bright, "Prose Sermons", 205-06) or the later product of the Deuteronomists (so Nicholson, Preaching, *passim*).

[5]Hobbs, "Composition", *passim*, Holladay, "Prototype and Copy", *passim*; idem, "Fresh Look", *passim*; Overholt, "Continuity", *passim*; W. McKane, "Relation Between Poetry and Prose in the Book of Jeremiah with Special Reference to Jeremiah 3:6-11 and 12:14-17", Prophet to the Nations, 269-84.

[6]It is obviously not true that documents written at different times *must* reflect development of ideas. However, if the trauma of the fall of Jerusalem stands between the A-source and the C-source, a development in thinking would be expected. A similar development in thinking is evident in the book of Ezekiel. Leslie Allen notes that "The fall of Jerusalem changed the nature of Ezekiel's prophesying from national judgement to salvation", (Ezekiel 1-19, WBC 28 [Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1994], xxxi). Moshe Greenberg notes these major blocks of material but points out that prophecies of salvation are not found exclusively in the material dating from after the fall of Jerusalem, (Ezekiel 1-20, AB 22 [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983], 4-6). Thus failure to find theological development in Jeremiah would be evidence that both the prose and poetic material originated at the same time.

What I am suggesting here is somewhat related to the "criterion of dissimilarity" in historical Jesus research, (cf. the discussion on pages 10-12, above). The chief difference is that in historical Jesus research the criterion suggests that what Jesus taught was

analysed and used as a control to examine the development of theological ideas in the confessions.[7]

The Theology of Jeremiah's Poetic Oracles

The oracles clearly portray Yahweh as the Lord of history. He overrules not only in the affairs of nations but also in the lives of individuals. Thus a doctrine of providence can be seen particularly in the call dialogue (Jer 1:4-10). Jeremiah is told that he was chosen for his task before he was born and that God will empower him. Thus Jeremiah is pictured as holding to a doctrine of personal election and not simply national election. He is commissioned to go fearlessly and promised that God will protect him. Accordingly, the same conditions of obedience that the Deuteronomists hold out for Israel's blessing, and which Jeremiah elsewhere endorses, are here individualised with reference to Jeremiah himself.

The poetic oracles stress the power and authority of God's prophetic word (Jer 1:10). Jeremiah's words are God's words (Jer 6:11) and they are to be instrumental in

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different both to what preceded it and what followed it. In the context of Jeremiah we would affirm only that the destruction of Jerusalem/exile formed a turning point in Israel's life and thinking. What preceded it could be expected to differ from what followed it--at least in degree.

[7]It may be objected that the confessions are too small a block of material to be analysed in this way. But at forty-seven verses the confessions are longer than books like Haggai and Nahum and almost as long as Habakkuk and Zephaniah.

plucking up and pulling down nations as well as planting and building them. He thus becomes the "tester" and "refiner" of Israel (6:27-30).

God's power over nature is emphasised throughout the poetic oracles (Jer 10:12-13; 31:35). He is the creator (Jer 10:16), he places the limits on the sea--the ancient Hebrew symbol for chaos (Jer 5:22 cf Job 26:12-14; Ps 74:13-17; 89:9-11; Isa 17:12-14; 51:9,10; 27:1),[8] and it is he who controls the seasons (Jer 5:24; 14:22).

The traditions regarding the exodus and conquest are important in the oracles (Jer 2:6,7; 3:19). Jeremiah believes in Israel's national election (Jer 14:21). The nation is God's holy nation and subject to his specific watchcare (Jer 2:3) The wilderness wanderings are seen as the "golden age" of Israel's relationship with God (Jer 2:2).[9]

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[8]A good discussion of water as a chaos symbol in the Old Testament and in earlier Caananite literature is found in J.J. Collins, The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel, Harvard Semitic Mongraphs 16 (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars, 1977), 96-99.

[9]This point is disputed by M.V. Fox, who insists that Jeremiah does not speak of Israel's loyalty to God in the wilderness but rather of God's love to Israel in the wilderness ("Jeremiah 2:2 and the 'Desert Ideal'", CBQ 35 [1973], 441-50). Fox's position is subjected to searching critique by M. deRoche, "Jeremiah 2:2-3 and Israel's Love for God during the Wilderness Wanderings", CBQ 45 (1983), 364-76.

On a slightly different tack R.M. Paterson suggests that Jeremiah's depiction of Israel in the wilderness highlights only that Israel was free of Baal worship at that time ("Repentance or Judgment: The Construction and Purpose of Jeremiah 2-6", ExT 96 [1984-85], 200).

The state of Israel in Jeremiah's day was one of long standing and widespread apostasy (Jer 3:21; 5:1-2, 7, 11; 6:7a, 10). The problem had begun "long ago" (Jer 2:20) in the time of the nation's "ancestors" (Jer 2:4). God is blameless for this state of affairs (Jer 2:31). He had remained faithful to the covenant and blessed Israel abundantly (Jer 5:7b). However, Israel had been defiantly rebellious (Jer 2:20, 29; 5:22a, 23; 6:16b-17, 28; 15:5-6a; 22:21) and the Israelites have "perverted their way" (Jer 3:21). They still refuse to repent (Jer 8:4-7), despite God's attempts to bring them back to him (Jer 2:30; 5:3). This refusal has led to a situation where the dissolution of the covenant is inevitable (Jer 12:7-8a). The imagery of marriage and divorce is used to depict this dissolution (Jer 3:1).

There is a practical atheism with regard to Yahweh (Jer 5:12, 6:10b) which infects not only the poorer classes (Jer 5:4) but also the spiritual leaders of the nation: priests, prophets and wisemen (Jer 5:13-14, 30-31; 6:13b-14; 8:8-11; 23:11, 18, 21-22), along with rulers (Jer 2:8, 26-27; 5:5).[10] Therefore, to the extent

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[10]This practical atheism causes Jeremiah to speak in such a way that he appears to utterly reject the Yahwistic cultus (Jer 6:30). However, his rejection of the cultus is not absolute. For example, he foresees a time when a reunited Israel will worship God on Mt. Zion, i.e., at the temple (Jer 31:6). Bright notes that "like all prophets, he decided that God's demands could be met, and the covenant bond maintained, through sacrifice and cultic observance alone; and for this reason he declared

that Yahweh is worshiped he is misrepresented.[11] Other

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that God was displeased with--nay rejected--the lavish cultus that an unrepentant people brought to him (e.g., 6:16-21). But this is far from a rejection of the cult as such. Not even such a passage as 7:21-26 can be driven so far. Here (v. 22) it might seem that Jeremiah is saying that God never instituted the sacrificial system at all, and that sacrifice had no place in Israel's religion in the earliest period. But the point lies in the balance between this verse and v. 23. The words, 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people,' are the formula of covenant. Jeremiah is not rejecting the cult as illegitimate in itself; he is saying that God's essential demands never had to do with ritual matters, but with obedience to the covenant stipulations, (Covenant and Promise, [Philadelphia, Penn.: Westminster, 1976], 162).

[11]Jer 2:27a is usually understood to refer to Baal and Asherah, but S.M. Olyan has argued that the reference is actually to Yahweh and Asherah, (S.M. Olyan, "The Cultic Confessions of Jeremiah 2:27a," ZAW 99 [1987], 254-59). This view develops from archaeological evidence uncovered at Kuntillet 'Ajrud that there was a belief in Israel that Yahweh had a consort. This evidence and its implications for Biblical studies are discussed in Z. Meshel, "Did Yahweh Have a Consort?" BAR 5 (Mar-Apr 1979), 24-34; J.A. Emerton, "New Light on Israelite Religion: The Implications of the Inscriptions from Kuntillet 'Ajrud," ZAW 94 (1982), 2-20; W.G. Dever, "Asherah, Consort of Yahweh? New Evidence from Kuntillet 'Ajrud", BASOR 255 (1984), 21-37; A. Lemaire, "Who or What was Yahweh's Asherah?" BAR 10 (Nov-Dec 1984), 42-51; R. Hestron, "The Lachish Ewer and the Asherah," IEJ 37 (1987), 212-23; *Idem*, "Understanding Asherah," BAR 17 (Sep-Oct 1991), 50-59; J.G. Taylor, "Was Yahweh Worshiped as the Sun?" BAR, 20 (May-June 1994), 53-61, 90-91; D.N. Freedman, "Yahweh of Samaria and his Asherah", Divine Commitment and Human Obligation, 2 volumes [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997], 1: 403-08; A.D.H. Mayes, "Juntillet 'Ajrud and the History of Israelite Religion", Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation, edited by J.R. Bartlett, [London: Routledge, 1997], 51-66).

The material from Kuntillet 'Ajrud comes from the late 9th/early 8th century, and thus predates Jeremiah. However, religious communities are notoriously conservative, and it is possible that the attitudes reflected in Kuntillet 'Ajrud persisted until the time of Jeremiah.

gods are also worshiped. Baal is specifically mentioned (Jer 2:8), but there are indications that Egyptian and Mesopotamian gods are also worshiped (Jer 2:18 cf 2:13). Such a national transfer of allegiance in religious devotion is unprecedented (Jer 2:9-11, 32; 18:13-16).

Jeremiah repudiates the false gods and mocks and derides those who worship them (Jer 10:2-5, 8-9, 14-15; 16:19b-20). He describes the false gods as "worthless" (Jer 2:4, 8) and as having defiled the land and made "my heritage an abomination" (Jer 2:7). They are "cracked cisterns" in contrast to Yahweh--who alone is God (Jer 10:6-7, 10)--is "the fountain of living water" (Jer 2:13; 17:12-13). Despite the fact that Baal is worshiped as a fertility God, drought prevailed (Jer 3:3; 14:2-6; 23:10).

The worship of false gods has serious moral and social consequences. These are suggested by the strong sexual imagery employed (Jer 2:20-25, 33; 3:1-2, 23; 5:7-8; 8:12; 9:2; 13:27; 23:10; 23:14). However, it is possible that this imagery is symbolic for apostasy rather then a literal description of Israel's immorality (Jer 3:20).[12] The "poor" are oppressed (Jer 2:34; 22:13).

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[12]Koch, The Prophets, 2: 22. The likelihood of Koch's position is perhaps weakened by Jer 23:13-14 which seems to draw a contrast between the sin of Samaria's prophets (prophesying by Baal) and "a more shocking thing" done by the prophets of Jerusalem (adultery, lies, and strengthening the hands of evildoers). It is possible that נאף ("adultery") is used here as a symbol of

"Greed" is a dominating motivation for people's actions (Jer 6:13a; 8:10; 17:11; 22:17), and the rich are castigated for being "treacherous" (Jer 5:26-27). Justice is perverted. Indeed, it is non-existent for the poor (Jer 5:28; 9:6a; 22:15-16).[13] "Violence" is commonplace (Jer 6:7b; 22:17) and the nation is characterised by falsity and "evil" (Jer 9:3-6; 8).

In Deuteronomic style, apostasy from Yahweh is portrayed as inevitably resulting in disaster for Israel (Jer 4:3b-4, 18, 22, 28; 5:6c, 9, 29; 6:6b, 8a, 10-11, 18-19; 8:19b; 9:7, 9; 10:21; 12:8b; 13:15-17, 22; 13:25-27; 14:10; 15:6b; 21:12b-14; 22:20b-23; 23:19-20; 30:15b).[14] Jerusalem would be at the mercy of military enemies from the North (Jer 4:5-7; 5:15; 6:1, 22-25;

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false worship rather than an indicator of immorality (Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 340, Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 13, Jones, Jeremiah, 307). However, if apostasy is meant, "the contrast with Samaria's prophets would lose its point" (Bright, Jeremiah, 151-52; c.f., Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 631, McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 574).

[13]This perversion of justice goes all the way through society to the king, who is admonished to "execute justice in the morning, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed" (Jer 21:12a).

Interestingly, although Jeremiah refers to the apostasy of Israel beginning long ago in the time of the ancestors (Jer 2:5; 14:20), he can still declare that in early times justice and righteousness did prevail among the people (Jer 22:15b-16). This contrast suggests a certain lack of systematic structure in Jeremiah's thinking.

[14]Jeremiah has an element of individualisation here as well. He specifically declares that the false prophets would be punished for their failure to serve Yahweh appropriately (Jer 6:15; 8:13; 23:12-15).

10:22; 13:20-21; 18:17; 22:7), symbolised both by wild animals (Jer 5:6; 8:17; 12:9) and by shepherds pasturing their flocks in the finest pastures (Jer 6:2-3; 12:10), who would besiege her (Jer 4:15-17; 6:3-6) and plunder her (Jer 2:15-17; 4:20-21; 8:10a; 12:11-12; 25:37-38; 26:18). Terror would come upon the people (Jer 8:15; 14:19; 15:8; 30:5) and the end result would be devastation and depopulation for Jerusalem and Judah (Jer 4:29; 5:10, 16-17; 6:8b, 12, 21; 8:14, 16; 9:10-11, 21-22; 10:17-20; 18-19; 13:24; 14:18; 15:2, 7-9; 22:6b; 25:34-35). Even the king would be included (Jer 22:18-19; 28-30). The grief of the survivors would be almost indescribable (Jer 9:17-22; 14:17-18; 22:10; 25:36; 30:6-7, 12-15a; 31:15).

Jeremiah's language sometimes suggests that it is not a human foe that is coming against Jerusalem but Yahweh himself (Jer 4:13; 13:26; 15:6b-8; 21:13-14; 22:6B; 25:30, 36; 30:23-24). His language is almost apocalyptic as he struggles to express the extent of the disaster (Jer 4:23-26; 25:30-32).

Israel is called upon to mourn the coming catastrophe (Jer 4:8; 6:26; 9:10), in which the false gods, worshipped with such zeal, will prove powerless (Jer 2:28; 4:30-31). Obedience and covenant faithfulness are seen as the only path to blessedness (Jer 12:13). Jeremiah calls for more than outward conformity. He

urges Israel to circumcise their hearts (Jer 4:4 cf 17:9-10).

God is portrayed as a loving and gracious God who has deep feelings for his people (Jer 3:12; 8:18-22; 9:1; 22:6). There are assurances of God's willingness to forgive the nation, if only it will return to him (Jer 3:22; 4:14). There are invitations for Israel to repent (Jer 6:16), although in other places the impossibility of Israel repenting is stressed (Jer 13:23).[15] Among the predictions of doom for Israel there are also promises of restoration (Jer 3:14, 22b, 23b; 5:10b; 6:9; 30:10-11, 17-20a, 21; 31:2-14, 16-22, 23b, 25) and assurances that safe refuge can only be found in Yahweh (Jer 16:19; 17:5-8).[16] The clearest promise of restoration is seen in the prediction of a new covenant relationship between the

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[15]Many scholars suggest a development in Jeremiah's thought, with the passages allowing for the possibility of repentance dated early in his ministry and those stressing the inevitability of punishment dated later (eg, Bright, Jeremiah, cii; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 5; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 780; T.M. Raitt, A Theology of Exile [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977], 35-45). These authors see the decisive moment coming with the destruction of the Baruch scroll by Jehoiakim (Jer 36), except for Raitt who suggests that the capture of Jerusalem provides the dividing line between the two phases of ministry (Theology, 44).

[16]Jeremiah gives the distinctive title "Hope of Israel" to Yahweh in 14:8 and 17:13. In the prose material the similar phrase "hope of their ancestors" is used (50:7).

renewed nation and Yahweh (Jer 31:31).[17] From this perspective, the election of Israel appears to be certain (Jer 31:35-37). The promise of God to Abraham that the nations would be blessed through Israel may still be fulfilled, if Israel repents and returns to the Lord (Jer 4:1,2). The promised blessing encompasses all Israel, including the ten northern tribes (Jer 31:9, 18-20; 51:5).[18]

Connected to the oracles of hope for Israel are oracles of doom for Israel's enemies (Jer 30:16, 20b; 46:3-24; 27-28; 47:2-48:9; 11; 14-20; 28-33; 40-49:11; 14-16; 23-33; 50:2, 11-16; 21-27, 31-32, 35-38, 41-43;

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[17]The dating, unity, authenticity and interpretation of the "Book of Consolation" (Jer 30-33) are vigorously discussed with scholars reaching a wide range of conclusions. The "new covenant" pericope is accepted as authentic by H.D. Potter, "The New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34", VT 33 (1983), 347-57; Patterson, "Jeremiah", 556; Jones, Jeremiah, 400; Bright, Jeremiah, 287; Thompson, Jeremiah, 580; Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 197; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 1037.

[18]Some scholars (eg Bright, Jeremiah, 285; Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 156-59; Koch, Prophets, 2:16) have seen in these references to the northern tribes evidence that Jeremiah, at some stage, engaged in a ministry in the north, or at least to the people of the north. This hypothesis is not strictly necessary. Jeremiah's theology is firmly based in the Mosaic covenant which encompassed all twelve tribes. This fact is sufficient to account for his references to Ephraim (Jones, Jeremiah, 374-77; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 1022-23).

Jeremiah still sometimes uses the title "Israel" with reference to the territory and tribes of the former northern kingdom. For example, in Jer 23:13 "Israel" clearly stands in parallelism with "Samaria".

51:1-23; 25-58).[19] Jeremiah prays for their destruction (Jer 10:23-25) and is later assured that it will take place.

Jeremiah is portrayed as one who feels deeply for his wayward people and intercedes for them (Jer 14:7-9, 20-22). However, Yahweh rejects Jeremiah's pleas and forbids him to continue his intercession (Jer 14:10).

The theological themes of the oracles can be summarised in the following list:

1. Individual election;
2. God's power manifest in the prophetic word and in nature;
3. The exodus traditions;
4. The longstanding defiant apostasy of Israel (syncretistic worship and idolatry) with resultant moral and social decline;
5. Disasters would inevitably follow from apostasy (in harmony with deuteronomistic views);
6. The love of God for Israel; and
7. The promise of Israel's restoration and the punishment of her enemies

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[19]The authenticity and unity of the oracles against the nations are hotly disputed, in debates which are intensified by the textual issues which are especially acute for this section of the book (Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, xlii). However, it appears that a solid core of material in the oracles is Jeremaic (e.g., see, Bright, Jeremiah, 299-362; Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 313.; Eissfeldt, Introduction, 362-64).

A comparison must now be made between the theology of the poetic oracles and the theology of the prose sermons. Caution must be exercised here that conclusions not be based on the absence of certain themes. There may be a number of circumstantial reasons why certain themes may be absent. Conclusions regarding theological development can only be validly drawn when a theme is found in both sections but is formulated differently.

The Theology of the Prose Sermons

Like the oracles, the prose sermons stress the exodus traditions (Jer 11:4;[20] 34:13).[21] Central to these traditions is the Mosaic covenant (Jer 11:3; 34:13). Obedience to the covenant commands is the condition of God giving Israel the land of Canaan (Jer 11:4-5).[22]

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[20]The distinctive image of Egypt as כּוּר הַבַּרְזֶל ("iron smelter") is picked up from Deut 4:20. The expression is elsewhere used only once (I King 8:21). There the allusion is also to the exodus.

[21]The vehemence with which Jeremiah rejects the proposal (made after the assassination of Gedaliah) that safety might be found in Egypt (Jer 42:8-22) may derive from his conviction that God's grace is most clearly experienced in coming out of Egypt, ie, the Exodus, (Brueggemann, "'Baruch Connection', 410; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 720). Bright prefers to link this vehemence to Jeremiah's unshakeable faith in the restoration of Israel to Palestine at the end of the exile, that is, to a new Exodus (Jeremiah, 257). What is beyond dispute is that this motif, which may be implicit in Jeremiah, is explicitly stated in Deut 17:16.

[22]"Mosaic" legislation regarding the Sabbath year is actually cited by Jeremiah (Jer 34:14 cf Ex 21:2-11; Deut 15:1,12). Failure to observe this law is a factor in the covenant curses falling on Israel (e.g., Jer 34:17-18).

However, throughout its history, Israel had not obeyed (Jer 11:6-8) and had therefore suffered the covenant curses (Jer 11:8; 22:8-9).

The theology of Jeremiah's prose sermons is distinguished from the Deuteronomic theology of the oracles by its attitude to the temple, which is said to have become a den of thieves (Jer 7:11). Jeremiah is

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The language of disaster here is general but its identification with the covenant curses is explicitly made by the covenant party that broke the stipulations of the covenant in a self-imprecation (Holladay, Jeremiah, 2:242-43; Brueggemann, To Build, To Plant, 110-11; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 1058; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 650; Jones, Jeremiah, 426; Keown, Scalise, Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52, 189; McKane, Jeremiah 2: 882).

The text of Jeremiah 34:18 is problematical and open to varied translations and interpretations. The LXX and MT differ substantially. The covenantal cutting of a calf disappears in the LXX only to be replaced by a reference to the golden calf of the exodus (see McKane, Jeremiah, 2: 873). However, the MT is generally regarded as superior at this point. McKane comments that "it is clear that the Sept. has no text-critical value [at this point]" (Jeremiah 2: 873).

The meaning of the cutting of an animal in connection with covenant making is also problematical. A number of competing proposals as to its meaning have been made (see McCarthy, Covenant and Treaty, 54-57 and G.F. Hasel, "The Meaning of the Animal Rite in Genesis 15," JSOT, 19 (1981), 61-64 for a survey of the options). Scholars who accept that the rite is a self-imprecation or self-curse include Thompson, Jeremiah, 613; Jones, Jeremiah, 426; M. Weinfield, "בְּרִית b^{e}rith", TDOT, ed. G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1975), 2: 262; McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant, 54-57.

Hillers has traced the ancient near eastern treaty background of the covenant curses (Treaty-Curses, *passim*). His work has been criticised because of the general nature of the covenant curses (eg by, Clements, Prophecy and Tradition, 16-17). However, Jeremiah (despite the difficulties in this passage) appears to lend support to Hillers' position.

insistent that the temple is not inviolable (Jer 7:4 cf 27:18-22) and uses the fate of Shiloh as supporting evidence (Jer 7:12-14; 26:6).[23] God would only dwell there "forever" if "you truly act justly one with another, if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your hurt" (Jer 7:5-7).

In Jer 7:5-7, the same concerns for social justice and religious purity which are so important in the oracles are summarised. The sins of Israel are collectively described as "not walk[ing] in the law that I have set before you" (Jer 26:4) and are more generally catalogued in terms of specific infringements of the Decalogue--theft, murder (19:4), adultery, false swearing, idol worship (Jer 7:9), and especially, sabbath desecration (Jer 17:19-27).[24] The demands that God places

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[23]The Deuteronomists put a great deal of importance on the temple. They insisted that the cultus be centralised there, and it became the geographical locus of their theology. This is clearly shown by the centralising legislation of Deuteronomy (e.g,. 18:6-8) and the Deuteronomic account of Josiah's reform (II Kings 23) which stresses the closure and defilement of non-Jerusalem cultic centres.

[24]Jer 17:19-27 is widely regarded as an exilic (or even post-exilic) addition to the book--precisely because of the attitude it manifests towards Sabbath keeping(see Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 958-59; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 509; Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 368-69; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 416-19; Jones, Jeremiah, 248-49; Nicholson, Preaching, 65-66; Bright, Jeremiah, 120). However, the authenticity of the passage is defended by N-E. A. Andreasen, The Old Testament Sabbath: A Tradition-Historical Investigation, SBLDS 7, Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1972, 31-34; Thompson,

on Israel are catalogued in terms of "act[ing] with justice and righteousness and deliver[ing] from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed", and of "do[ing] no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed[ing] innocent blood in this place" (Jer 22:3).

The prose sermons can speak violently against the cultus in its totality, although such denunciations are always set in the context of syncretism and moral indifference, as is the case in the oracles (e.g., Jer 7:21-22). However, it is plain that the prose sermons do not seek only for outward conformity to a pure cult, but for an inward renewal and spiritual religion (Jer 9:25; c.f., 11:15). God desires his laws to be written on the heart (Jer 31:33), but currently Israel has her sins inscribed there instead (Jer 17:1). The people are uncircumcised in heart and are therefore grouped with the uncircumcised nations around about (Jer 9:26).[25] This emphasis corresponds exactly with that found in the poetic oracles (Jer 4:4, 17:9-10).

Jeremiah, 427-28; Craigie, Jeremiah, 1: 239).

[25]When Jeremiah is given the cup of the Lord's wrath to give "to all the nations to whom I send you" (Jer 25:15), he presents it first to "Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah" (Jer 25:18)! Only then does he pass it on to Egypt, and Israel's other enemies (Jer 25:19-26). The unavoidable penalty about to befall them is that they would "fall and rise no more" (Jer 25:27).

Like the oracles, the prose sermons stress the apostasy of Israel.[26] Other gods are being worshipped (Jer 11:13; 16:18; 17:2; 32:35; 35:15; 44:3)--even in the temple (Jer 32:34). The worship of the "queen of heaven" is specifically mentioned as being widespread (Jer 7:17-18; 44:17), along with that of Baal (Jer 9:14; 19:5). Another specific example of false worship that is mentioned is that Israel practised human sacrifice (Jer 7:30-31; 32:35).[27]

The failure of Israel goes back to the "fathers" (Jer 7:22-24; 9:14; 11:10; 16:11; 34:14).[28] This apostasy of the fathers culminates with Manassah (Jer 15:4).[29]

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[26]Idolatry is listed as one of the specific causes of the exile (Jer 44:21-22).

[27]K. Koch suggests that this was due to an overliteralistic adoption of Mesopotamian religious customs. In Mesopotamia the children were not literally burnt in the fire but in Israel they were (Prophets, 2: 49).

[28]Jeremiah 32:30 (cf 31:13) uses a different image. It declares that Israel had been in apostasy since her "youth"--presumably an allusion to the exodus (see, Bright, Jeremiah, 295-96). In this way, Jeremiah castigates the entire history of the nation as being characterised by apostasy and failure.

The image of Israel's "youth" is used to make the same point in 3:25--which is written in prose. The poetic oracles also use the imagery in Jer 2:2; 3:4 without stressing the apostate nature of Israel at that time.

[29]Interestingly, Jeremiah accuses his contemporaries of worshipping gods (specifically the "Queen of heaven", v. 17) that were unknown even to their ancestors (Jer 44:3)--presumably an allusion to the Assyrian/Babylonian cult. J. Gray suggests that the "Queen of heaven" may refer to "the cult of the goddess Ishtar [which] may have been introduced from Mesopotamia under Manassah" ("Queen

However, in the oracles the failure of the fathers is not always described as false worship. Rather their problem is said to be that they "did not obey or incline their ear" but "walked in their own counsels, and look backward rather than forward" (Jer 7:24 cf 13:10-11; 29:19; 32:33; 35:15).[30] Thus failure to heed the prophets is held up as the major example of their sin (Jer 7:25).[31] However, the

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of Heaven", IDB, ed. G.A. Buttrick, [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1962], 3: 975 cf Thompson, Jeremiah, 679).

Carroll points to the inconsistency of Jeremiah claiming that Israel was in apostasy throughout her history--always worshipping gods she did not know (Jeremiah, OTL, 729). However, יָדַע ("know") can have the meaning of "to make a covenant with" (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 245; J. Bergman and G.J.Botterweck, "יָדַע yada';", TDOT, ed. G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1986], 468; c.f., H.B. Huffmon, "The Treaty Background of *yada*", BASOR, 118 [1966], 31-37; *idem* and S.B. Parker, "A Further Note on the Treaty Background of Hebrew *yada*", BASOR, 184 [1966], 36-38). The inconsistency seen by Carroll vanishes if the text is read "other gods with which neither you nor your fathers made a covenant".

It is interesting that the idolatry persisted in Egypt among those who fled there after the murder of Gedaliah. Jeremiah continued to warn of the dire consequences it would surely bring in its trail (Jer 44:2-30).

[30]To "turn backward rather than forward" in Jer 7 suggests Israel had turned its back on God and became "worse instead of better" (Bright, Jeremiah, 54). The phrase is unique here in the Old Testament, although it is similar in intent to Jer 2:27 (Holladay, Jeremiah 1: 262). Seeing that Jer 2:27 is set in the context of a discussion of the exodus from Egypt, one wonders if Jeremiah is not subtlely suggesting that Israel has been heading back to Egypt (Babylon) ever since the original liberation. Jeremiah stresses that this refusal to heed the prophets had been persistent in contrast to the faithfulness of the Rechabites (Jer 35:14, 16).

[31]C.f., 29:19; 32:33; 35:15. Jeremiah insists that like himself, these early prophets all proclaimed a

sins of Jeremiah's contemporaries were "worse" (Jer 7:26) because "you are, every one of you, following your stubborn evil will, refusing to listen to me" (Jer 16:12 cf 25:4,7).[32] The wilfulness of this refusal to follow Yahweh is stressed (Jer 18:12; 25:7).

The sure penalty for Israel's sins is that she will be "cast out of my sight"--just as the northern kingdom had been (Jer 7:15; 9:12-13, 15; 11:11, 17; 17:3-4;

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message of warning and doom and not a sunny message of assurance (Jer 28:8-9). A problem that is given special attention in Jeremiah and especially in the prose sermons is that of "false prophets" (Jer 14:13-15a; 23:14-17). They made it more difficult for the people to follow the word and way of God by proclaiming a different word--a word of assurance rather than doom (Jer 23:17,25; 27:16-17; 29:31). Their false prophecy is paralleled with the earlier apostasy of Israel into Baalism (Jer 23:26-27). The false prophets are grouped with the pagan prophets, diviners, dreamers, soothsayers, and sorcerers who are giving similarly optimistic messages in the face of the Babylonian threat in neighbouring countries (Jer 27:9-10). Just as in the poetry the false prophets are designated as destined for punishment (Jer 14:15b-16; 17:26, 29-32, 34; 29:20-23, 32). The fact that God is fully knowledgable about their activities and teachings is stressed (Jer 23:23-24; 29:23).

The "false prophets" might be included among the "shepherds" who "destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture" (Jer 23:1-2). The comment of Carroll on this last passage is apposite: "In the context of the royal cycle a statement about shepherds may be taken to refer to the community's kings, but the term is broader than that and includes all the ruling elements charged with the oversight of the people" (Jeremiah, OTL, 444).

[32]In the prose sections at least, "The key to the disaster is the community's attitude to Jeremiah, especially the failure of the kings to respond to his preaching" (Carroll, Chaos to Covenant, 27). Carroll applies this comment to the entire book but he appears to overlook the substantial differences between the prose and poetic sections at this point.

22:24-26; 23:33-40).[33] God's wrath poured out on Israel (Jer 25:28-29; 33:5) will leave it defeated in battle (Jer 21:4-5; 29:17-18) and utterly devastated (Jer 7:21; 11:16; 13:9, 12-14; 16:16-17; 22:5; 25:9-11; 32:28, 36).[34] Jerusalem would be captured (Jer 37:8) after a terrible siege during which the population would be reduced to eating their own children (Jer 19:9; c.f., 29:17-18; 34:17).[35] There would be widespread slaughter (Jer 7:32-34; 15:3-4a; 19:6; 33:5; 34:17)[36] and the dead would lie

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[33]When Jeremiah declares that God is "going to bring on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem every disaster that I [God] have pronounced against them" (Jer 35:17), he may be alluding to the covenant curses rather than simply to the repeated messages of doom from the prophets. However, Jeremiah uses very similar language in apparent reference to the contents of his first scroll in 36:31 (McKane, Jeremiah, 2: 921; Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 261).

Not only will the nation in general be cast out, so will the city of Jerusalem (Jer 32:31). Like the nation, Jerusalem had provoked God's wrath since its foundation and God had hidden his "face from this city" (Jer 33:5). Jeremiah elsewhere declares that the depopulation of the city will be total, both for animals and humans (Jer 33:10, 12; 36:29).

[34]The nature of the devastation is specified to some degree: the city would be burnt with fire (Jer 21:10; 34:2; 37:8, 10; 37:18, 23). Surrender of the city would spare it this fate (Jer 37:17). Otherwise, its fate was inevitable. Jeremiah records the fulfilment of this prophecy in Jer 39:8.

[35]Jeremiah stresses the inevitability of Jerusalem's capture by declaring that even if Judah reduced the Babylonian army to just wounded men, the city would still fall to the Babylonians (Jer 37:10).

[36]See also Jer 16:1-9 which stresses the widespread nature of the slaughter through Jeremiah's decision not to marry, have children, or join in mourning rituals. In the not too far distant future the children would die and the there would be no one to mourn for them (c.f., Jer 25:10).

unburied under the sun, moon and stars which they had worshiped (Jer 8:1-3; 16:4,6; 19:7).[37]

The gods worshiped in preference to Yahweh will finally prove useless (Jer 11:11; 28:29) as Yahweh will actively fight against Israel (Jer 21:6-7; 28:28). The survivors will be cast out of the land of Israel (Jer 16:13), scattered among the nations (Jer 9:16; 16:9; 29:18),[38] where they will be mocked (Jer 29:18) as they serve the foreign gods continually (Jer 16:13)[39]. The

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[37]The imagery is echoed in Jeremiah's picture of the aftermath of the judgement "against all the inhabitants of the earth" (Jer 25:30-31). At that time, "Those slain by the LORD on that day shall extend from one end of the earth to the other. They shall not be lamented or gathered, or buried; they shall become dung on the surface of the ground." (Jer 25:33).

[38]The symbolic action of Jer 13:1-7 declares the site of the dispersion to be "the Euphrates". R.P. Carroll argues that this particular passage only makes sense as a literary construction and not as an historical account (Jeremiah, OTG, 60-62). However, Bright insists on the likelihood that Jeremiah literally carried out the action as described, except that he probably went to Parah (near Anathoth) instead of to the Euphrates. The two words are spelled similarly in Hebrew--פְּרָת ("Euphrates") and פְּרָה ("Parah"). In fact, the phrases "to the Euphrates" and "to Parah" are spelled identically in unpointed Hebrew--פרתה (Jeremiah, 96). Bright has support from Aquila's translation which reads εἰς Παραν (Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 188).

Elsewhere the destination of the exiles is designated as the "north" (Jer 25:9). Significantly, the final punishment that falls on Babylon is also described as coming from the "north" (Jer 50:3, 9).

[39]Jeremiah is not suggesting that Israel would practice her idolatry in exile. In fact, the exile was meant to renew Israel's knowledge of Yahweh (Jer 16:21). Rather, the king of Babylon understood himself as the servant of his gods. Therefore serving him was in a sense serving his gods (c.f., Jer 5:19; Holladay,

invading enemy is identified as the Chaldeans (Jer 33:5) or Babylonians (Jer 34:2). Zedekiah and his circle will be treated mercilessly by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 21:9; 34:3-5, 21) and Jehoiakim will be killed (Jer 36:30). The end result will be "everlasting disgrace and perpetual shame which shall not be forgotten" (Jer 23:40).

In the prose sermons as in the poetic oracles, Jeremiah is forbidden to intercede for the nation whose doom is certain (Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:11-12). Neither wisdom, might nor wealth would provide any security (Jer 9:23). However, their doom is conditional on their actions. Repentance could turn it away (Jer 18:1-11; 25:5-6; 26:3, 13).[40] Furthermore the people are urged to leave Jerusalem before judgements fall upon it (Jer 21:8,9). Those who stay in the city are embracing death, whereas those who go out and surrender to the Babylonians will live (Jer 21:9).

In the prose sermons the kings of Judah are subjected to hostile treatment.[41] The kings begin a list-

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Jeremiah 1: 191; Carroll, Jeremiah, 186).

[40]Indeed, if Israel were to obey God Jerusalem would rule over kings rather than being conquered by them (Jer 22:4).

[41]The only Judean King in Jeremiah's time to escape criticism and condemnation is Josiah. This fact has led scholars to puzzle about the exact relationship of Jeremiah to Josiah's reform.

The persistent attempts of William Holladay to cut the Gordian knot by interpreting the "thirteenth year of his [Josiah's] reign" (Jer 1:1) as the year of Jeremiah's

-which includes officials, priests, prophets and citizens--of those who have provoked the wrath of Yahweh (Jer 32:32). Manasseh is identified as the instigator of the final phase of the nation's apostasy (Jer 15:4). A merciless treatment at the hands of the Babylonians is

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birth and not his prophetic call must be judged as a failure ("The Background of Jeremiah's Self-Understanding: Moses, Samuel and Psalm 22", Prophet to the Nations, 317-23; *idem*, "Jeremiah and Moses: Further Observations", JBL 85 [1066], 17-21; *idem*, "The Years of Jeremiah's Preaching", Interpretation 37 [1983], 146; *idem*, "A Proposal for Reflections in the Book of Jeremiah of the Seven-Year Recitation of the Law in Deuteronomy (Deut. 31:10-13", Das Deuteronomium, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 68, Ed N. Lohfink [Leuven: University Press, 1985], 327; *idem*, Jeremiah, 1: 1-2). It is explicitly contradicted by the prose declaration, "For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah to this day, the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened" (Jer 25:3).

Holladay's views on this issue have generally been rejected (see Thompson, Jeremiah, 50-56; Bright, Jeremiah, LXXXVII; McKane, Jeremiah, 1:1-5; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 3). Wang sees Holladay's programatic essays on the topic as being "substantially correct" but nevertheless rejects Holladay's proposed lower chronology, listing five major weaknesses in Holladay's argument ("Frustration", 38-39). Even J.R. Lundbom, Holladay's one-time student, rejects his teacher's views at this point--although he clearly senses the strength of Holladay's arguments and resolves the difficulties by attempting to distinguish between the *call* and the *commissioning* of the prophet ("Jeremiah 15:15-21 and the Call of Jeremiah", SJOT, 9 (1995), 143-155).

An earlier scholar with views similar to those of Holladay is J.P. Hyatt ("Jeremiah", 779-780; *idem*, "The Beginning of Jeremiah's Prophecy", Prophet to the Nations, 63-72). Another earlier scholar who attempts to drastically amend the traditional chronology of Jeremiah's life (albeit in a different way) is C.F. Whitely ("The Date of Jeremiah's Call," Prophet to the Nations, 73-87). However, the generally held consensus view appears to be impervious to all attacks.

predicted for Zedekiah (Jer 21:9; Jer 34:3-5, 21; 37:17), his wives and his children (Jer 37:23)[42]. This same king and his circle of advisors are compared with a basket of rotten figs (Jer 24:8) and Jeremiah is emphatic that they will have no part in Israel's glorious future (Jer 24:8-10).[43] Jehoiachin (Coniah) will die in captivity (Jer 22:24-26). The kings are generally regarded as shepherds who have plundered and destroyed the flock rather than having protected it (Jer 23:1-2). The exile will bring a (temporary) hiatus in the Davidic dynasty (Jer 36:30). During Jeremiah's lifetime, God's servant is to be "Nebuchadnezzar", not the Davidic King in Jerusalem (Jer 27:6; 43:10). Failure to submit to Nebuchadnezzar is therefore to invite the punishment of God (Jer 27:8).[44] However, in the future God will act as a shepherd in bringing the remnant of Israel back from Babylon (Jer 23:3).

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[42]Jeremiah records the fulfilment of these predictions in 39:5-8.

[43]However, surrender to the Babylonians could spare Zedekiah the worst of his fate (Jer 37:17).

[44]The punishments specified are based on the Deuteronomic covenant curses--sword, famine, pestilence, destruction (Jer 27:8,13; 32:36 cf Deut 28:15-68). Those nations that submitted would not be driven into exile (Jer 27:11). Thus, exile--another covenant curse (Deut 28:64-65) was another punishment for resistance. The application of this explicitly covenant language to the relationship of the nations to Nebuchadnezzar suggests the extent to which he had truly replaced the Davidic king (established by covenant) as God's servant.

Throughout the sermons Yahweh is described as loving, just and righteous (Jer 9:24). He is the revealer of secrets to those who call on him (Jer 33:3). He has a long history with Israel. Thus the exodus traditions are important in the prose sermons as they are in the oracles (Jer 7:25).

As with the poetic oracles, the prose sermons contain promises for the future of Israel and the punishment of her enemies (Jer 12:14-15; 25:15-29, 33; 29:11; 30:3, 8; 33:6-13).[45] The exile in Babylon will be for seventy years, not forever (Jer 25:11; 29:10); but the punishment meted out to Babylon will see her become an "eternal waste" (Jer 25:12 c.f., 50:3; 51:62-63).[46] A "remnant" of the flock will be brought back from Babylon;[47] the land of Palestine will be "sown" (זָרַע) with

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[45]God's authority over the nations--and, consequently, his ability to assure Israel of the certainty of her future restoration--is anchored in his creatorship of the world to which Jeremiah makes passing reference (Jer 27:5; 33:2).

Prose sayings declare the defeat of Egypt, (Jer 46:25-26), Moab (Jer 48:12, 21-27, 34-39), Edom, (Jer 49:12, 17-22), Elam (Jer 49:34-39) and Babylon (Jer 50:3, 8-10, 17-20, 28-30, 33-34, 39, 44-46; 51:24).

[46]Yahweh's punishment of Babylon, like his use of Babylon to punish Israel, stresses the fact that Yahweh is Lord over the whole earth, not just over Israel. This theme is developed in greater detail in Second Isaiah.

[47]Similar imagery is elsewhere used when Israel is described as a "lost sheep" attacked and devoured by any wild animals that chance upon her (Jer 50:6-7).

people and animals (Jer 31:27; 32:41; 33:10-11, 13);[48] Jerusalem will be rebuilt (Jer 33:7), enlarged (Jer 31:38-40), "healed" (רָפָא) and restored to prosperity (Jer 33:6) and security (Jer 33:16). The cleansed city would be renamed יְהוָה צִדְקֵנוּ ("The LORD is our righteousness"), (Jer 33:16).[49]

The future of Israel lies with those who would be exiled in Babylon and not with those who will remain in Palestine.[50] The exiles will bring the temple vessels with them when they return to Jerusalem and the temple services recommence (Jer 27:22; 33:18).

The restored nation will be given faithful shepherds (Jer 23:3-4)--specifically, the "righteous branch" of David (Jer 23:5; 30:8; 33:13), who will be the foundation of a renewed Davidic Covenant (Jer 33:17).[51] A future

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[48]Jeremiah emphasises this fact by legally purchasing a field on the eve of Jerusalem's destruction (Jer 32:6-14 cf 32:44).

[49]This name is, as Carroll observes "a pun on Zedekiah's name"--צִדְקִיָּהוּ (Jeremiah, OTL, 637). As such it reflects the rejection of the kings of Jeremiah's time--even in the context of affirming a future role for the Davidic dynasty. The fulfilment of the promises God had made to Israel (v. 14) is immediately elaborated with a reference to the Davidic branch (v. 15). The "promises" thus refer primarily to the Davidic covenant.

[50]Jeremiah emphatically makes this point with his illustration about the two baskets of figs--one good, one bad. The bad figs represent those who would remain in the land; the good figs those who would go into exile (Jer 24:1-10).

[51]The Davidic covenant is considered to be as permanent as the cycle of day and night (Jer 33:20-22). Jeremiah links the Davidic dynasty as closely as possible

Israel is envisaged that is purged of her idolatry (Jer 12:16-17), cleansed of her guilt (Jer 33:8) and has "a heart to know that I am the Lord" (Jer 24:7) is envisaged. It will be an Israel who will fear Yahweh (Jer 33:9) will and pray to him, rather than to the Baals (Jer 29:12,13). The people will return from the north in a new exodus (Jer 16:14-15)--the glory of which will utterly eclipse the memory of the exodus from Egypt. Their new relationship with God is described in terms of a "new covenant" (Jer 31:31-34).[52]

The theological themes of the prose sermons can be summarised in the following list:

1. Exodus and covenant traditions;
2. The violability of the temple;
3. The importance of social justice and ethical behaviour, as summarised in the decalogue;
4. The importance of sabbath keeping;
5. The inadequacy of a syncretistic cult;
6. The need of "heart" religion;
7. The longstanding apostasy of Israel--especially with regard to idolatry;

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to the levitical priesthood at the temple (Jer 33:17-22). The perpetual covenant with David is seen as an evidence of the election of the people of Israel(Jer 33:23-26). Thus the Siniatic and Davidic covenants are bound together.

[52]Covenantal language is also used for this experience in Jer 24:7 (cf Jer 31:1; 32:38-40).

8. The failure of Israel to heed the prophets--culminating in the rejection of Jeremiah himself;
9. The inevitable punishment of Jerusalem and the nation as a whole--which repentance could have averted and which surrender could mitigate;
10. The permanence of the Davidic covenant, which is linked closely with the Siniatic. The permanence of the covenant is affirmed in spite of the manifest hostility of Jeremiah towards the last Davidic kings;
11. The loving character of God;
12. The future restoration of Judah (and of Israel as a whole);
13. The future overthrow of Israel's enemies--especially Babylon.

There is obviously a considerable body of material in common between the oracles and the sermons. Both stress the Exodus traditions; both stress the longstanding apostasy of Israel, especially in regard to idolatry; both stress the appalling social conditions that prevail in Jeremiah's day.

The differences between the two blocks of material are more revealing than the similarities. In the sermons, the note of individual election is missing. The emphasis is purely corporate. However, the themes of

Israel's failure to heed the prophets and of false prophets are much more prominent than in the poetic oracles. The delineation of the moral evils in Israel (in terms of the decalogue) is much more detailed than in the oracles. The inclusion of sabbath-breaking among the sins that would cause the captivity has no "prototype" in the oracles. Hostility towards the kings is much more evident in the prose. Paradoxically, the emphasis on the eternal duration of the Davidic covenant and its link with the Siniatic covenant (eg the insistence that there will always be a Davidic king on the throne and a levite in the sanctuary) is also much stronger in the sermons. Descriptions of the fate of Jerusalem appear to be more intense.

How can such differences best be accounted for? The most obvious answer is the trauma of the exile is anticipated in the oracles and reflected in the sermons. In the light of the exile concerns about the individual might well be expected to be swallowed up in concern for the nation.[53] Similarly, the fact of the exile vindicates

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[53]Individuality is not totally swallowed up in the Jeremiac prose traditions. There are reference to specific individuals suffering a specific fate because of their sins in the prose accounts (eg Hannaniah--28:15-17; Shemaiah--29:30-32; and, Zedekiah--34:3-5). However, such individualisation is absent from the prose sermons.

With our explanation of this phenomenon we are handling a two-edged sword. Although it is possible for the catastrophe of the exile to lead to a reduction in individualisation it is equally possible that with the complete ruination of the nation there would have been an

the rejected message of Jeremiah. It is easy to see how, in Jeremiac circles, the theme of the apostasy of Israel may well have been focused on their failure to heed the prophets. The moral evils delineated in the sermons are just the evils the community of Jews in exile would have been wrestling with. Sabbath keeping would have received increased emphasis among the exiles as a means of maintaining corporate identity in the face of pressures

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increased concern for the individual. It is often felt that Ezekiel 18 reflects just such an increased individualisation (G. Fohrer, Introduction to the Old Testament, [London: SPCK, 1968], 417; J.W. Wevers, Ezekiel, NCB [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1969], 108; Eichrodt, Theology, 1: 376; G. von Rad, The Message of the Prophets [London: SCM, 1968], 199; B. Vawter and L.J. Hoppe, A New Hope, ITC, [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991], 99).

However, it is important not to overstress the individualism of Ezekiel. Wevers summarises Ezekiel's general understanding of corporate responsibility very adequately: "The exiles do take corporate responsibility as is indicated by his use elsewhere of the term 'rebellious house', eg 17:12. Jerusalem will be completely destroyed and no regard for the righteous in it (such as Jeremiah) will save it (cf Gen 18:22-33). Usually no provision is made for their escape in the general destruction, though in the vision of the departing glory the scribal messenger does mark the righteous, 9:4-6," (Wevers, Ezekiel, 108). Wevers sees chapter 18 as being inconsistent with this general teaching. However, it must be understood that the function of the message of chapter 18 is to stress the corporate responsibility of Ezekiel's generation (and not simply the "fathers") for the exile (see, P. Joyce, Divine Initiative and Human Response in Ezekiel, JSOTSS 51 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989], 33-60; J.S. Kaminsky, Corporate Responsibility in the Hebrew Bible, JSOTSS 196 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995], 155-178; C.R. Briggs, The Book of Ezekiel, [London: Epworth, 1996], 54; H. McKeating, Ezekiel, Old Testament Guides, [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993], 83-85; B. Lindars, "Ezekiel and Individual Responsibility", VT 15 [1965], 452-67).

to fully assimilate. Hostility to the Davidic kings who led the nation to disaster would be intense. However, hopes for restoration would have centred on the temple and monarchy--both of which had been taken from the nation. Obviously, memories of the siege and capture of Jerusalem would have been vivid among the exiles.

Thus the hypothesis that the prose sermons are "snapshots" of the Jeremaic tradition from an exilic perspective seems to be confirmed by our analysis of the theological development between the prose and the poetic oracles. It is now necessary to see which body of tradition the confessions lie closest to.

The Theology of the Confessions

Establishing the theology of the confessions is a difficult task, given the limited amount of material involved and the nature of that material. The main issue in the confessions is that of "theodicy". Their tone is often disillusioned and dispirited. It is important to understand not only the theology of the confessions (i.e., the theology they express) but also their "anti-theology" (i.e., the theology that they are reacting against in disillusionment).

In the confessions, God is portrayed as a one who enters into relationships with individuals (Jer 11:18).

He intervenes--for good (Jer 15:11)[54]--and reveals secret plots (Jer 11:18) which cannot be hidden from him (Jer 18:23). He commissions and re-commissions (Jer 15:19). The privilege offered to Jeremiah is that he can be God's "mouth" (Jer 15:19). He expects that God will judge righteously and execute retribution against the wicked (Jer 11:20; 17:18; 20:12).[55] However, a crisis of faith exists because the wicked[56] prosper (Jer 12:1). This crisis leads Jeremiah to call passionately for justice and punishment to be executed upon his enemies (Jer 12:3;

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[54]However, the compassion of God is a source of concern to Jeremiah in Jer 15:15b rather than a source of comfort, (Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints", 414).

[55]The punishment of Jeremiah's enemies is specifically described in terms of the exile: death by sword and famine leading to total extermination (Jer 11:22-23).

[56]The "wicked" in this context are clearly Israelites, who nominally serve God but are actually far from him (Jer 12:2). As far as Jeremiah is concerned they are guilty of a practical atheism (Jer 12:4b).

Those who are aligned against Jeremiah include the spiritual leaders of the people--priests, wisemen, and [cultic] prophets (Jer 18:18)--as well as the "people of Anathoth" (Jer 11:21), Jeremiah's own kinsmen (Jer 12:6). He also finds himself opposed by "my close friends" (Jer 20:10).

That the crisis is a crisis *of faith* is evident from Jeremiah's telling admission that "You will be right, O LORD, when I lay charges against you" (Jer 12:1). Jeremiah knows his affirmations about God are true even though they do not seem to be confirmed by his own personal experience. Similar affirmations of faith are made in the final confession where Jeremiah expresses confidence in the LORD as a "dread warrior" who will make his enemies stumble (Jer 20:11) and affirms that God "has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers" (Jer 20:13).

15:15; 18:18-19, 21-22a, 23). Not only so, Jeremiah can describe God as a "deceitful brook" (Jer 15:18) and as one who has "enticed" and "overpowered" him (Jer 20:7).

The defencelessness and utter social rejection faced by Jeremiah are stressed (Jer 11:19, 21; 18:20a, 22b; 20:7b).[57] His vunerability leads to despair over his own existence (Jer 15:10; 20:14-18[58]). There are passionate defences of his own innocence (Jer 12:3; 15:10,[59] 17; 18:20b).[60] Foremost among Jeremiah's virtues is his enthusiasm for God and his word (Jer 15:16; 17:16;

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[57]The death of Jeremiah is plotted by his enemies. Because he is childless (Jer 16:2) such a plot would destroy the memory of his name (Jer 11:19). The rejection of Jeremiah comes about in part because of an apparent delay in the fulfilment of his predictions (Jer 17:15), (Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints", 414-15).

[58]Jer 20:14-18 is generally regarded as part of the final confession (so Diamond, Confessions, 114-21; Baumgartner, Lament, 76-79; Bright, Jeremiah, 134). However, O'Connor argues that it should not be so regarded on rhetorical grounds, (O'Connor, Confessions, 75-80).

[59]It is a matter of conjecture among scholars as to whether the declaration "I have not lent, nor have I borrowed", should be understood in terms of normal social interaction (so Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 939; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah, 209; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 346; Thompson, Jeremiah, 392) or in terms of "entrance liturgies" of the temple (so Jones, Jeremiah, 220-21). However, neither interpretation makes any material difference to the overall meaning of the passage.

[60]However, Jeremiah's innocence is not absolute. God himself urges him to repent in Jer 15:19.

20:9).[61] Proclamation of God's message is the source of Jeremiah's pain (Jer 15:15; 20:8).[62]

There is an awareness that not just Jeremiah but the entire land is suffering because of the sins of the wicked (Jer 12:4). Indeed, God has "abandoned" (נָטַשׁ) his "house" (בַּיִת) and his "heritage" (נַחֲלָה) (Jer 12:7) and "hates" (שָׂנֵא) it (Jer 12:8). The fire of God's anger will burn "forever" (עַד־עוֹלָם)[63] (Jer 15:14)--a statement which

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[61]It is difficult to determine whether the "words" which Jeremiah ate with such relish (Jer 15:16) refer to his prophetic call/message (so Jones, Jeremiah, 224; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 210; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 942; Thompson, Jeremiah, 396; McKane, Jeremiah, 1:352-53; Baumgartner, Lament, 36), or to the book of Deuteronomy and/or other earlier prophetic and psalmic works (so Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 458; Diamond, Confessions, 76 cf Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 119-20). However, the parallels with the call of Ezekiel (Ez 2:8-3:3) make the former interpretation more likely.

The interpretation of Jer 15:16 is complicated by a major textual variation between the MT and LXX, which reads "I bear the reproach of those who despise thy words. Destroy them and thy words will become the joy and delight of my heart" (cf NEB). The underlying Hebrew Vorlage would appear to differ only slightly from the MT. (Hyatt lists only two specific variants: מְאֹאֲצִי ["from those who despise"] for נִמְצְאוּ ["were found"] and כַּלֵּם ["consume them"] for וָאֹכְלֵם ["and I ate them"]). The LXX reading is accepted as superior by some scholars (e.g., Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 942; Baumgartner, Lament, 46-47), while the MT is favoured by others (e.g., Jones, Jeremiah, 224; Bright, Jeremiah, 106; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 458). Fortunately, resolution of this question does not materially affect the reading of the passage in its entirety.

[62]His faithful proclamation not withstanding, Jeremiah insists that he has not wanted the disastrous events which he has predicted to come to pass (Jer 17:16)

[63]This reading is textually uncertain. BHS reads עֲלֵיכֶם ("over you") but some manuscripts read עַד־עוֹלָם ("forever"). A few manuscripts have a mixed text,

seems to indicate the total rejection of Israel. The people will be given into the hands of enemies--clearly the Babylonians[64]--because of their rebellion (Jer 12:7-8).[65] The people will serve as slaves in a foreign land (Jer 15:14) and their wealth will be plunder (Jer 15:13).

Jeremiah calls to God for deliverance and "healing" (√רפא) (Jer 17:14), but receives no word of comfort in response to his demand for justice. Indeed, God has become a "terror" (מַחְתֶּה) to Jeremiah rather than a refuge (Jer 17:17), and he is assured things will get worse (Jer 12:5). The same promises that have already proven to be inadequate are reiterated (Jer 15:20-21; c.f., Jer 1:18-19)

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reading either עֲלֵיכֶם עַד־עוֹלָם ("over you forever") or עַד־עֲלֵיכֶם ("continuously over you"), (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 447). Since Jer 15:13-14 is very similar to Jer 17:3-4, (see above, chapter 3, footnote 75) Holladay understands the reading עַד־עוֹלָם to be a corruption from that passage (Ibid.; c.f., Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 52; Wimmer, Prophetic Experience, 188, 190). However, עַד־עוֹלָם is the reading prefered by Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard (Jeremiah 1-25, 207), McKane, (Jeremiah 1-25, 344), Carroll, (Jeremiah, OTL, 328), Thompson, (Jeremiah, 391), Chambers, (Prophetic Ambivalence, 59), Gerstenberger, ("Jeremiah's Complaints", 395).

[64]The reference to the "iron of the north" (Jer 15:12) is one of the most obscure in the entire book. However, the early references to the "enemy from the north" make it highly likely that here the reference is also to the Babylonians (see O'Connor, Confessions, 35-36; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 348-49; Thompson, Jeremiah, 393; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 210 cf Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 455).

[65]This divine giving into the hands of the enemy is symbolised graphically by the divine call to the wild animals to come and devour Israel (Jer 12:9).

The theological themes of the confessions can be summarised as follows:

1. individual election;
2. the loving, gracious, just character of God (although his character is constantly challenged and debated);
3. the genuineness of Jeremiah's ministry;
4. the rejection of Jeremiah and the resultant rejection of Israel by God; and,
5. the inscrutability of God in the face of the suffering of God's people.

A number of key themes in both the poetry and prose are totally absent from the confessions (e.g., the exodus and Sinai covenant traditions) while others are common to the confessions and to both the prose and the poetry (e.g., the validity of Jeremiah's ministry). However, the theology of the confessions is clearly more closely connected with that of the poetry than with the prose of Jeremiah. This is seen particularly in regard to the emphasis on individual election.[66]

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[66]The theme of individual election is found especially in connection with the "call narrative"--especially Jer 1:5 (Skinner, Prophecy and Society, 27). William Holladay, in particular has made much of the parallels between Jeremiah and Moses and Samuel at this point ("The Background of Jeremiah's Self-Understanding: Moses, Samuel and Psalm 22", Prophet to the Nations, 313-24; *idem*, Jeremiah and Moses: Further Observations", JBL 85 (1966), 17-17) A different analysis of the relevance of these parallels is given by C.R. Seitz, ("The Prophet Moses and the Canonical Shape of Jeremiah", ZAW 101

Of the seven theological themes in the oracles one is clearly reflected in the confessions (individual election). Four others are assumed and become the basis for Jeremiah's complaints (the love of God; the power of God revealed in the prophetic word [but not nature]; the apostasy of Israel; and the disastrous consequences of the national apostasy). The remaining two (the exodus tradition; the promise of national restitution) are not touched upon throughout the confessions. These facts do not mean that the confessions develop each of the themes in exactly the same way as do the oracles, nor would such and exact correspondence be expected.

By way of contrast, none of the thirteen theological themes isolated in the sermons is clearly reflected in the confessions. Ten of these themes (Exodus tradition; violability of the temple; importance of decalogue; sabbath-keeping; inadequacy of syncretism; need for heart religion; inevitability of punishment; Davidic covenant; future restoration; and, the overthrow of Israel's enemies) are totally missing from the confessions. The remaining three (Israel's apostasy; Israel's rejection of the prophets; and the character of God) are assumed. It

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[1989], 3-27).

Connections between the call narrative and the confessions have long been noticed (eg Keil, "Jeremiah", 18; Skinner, Prophecy and Society, 210 cf Bright, "Prophet's Lament", 335-37; Lundbom, "Call of Jeremiah", 143-55).

is important to realise that two of these themes are also evident in the oracles. Themes common to the oracles, the prose sermons and the confessions cannot be used to demonstrate a special relationship between the confessions and either the prose or the poetry.

The Evidence from Vocabulary

The conclusions drawn from the theological differences evident between the proaic and poetic sections of Jeremiah are supported by an analysis of the book's vocabulary.[67] A survey of some 250 major words used in the confessions reveals some valuable data.[68] A

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[67]Any exploration into vocabulary distribution is fraught with dangers and difficulties. Deciding which vocabulary to study is a complex task in its own right. In the context of Jeremiah, the following questions arise: "Are words which are common in the confessions but rare in the rest of Jeremiah significant for our study? Are words which are rare in the confessions but common in the rest of Jeremiah more important?" And "are words which are common in both the confessions and the individual laments of the Psalms important?"

It must also be kept in mind that the real unit of meaning is not the "word" but the sentence (J. Barr, The Semantics of Biblical Language [London: SCM, 1961], 233-38). It is possible for a single word to be used with different meanings in different contexts.

A specific difficulty arises in the context of our examination of the poetry and prose of Jeremiah. It may be possible that distinctively "poetic" vocabulary was deliberately copied by the writers, editors and collectors of the prose (or the final editors of entire book).

As a result of these difficulties our conclusions here are likely to be minimalist rather than maximalist. The evidence can only be used when it is overwhelmingly clear.

[68]See Appendix One. Given the textual difficulties in Jeremiah, it is not possible to go beyond an

total of forty-seven words are used more than twice in the confessions. In addition twenty-four words from the confessions are not used in the Psalms, although they are used elsewhere in Jeremiah. They are thus not part of a stereotypical lament formulation but are part of the language of the book. A considerable amount of vocabulary in the confessions proves to be common to both the prose and poetry sections of Jeremiah.

Two groups of words stand out as particularly prominent in the confessions: legal words (eg רִיב ["contend, dispute"], צֶדֶק ["righteous, righteousness"], צַדִּיק ["just, righteous"]) and words referring to the spoken word (eg דָּבָר ["word"], דִּבֶּר ["speak"], אָמַר ["say"], נִבָּא ["announce, prophecy"]).[69] Legal words are relatively common in the individual laments of the Psalms and may be regarded as examples of typical vocabulary for this *Gattung*.[70] Reference to the spoken word may be more reflective of prophetic activity.[71]

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approximate survey of the vocabulary of the confessions.

[69]In this connection one should also note the expressions כְּפִי תִּהְיֶה ("you shall serve as my mouth") in Jer 15:19.

[70]For attempts at explanation as to why these words should be typical of the lament *Gattung*, see Appendix Two.

[71]Overholt, "Jeremiah", 619. Too rigid a line should not be drawn between cultic and prophetic activity. The role of prophetic activity within the cult has been emphasised by scholars such as A.R. Johnson, (The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel [Cardiff: University of Wales

Vocabulary which highlights the spoken word seems to be fairly evenly distributed between the poetic and prosaic sections of Jeremiah and is consequently of little help in our present quest. The situation, however, is different with regard to the judicial vocabulary used in the confessions. Several judicial words occur exclusively or predominantly in the poetic sections of the book. These include רִיב (in nounal and verbal forms);[72] שָׁפַט ("judge, govern");[73] צֶדֶק ("rightness,

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Press, 1962], *passim*) and J. Eaton, (Vision in Worship [London: SPCK, 1981], *passim*). However, as Baumgartner points out there are elements in the confessions which are not reflected in the (cultic) laments in Psalms (Poems, 80-83).

[72]Of the eleven verses which contain this root, nine are unanimously regarded as being written in poetry by Bright, Holladay and the NRSV translators. Jer 15:10 and 50:34 are regarded as prose in the NRSV. However, both Bright (Jeremiah, 106, 344) and Holladay (Jeremiah, 1: 445; 2: 398-99) take these verses to be poetry. McKane concurs with the view of these scholars (Jeremiah, 1: 343; 2: 1284).

[73]מִשְׁפָּט ("judgement, justice"), however, is found in both prose and poetry in equal proportions.

righteousness");[74] צַדִּיק ("just, righteous");[75] and, רָשָׁע ("wickedness, act wickedly").[76]

This use of judicial terms suggests that Jeremiah was familiar with legal language and used it extensively. Such legal language is admittedly common in the individual laments of the Psalms but it is not a feature of the later reworking of the Jeremaic traditions reflected in the prose of the book.

Outside the two groupings of vocabulary in the confessions mentioned above (spoken word and judicial language) the same pattern can often be discerned.[77] For

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[74]Of the six verses that use this word in Jeremiah only Jer 33:16 is taken as prose by all three of my sources (Bright, Holladay, NRSV). Jeremiah 23:6 and 50:7 are treated as prose in the NRSV. With regard to Jer 50:7--but not Jer 23:6 the NRSV is supported by McKane(Jeremiah, 1: 559; 2: 1251). If both these verses are in fact written in prose, צֶדֶק ("rightness, righteousness") should be deleted from this list.

[75]צַדִּיק ("just, righteous") only occurs once outside the confessions (Jer 23:5) and twice in the confessions (Jer 12:1; 20:12). The single non-confessional usage is considered prose by the NRSV (supported by McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 559). If this is correct צַדִּיק ("just, righteous") should be deleted from this list.

[76]רָשָׁע ("wickedness, act wickedly") is not necessarily a legal term but it is the antithesis of צֶדֶק ("rightness, righteousness"), (G.H. Livingston, "רָשָׁע (rasha') be wicked, act wickedly", Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, ed. R.L. Harris, G.L. Archer, and B.K. Walke [Chicago: Moody, 1980], 2: 864) and can be used with the sense of "criminal" (J. Greenberg, "Crimes and Punishment", IDB, ed. G.A. Buttrick [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1962], 1: 735).

[77]Although a comprehensive survey of judicial language found in the confessions has been attempted, no claim to comprehensiveness can be made here. Some words clearly occur more frequently in the poetry than in the

example שָׂחַק ("laugh") and אַלּוּף ("chief") only occur in Jeremiah's poetry. The words חָזַק ("grow firm, strong, strengthen") and יָכֹל ("be able, have power, prevail, endure") occur predominantly in the poetry.[78] The phrase מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב ("terror on every side") is used five times in Jeremiah (6:25; 20:3,10; 46:5; 49:29).[79] Of these texts

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prose. This fact supports the conclusions drawn from the comprehensive survey of judicial language. However, it cannot be used as independent evidence, the possibility that other words occur more often in the prose than the poetry cannot be disallowed.

[78]The case of חָזַק ("grow firm, strong, strengthen") is particularly impressive. The word occurs in fifteen verses in Jeremiah. Of these one is in the confessions (Jer 20:7) and only two (Jer 31:32; 52:6) are considered to be prose by all my sources. Two more (Jer 50:33-34) are treated as prose in the NRSV. (The NRSV is not suppported by McKane in either case, Jeremiah, 2: 1284). The uses of חָזַק ("grow firm, strong, strengthen") is still overwhelmingly in the poetic sections of Jeremiah.

The use of יָכֹל ("to be able") is less decisive. It is found in five confessional verses (15:20; 20:7,9-11). Outside the confessions, it is used six times in the prose sections and nine times in the poetic oracles (i.e., fifty percent more often). However, the NRSV translates Jer 1:19 as prose--and is supported by McKane (Jeremiah, 1: 22). If this is correct, the distribution between poetry and prose is almost even.

[79]This phrase occurs outside of Jeremiah in Ps 31:14 and Lam 2:22. Jeremiah is often thought to have coined the prase (eg W.L. Holladay, "The Covenant with the Patriarchs Overturned: Jeremiah's Intention in 'Terror on Every Side' [Jer 20:1-6]", JBL 91 [1972], 307) although others see it as a conventional phrase (eg H.-J. Kraus, Psalms 1-59: A Commentary, [Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1988], 364). Its significane in Jeremiah--especially in chapter 20--has generated considerable discussion.

Upon his release from prison Jeremiah declares that the name of the priest Pashur has been changed to מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב ("Terror-all-around"). It is generally accepted that there is some connection between his old and new names (conra Keil, "Jeremiah", 744-45 cf Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 970)--although the nature of the connection is not

only Jer 20:3 is clearly prosaic.[80] However, its placement in juxtaposition with the seventh confession raises the possibility that it was taken over by the editor/writer of Jer 20:1-6 in deliberate imitation of the poetry of the seventh confession.

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readily apparent (Bright, Jeremiah, 132).

A.M. Honeyman suggests that the usual translation "terror all around" is not appropriate in this context which is not about "encompassing terror" but on punishment of the Pashur and his supporters. The cause of terror would be the overwhelming enemy and not the priest ("*Magor Mis-sabib* and Jeremiah's Pun", VT 4 (1954), 424). He suggests that, although מָגוֹר means "terror" normally, it never has that meaning when used in conjunction with מִסָּבִיב ("all around, on every side"). Rather in this context it has the connotation of "destruction" ("Jeremiah's Pun", 425).

Holladay suggests that מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב actually has a multiplicity of meanings and should be left untranslated (Jeremiah, 1: 543 cf "Jeremiah's Intention", 307-17). Thus he proposes that מָגוֹר has the connotations of "terror", "enmity" and "sojourning in exile" and that מִסָּבִיב should be understood notionally: "from every point of view" (Jeremiah 1: 542; "Jeremiah's Intention", 306-07). As such it is a reversal of the meaning of Pashur derived from a putative Aramaic etymology "fruitful on every side". Thus it signals the cancellation of the promises of the covenant. Holladay's position is largely supported by D.L. Christensen, "'Terror on Every Side' in Jeremiah", JBL 92 (1973), 498-502. Carroll on the other hand regards Holladay's position as "over-sophisticated" (Jeremiah, OTL, 391). Jones is likewise unconvinced and prefers the usual translation "terror [or 'horror'] on every side". He declares attempts to find word plays here--presumably he is refering to Holladay--as "esoteric mumbo-jumbo" (Jeremiah, 270). McKane is also dismissive of this view (Jeremiah, 1: 463)

[80]All three of my sources are unanimous regarding these verses: Jer 20:3 is regarded as prose; the others as poetic.

Conclusion

The overall picture of the theological development of the book of Jeremiah confirms that its poetry is more likely to have originated with Jeremiah than is its prose. The confessional material taken as a whole has more theological links with the poetry than with the prose. This suggests that the confessions have their origin with the prophet Jeremiah and that consequently their "I" should be understood in an individualistic way.

This conclusion is confirmed by an analysis of the vocabulary used in the confessions. Of the two clear blocks of vocabulary discernible in the confessions one (spoken word) is elsewhere equally distributed between the poetry and the prose, but the other (judicial language) is used far more frequently in the poetry then the prose. The same pattern holds true for a number of other key words and phrases in the confessions, although their use has not been explored comprehensively. This fact confirms an origin for the confessions in the life time of Jeremiah and not in a later period. Since a corporate understanding of the confessions is predicated on their exilic or post-exilic origins, the linguistic data also confirms that their "I" should be understood individualistically.

Our conclusions thus far support a life setting of the confessions in the life and experience of Jeremiah

himself. That fact inevitably raises the question of how and why they were included in the book of Jeremiah. It is to the question of their role in Jeremiah that this study now turns.

The Confessions in Context

Thus far the confessions have been examined in relative isolation. Their *Gattung* has been studied and its use has been compared with the use of the *Gattung* elsewhere in Jeremiah. The theology of the confessions has been compared with that of other blocks of material in Jeremiah. However, in both the study of *Guttang* and theology, the concern in this thesis has been with the confessions as a discrete unit of material.

Attention has been given to the original meaning of the confessions. Now attention must be given to their role and function in the book of Jeremiah as a whole. What redactional meaning do they have? Is the redactional meaning the same as original meaning? Is the degree of individuality in them unchanged?

The confessions were open to redaction on three levels:[1] within the individual confessions themselves; in the arrangement of the confessions in relation to one-

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[1]It should be pointed out that even if all the material in the book of Jeremiah is authentic, and even if the book was edited by Jeremiah and/or Baruch a process of redaction may still have taken place. Inevitably, the very act of selecting material and placing in its present order reflected concerns apposite to a time when Jeremiah's prophecies had largely been fulfilled (J.G. McConville, "Jeremiah: Prophet and Book", TynBul 42 [1991], 92-95).

another;[2] and, in the placement of the confessions in the context of the other material in Jeremiah.[3] We must also reckon with the possibility of layers of redactional context--especially if we take McKane's proposal of "rolling corpus" seriously.[4] It is possible that the confessions were given a certain redactional meaning when incorporated into blocks of material, but this meaning was modified as those blocks were themselves incorporated into larger units (ultimately the book in its final

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[2]Beyond recognising that the first three [four on Diamond's counting] confessions (as they now stand) receive a divine response; while the last three [four on Diamond's counting] do not, S. Blank denies any significance to the ordering of the confessions ("The Prophet as Paradigm", Essays in Old Testament Ethics: J. Philip Hyatt, in Memorium, edited by J.L. Crenshaw and L.T. Willis, [New York: KTAV, 1974], 125-26). He may be overly pessimistic at this point.

[3]The tentative nature of any reconstruction is highlighted by the diversity of opinion among scholars on these matters. For example, Holladay argues that the confessions as they now stand reflect their original chronological order (Jeremiah, 1: 361). However, Smith denies this assertion, declaring, "the arrangement of the laments is secondary" (Laments, 2). The question would appear to be beyond resolution because clear evidence for either position is lacking.

[4]McKane, Jeremiah, 1: l-lxxxxiii. Unfortunately, as W. Brueggemann points out, McKane never develops this stimulating idea to any great extent ("'Baruch Connection'", 406).

form).[5] Unfortunately, the identification of the blocks of material in Jeremiah 10-20 is hotly disputed.[6]

The procedure adopted here involves examining of the role and function of the confessions in isolation, then examining their role and function in their final context.[7] The final redaction of the confessions in Jeremiah reveals a strengthening of legal emphasis; an increased representative role for Jeremiah; a greater paradigmatic function for the confessions; and, a new explanatory function for the confessions. Each of these issues has ramifications for the degree of corporality of the "I" of the confessions and will be examined in turn.

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[5]This creates the further possibility that the redactional meaning of the confessions differs in the MT and the LXX (A.R. Diamond, "Jeremiah's Confessions", 33-50).

[6]Smith points out that scholars use a variety of approaches in their analysis of this section of the book of Jeremiah. Some (eg McKane) decline to offer any unit divisions; others (eg Holladay) use thematic criteria. Still others (eg Carrol, Diamond, O'Connor) use structural criteria (Laments, 31-32). Our analysis follows the approach of McKane which Smith observes, "may represent the better part of wisdom". He adds, "there are numerous difficulties involved in delimiting the units within chapters 11-20" (Laments, 32).

[7]Limitations of time and space mean that no attempt will be made to trace any extended hypothetical history of redaction with related development in the role and function of the confessions.

The Role and Function of the Confessions

In his review of A.R. Diamond's dissertation on the confessions, L. Stulman makes the wide ranging assertion that:

> the confessions, in my opinion, are far too diverse and complex to be subsumed under a single rubric or literary function, and D[iamond]'s very fine contextual analysis does as much at times to disprove his thesis as to prove it. Several poems, for example, depict Jeremiah as a paradigm of the suffering servant (suffering thereafter need not be looked upon as shameful but rather as a consequence of obedience to Yahweh); others serve as a defence of Jeremiah's prophetic integrity ...; still others are apparently intended to shatter popular notions regarding the Zion-temple cult. All of these motifs seems [sic] to *stand on their own without any direct dependence upon the theodicy theme*.[8]

Stulman's views are overstated. There does not seem to be any evidence that the confessions were attempting to counter popular notions regarding the "Zion-temple cult".[9] Likewise, the confessions--in and of themselves--do not depict Jeremiah as a "suffering servant".[10]

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[8]L. Stulman, "Review of The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context: Scenes of Prophetic Drama, by A.R. Diamond, JSOTSS 45 (Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1987)", CBQ 51 (1989), 317-18, emphasis original.

[9]Smith, Laments, 27

[10]H.G. May draws attention to parallels between the "servant songs" and the confessions which he proposes can be explained in terms of a common dependence on the individual lament *Gattung* ("The Righteous Servant in Second Isaiah's Songs", ZAW 66 [1954], 236-44). However, it does not *necessarily* follow that Jeremiah and the author of the servant songs used that *Gattung* with an identical intention in mind.

The theme that stands out clearly within the confessions is that of Jeremiah's prophetic legitimacy. This fact can be demonstrated in a number of different ways. It is significant that the closest parallels to the confessions in the book of Jeremiah are found in the account of Jeremiah's call (Jer 1:4-18).[11] Throughout the

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The position of A.H.J. Gunneweg should also be noted here. He argues that the purpose of the confessions is to portray Jeremiah as the exemplar of the righteous sufferer ("Konfession oder Interpretation im Jeremiabuch", ZTK 67 [1970], 395-416). This would make the Jeremiah of the confessions at least partially parallel to the Isaian "Suffering Servant"--who is clearly a righteous figure who suffers meaningfully (Isa 53:4-6). Interestingly, C.R. North lists B. Duhm and K. Holzhey as scholars who "saw in the Servant a type of the suffering righteous man and of the people in its ideal calling" and observes that the same theme is found in the meditation on fourth servant song found in Wisdom of Solomon 5:1-7 (The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah [London: Oxford University Press, 1948], 4,8). Such a position is very similar to that of Gunneweg on the Confessions.

However, Gunneweg's entire position on the confessions has been sujected to rigorous critique (Clines and Gunn, "Jeremiah 20", 400-01). We would add one further criticism: in seeing the Jeremiah of the confessions as the exemplar of the righteous sufferer Gunneweg has confused the teaching of the confessions as such with later reflections on them by others (cf Polk, Prophetic Persona, 128-30). In this Blank's comments are suggestive: "Putting on the record his confessions, Jeremiah *set in motion* the process by which he became a paradigm". He further suggests that this process continues in the production of the servant songs ("Paradigm", 126-27).

[11]The parallels are so strong that J.L. Mihelic, includes the call passage (Jer 1:4-19) in his list of confessions ("Dialogue with God", 43). This classification is not helpful. The account of the call is clearly different from the confessions (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 358), but it does highlight the relationship.

E.D. Lewin argues that the function of the call

confessions, Jeremiah faces opposition, apparently from other prophets as much as anyone else (Jer 18:18 cf 2:8; 5:30).[12] The words of his opponents echo his own.[13]

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account is to affirm the legitimacy of Jeremiah's ministry. In other words this account was proclaimed publicly at some stage ("Arguing for Authority", 108).

[12]Jer 18:18 lists three specific classes of people that Jeremiah appears to have clashed with: prophets, priests and wise men. These clashes lead to plots against Jeremiah. Holladay argues that the connection between this verse and the rest of the confession is original and not secondary. He concludes that the plotters refered to in verse 18 are, in fact, the optimistic prophets refered to in the rest of the unit (Jeremiah, 1: 528-30 cf Baumgartner, Poems, 56-59).

An alternative explaination is offered by McKane who regards the connection between verse 18 (prose) and verses 19-23 (poetry) as secondary (Jeremiah, 1: 437 cf Jones, Jeremiah, 260; Diamond, Prophetic Drama, 91; O'Connor, Confessions, 55-57; Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 270-76). The opponents in verse 18 are thus unspecified ("they") and not to be limited to the optimistic prophets. Craigie, Kelley and Drinkard suggest the plotters are "the people as a whole" (Jeremiah 1-25, 253).

[13]Magonet, "Last Confession", 309. M. Fishbane makes the same point specifically with regard to Jer 20:8,10--חָמָס וְשֹׁד ("violence and destruction") is a cry against the violence in his society (6:7) now transformed to express the violence used against the prophet, perhaps even by God. The mocking מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב ("terror all around") used against him is Jeremiah's own phrase of warning used against Pashhur earlier in the chapter (20:3) and elsewhere in the Book (6:2; 46:5; 49:29). The verbs פָּתָה ("entice") and יָכַל ("to be able") which he used of God's power over him express the desire of his enemies to overcome the prophet. The נְקָמָה ("your retribution") which is seen below (v. 12) and elsewhere (17:10) as a divine prerogative (Ps 94:1) is here the expressed wish of his enemies against him" (Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts [New York: Schocken, 1979], 98-99).

There are allusions to his prophetic messages sprinkled through the confessions. Although his opponents reject his message (Jer 11:21) and seek to silence his voice (Jer 11:19; 18:20, 23a),[14] Jeremiah affirms that he has been faithful to his calling (Jer 15:16)[15] and lived worthily of it (Jer 15:10, 17;[16] 17:16).

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[14]Smith interprets עֵץ ("tree") Jer 11:19 as Jeremiah and בְּלַחְמוֹ ("with its fruit") as his message (Laments, 4). The later expression is the more difficult of the two. Holladay proposes repointing it to לַחֲמוֹ ("his opponents") which moves the focus from Jeremiah's message to his opposition (Jeremiah, 1: 372-73). Numerous other attempts have been made by translators (from the LXX onwards) and scholars to render the expression meaninful. A convenient summary is provided by McKane, (Jeremiah, 1: 256-58). Perhaps the best solution is that of McKane who proposes a repointing to בְּלֻחְמוֹ, giving rise to the translation: "Let us cut down the tree while the sap is in it" (Jeremiah, 1: 258). The focus would than appear to remain on Jeremiah rather than move to his message.

[15]J. Lundbom lists five important evidences that Jer 15:16-20 refer to Jeremiah's prophetic call:

1. Jeremiah's eating of God's words (Jer 15:16) is reminiscent of Ezekiel's call (Ez 3:1);
2. Jeremiah was given God's name, signifying ownership;
3. Jeremiah's social isolation (Jer 15:17) recalls Ezekiel's reaction to his call (Ez 3:15);
4. Jeremiah experiences God's "hand" on him (Jer 15:17) just as Ezekiel did at his call (Ez 3:14);
5. In Jer 15:19 the phrase "you will be my mouth" echoes the account of the call (Jer 1:9) and the promises of Jer 15:20 summarise the promises given at the time of Jeremiah's call (Jer 1:18-19). ("Jeremiah 15:15-21 and the Call of Jeremiah", SJOT 9 (1995), 147-48.

For a discussion of some of the problems relating to verse 16 (which is vital to Lundbom's argumentation), see above, chapter 4 footnote 67).

[16]The phrase מִפְּנֵי יָדֶךָ ("under the weight of your hand") refers to the prophetic call, or perhaps more generally to "prophetic inspiration" (McKane, Jeremiah, 1:354-55;

However, in cursing the day of his birth he attempts to repudiate his call (Jer 20:14-18; 15:18),[17] which he sees as the cause of his pain (Jer 20:7-8). Possible allusions to Moses in the confessions highlight the theme of prophetic legitimisation.[18] The divine response to

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Holladay, Jeremiah, 1:460).

[17]For details of what is implied in such a curse see, T. Jacobsen and K. Nielsen, "Cursing the Day", SJOT 6 (1992), 187-204.

Jeremiah is pictured as having been called from birth (G.V. Smith, "The Use of Quotations in Jeremiah 15:11-14", VT 29 [1979], 230 cf Holladay, Jeremiah 1: 563). Lewin denies that Jeremiah is repudiating his ministry and suggests that he is simply describing what being a true prophet of God entails in his time ("Arguing for Authority", 116-17). This approach certainly ties the passage into the overall theme of prophetic legitimisation. Wang goes further and denies any connection between Jer 20:14-17 and Jeremiah's call ("Frustration", 39).

There are certainly difficulties in the traditional understanding of Jer 20:14-18. The centrality of the "messenger" is crucial in this regard and a number of proposals have been made made in an attempt to alieviate the difficulty. Holladay conveniently summarizes them (Jeremiah, 1: 560-66).

However, if Lewin has correctly understood Jeremiah's intention, the prophet uses extremely strong language to make his point. Jones notes that he has used "*the strongest possible terms* to express the truth that he did not wish to deliver the terrible message that was given to him" (Jeremiah, 272).

Furthermore, it is difficult to construe Jer 15:18 (despite a textual variant in the LXX) as anything other than a virtual repudiation of Jeremiah's prophetic calling (Bright, "Prophet's Lament", 330). It is followed by a call for him to repent (שוב, "turn back") and a reissuing of the promises first given to him at his call (Jer 15: 19-21 cf 1:18-19).

[18]According to J.E. Levenson, the call of Moses is echoed in Jer 20:9 where fire and the word of God are connected ("Some Unnoticed Connotations in Jeremiah 20:9", CBQ 46, [1984], 225). Wimmer draws attention to the fact that Moses "sits alone" (Ex 18:14) just as

Jeremiah's laments alludes to his prophetic call and re-issues that call (Jer 15:19-21 cf 15:11).[19]

It is clear that the primary function of the confessions was originally to defend the integrity of Jeremiah's prophetic vocation. This fact suggests that, contrary to common opinion, the confessions may have been

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Jeremiah does in Jer 15:17 ("Prophetic Experience", 218).

[19]The phrase אִם־לֹוא הִפְגַּעְתִּי בְךָ בְּעֵת רָעָה ("surely I have imposed enemies on you in a time of trouble") may allude to Jeremiah's prophetic call. Unfortunately, the contextual setting is subject to a range of textual, syntactical and interpretive difficulties that certainty is impossible here (Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 327).

The MT makes God the speaker in verse 11 (אָמַר יְהוָה, "Yahweh said"). However in the LXX the speaker is Jeremiah (γένοιτο δέσποτα, "Be it so, Lord" from אָמַר יְהוָה). Many commentators accept the LXX (eg Muilenburg, "Confession", 15; Bright, Jeremiah, 109; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 939-40, Patterson, "Jeremiah", 548, Jones, Jeremiah, 221) but Holladay accepts the MT--although he concedes that the text is corrupt (Jeremiah, 1: 446 cf Carroll, Jeremiah, 327).

The meaning of the verb פגע in this context is disputed. Its basic meaning is "to meet, encounter, reach" (Brown, Driver, Briggs, Lexicon, 803). However, such an enounter could be hostile or friendly. It could lead one to entreat. Thus a variety of translations are offered: "intervened" (NRSV; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1:447); "those who survive" (McKane, Jeremiah 1:343); "inflicted you" (Diamond, Confessions, 52), "rendered suppliant" (Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience"); "entreated you" (Muilenburg, "Confession", 15; O'Connor, Confessions, 27).

On Holladay's reading of the verse אִם־לֹוא הִפְגַּעְתִּי בְךָ בְּעֵת רָעָה is seen as parallel to אִם־לֹא שֵׁרוּתְךָ לְטֹוב. He translated this phrase "I swear, 'I have armoured you'" As such it would prepare the way for the reference to "iron and bronze" (echoing the call narrative, 1:18) in the following verse. Thus verse 11 may refer to the trials of prophetic ministry and God's provision to meet them (Jeremiah, 1:453-54).

uttered publicly.[20] It follows in the original setting of the confessions that the "I" was clearly and exclusively individualistic, applying to Jeremiah himself.

The theme of prophetic legitimisation is still quite clear in the finally redacted form of the confessions,[21]

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[20]So J.L. Berquist, "Prophetic Legitimation in Jeremiah", VT 39 (1989), 135-37 cf Berridge, Word of Yahweh, 157; Wimmer, "Confessions", 71-77. O'Connor suggests that the "public" utterance may have been limited to Jeremiah's "support group" (Confessions, 96). (On the role and necessity of a "support group" in relation to prophetic activity see R.R. Wilson, Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980], 28-32; 51-62; 76-83).

More typically Blank describes public utterance of the confessions by Jeremiah as "improbable" ("Paradigm", 122; cf Muilenburg, "Confession", 16). It should be remembered that it would not be at all difficult to compile a sizeable list of "improbable" things which the prophets are portrayed as doing. For example, is the public proclamation of the confessions any more improbable than Ezekiel acting out some of his dramatic parables? Ironically, Blank sees these acted parables as analogous to the publication of the confessions ("Paradigm", 124).

[21]A good introduction to this theme is found in Berquist, "Prophetic Legitimation", 129-39. The following points should be noted in particular. It is recognised by a number of scholars that the call account and the final confessions form an inclusio around a major block of material (Lundbom, Jeremiah, 48; Lewin, "Arguing for Authority", 106). This inclusio effect emphasises the theme of prophetic legitimisation within that section.

It should also be noted that the veiled possible allusions to the call of Moses in the confessions are matched by much clearer allusions outside the confessions (eg Jer 15:1). The issue here is not primarily prophetic legitimisation, but the futility of intercession. However, the effective placement of Jeremiah in the company of Moses and Samuel also serves to indicate that his ministry is as legitimate as theirs. Seitz suggests that a key theological concern in the prohibition against intercession given to Jeremiah, his confessions and the direct connection with Moses in Jer 15:1 is to show that

but it has been overlayed with other meanings and emphases.

The Confessions in Context

Greater Explanatory Function

The position and final redaction of the confessions helps to provide an explanation of the exile as part of the development of this topic within the book of Jeremiah. One of the themes of the book is that Israel had been faithless and had not heeded the voice of God heard through the prophets. The clearest example of this is the rejection of Jeremiah, as explicitly stated in Jer 16:10-12.[22]

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he is part of the succession of of true prophets envisaged by the Deuteronomists ("Canonical Shape", 5-12).

As Smith points out, the word שֵׁם ("name") helps tie the unit Jer 13-15 together. In this section Jeremiah (Jer 15:16), the people (Jer 14:9), and the false prophets (Jer 14:14) all lay claim to the divine name. The focus on prophetic integrity and efficacy is made even sharper by explicit reference to it in Jer 14:17-19; 15:18 (Smith, Laments, 51). A similar phenomena occurs in chapter 20 with the juxtaposing of מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב ("terror is all around") in the confession (Jer 20:10) and in the conflict story which precedes it (Jer 20:3).

There are also incidental hostile notes regarding the [false] prophets scattered throughout Jer 10-20 (eg Jer 13:13; 14:18).

[22]The clear antecedent of the charge that "they have not listened to me" (16:12) is the failure of Israel to listen to Jeremiah depicted in 15:19. The reference to God's words in 15:16 also seems to be relevant here.

The same theme of Israel's faithlessness can be seen in the first two confessions. In the preceding block of material, God complains that

> they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of an evil will. So I brought upon them all the words of this covenant which I commanded them to do, but they did not (Jer 11:8).

This complaint is followed by an affirmation that Israel's doom was certain (Jer 11:15), followed by an example of Israel's rejection of God's word (in the first confession, especially verse 21). The second confession is immediately followed by God's statement of his intention to forsake Israel (Jer 12:7). The reason is again Israel's failure to "listen" (Jer 12:17; c.f., 13:10). The confessions thus fit into their redactional context here as examples of the sins of Israel which led inevitably to the exile.[23]

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[23]Jer 12:4, which is notably obscure and is often regarded as being secondary, or, at least misplaced, (Peake, Jeremiah, 1: 186; Bright, Jeremiah, 87; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 916; Rowley, "Interpretation", 221)--seems to make the same point: the land suffers because of the wickedness of the people living in it. However, Jeremiah is not concerned with wickedness in general, but specifically with the people's wickedness in rejecting him and his divine message (Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 180, 192). How does the land suffer? The verse itself suggests drought; the wider context suggests exile.

The transition from drought to exile is a feature of the sixth confession (Jer 18:21-22) and other parts of Jeremiah (e.g., Jer 14, especially verses 1-11). Martin Kessler points out that the structure of 14:8-9 emphasises "Yahweh's seeming absence"--a prominent theme in the confessions ("From Drought to Exile: A Morphological Study of Jer 14:1-15:4", Society of

The redactional setting of Jer 17:14-18 should also be noted. The chapter begins with a threat of exile (Jer 17:1-4). This threat is followed by a lengthy Deuteronomically flavoured explanation that trusting God leads to blessing, but rejecting him results in curses (Jer 17:5-13; c.f., Deut 28:1-68).[24] This section closes

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Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 1972, 2: 506). A number of other features of this chapter also echo the confessions: Yahweh as a "mighty warrior" (14:9 cf 20:11); the abiding knowledge of prophets and priests (14:18 cf 18:18); the lack of healing (14:19 cf 15:18; 17:14); the theme of "terror" (14:19 cf 17:17; 20:10); and, people being called by God's name (14:9 cf 15:16).

Of course, it needs to be recognised that this concentration of ideas in chapter 14 may be as much a result of redactional activity as is the proximity of this material to the confessions. The chapter is made up of material produced in disparate *Gattungen* and posssibly on disparate occasions (Skinner, Prophecy, 128; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 929; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 199-200; Bright, Jeremiah, 103; contra Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 422).

[24]The parallels with Deuteronomy are noted by Jones, Jeremiah, 240. Others have stressed the parallels with the more strongly individualized wisdom literature (eg Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 352).

Holladay includes 17:5-8 to his list of confessions (Jeremiah, 1: 3-8 cf Thompson, Jeremiah, 419). This view has not won much support. (Hyatt points out that the poem's viewpoint is quite at variance with Jeremiah's own experience ["Jeremiah", 951-52] cf Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL 353). More commonly, the passage is regarded as a late addition to Jeremiah which is largely based on Ps 1 (eg Bright, Jeremiah, 119 cf Jones, Jeremiah, 241, and, Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 951 who argue for dependency of Ps 1 on Jer 17). However, a pre-occupation with sources and "authenticity" hinders an appreciation of the meaning of the passage in its final context.

An allusion to international alliances has commonly been seen in the phrase "trust[ing] in mere mortals" (Peake, Jeremiah, 1: 222; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 952; Holladay, Jeremiah, 491-92; Jones, Jeremiah, 240). The precise nature of the curse is not specified but the context (Jer 17:4) suggests a reference to the exile

with a hymnic declaration that all who forsake Yahweh will be "put to shame" (Jer 17:13). It is followed immediately by the confessional material (Jer 17:14-18), which climaxes with Jeremiah pleading with God to "let my persecutors be shamed" (Jer 17:18). The chapter then closes with another warning about the exile revolving around the issue of Sabbath breaking (Jer 17:19-27).[25] The clear implication of the final context is that the "shame" Jeremiah speaks of is that of the exile. It comes about because Israel has neither "heard" nor "obeyed" God.[26] Her failure to hear is illustrated in her attitude to Jeremiah; her failure to obey in her attitude to the Sabbath.

The pattern is essentially the same with regard to Jer 18:18-23. This confession is bracketed by reference to Judah and Jerusalem becoming a "horror". In Jer 18:16, it has been made a horror by the abomination of

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(Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 226-27). The reference to "an uninhabited salt land" in verse 6 may also be evocative of the exile. Similarly, the use of עַרְעָר (ususally translated "shrub" or "juniper") may carry connotation of "destitution" and be evocative of the exile (McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 387-88).

[25]For the divergent opinions regarding the dating and authenticity of Jer 17:19-27 see above chapter 4, footnote 27.

[26]In Hebrew idiom the idea of "obeying" is often inherent in "hearing" (Brown, Driver, Briggs, Lexicon, s.v. שָׁמַע; G. Kittel, "ἀκούω, ἀκοή, εἰς-, ἐπ-, παρακούω, παρακοή, ὑπακούω, ὑπακοή, ὑπήκοος", TDNT, edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964-76], 1: 217-219).

idolatry; in Jer 19:7-9 it will be made an abomination by the ravages of siege and capture. The reason is clearly stated: Israel has failed to follow God's word (Jer 18:12; 19:4). This theme is then illustrated in the confession (Jer 18:18). In response to this rejection, Jeremiah prays for the destruction of his enemies in language reminiscent of the description he gives of the destruction of those who reject God (Jer 18:21-22; c.f., 19:6-9).

In a similar way, the final two confessions (Jer 20:7-18) are bracketed with explicit descriptions of the horror of exile and captivity (Jer 20:4-6; 21:3-10). The confessions are linked to the context by the use of "מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב" ("terror all around")[27] as a name for Passhur (Jer 20:3) and is a summary of Jeremiah's preaching (Jer 20:10).[28] His message is rejected because it is a message of doom (Jer 20:8-10), but it is the acceptance of that message which holds the only hope of escaping the impending doom (Jer 21:8-10).

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[27]For a discussion of issues relating to this expression see above, chapter 4, footnote 86.

[28]Bright suggests the expression was used as a derisive nickname for Jeremiah derived from the content of his preaching (Jeremiah, 132-33).

One might compare Floyd's suggestion that Jer 15:13-14 (often regarded as a misplaced doublet of 17:3-4) is actually a deliberate "precis of the revelation that Jeremiah has received and proclaimed" ("Prophetic Complaints", 412).

It is significant to note that the confessions are interwoven with pericopes in which Jeremiah is commanded not to intercede for the people (11:14-17; 14:11-12; 15:1 cf 7:16).[29] Thus the theme of his rejection is juxtaposed with the theme of the people's irrevocable rejection by God.

Jeremiah as Paradigm

The completion of the book of Jeremiah during (or after) the exile[30] meant that the finished product initially spoke to people who were suffering and to whom God would have appeared to be distant.[31] The experiences of Jeremiah which are reflected in the confessions speak powerfully to such people. That such a reading of the confessions was intended by the final editors of the book is indicated by a number of crucial placements.

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[29]"It is worth noting that the several passages reflecting this same theme [prohibition against intercession] are gathered together in one restricted section of the book, and that they occupy roughly the same location as the laments of the prophet (chs. 11-20)", (Seitz, "Canonical Shape", 8).

[30]Regardless of the process whereby the book of Jeremiah was produced, it clearly was not *completed* until the exilic or post-exilic period. The events described in Jeremiah 52 clearly took place long after Jeremiah's demise. This fact is conceded even by those who give Jeremiah and Baruch a significant role in the production of the book (Holladay, Jeremiah, 2: 439).

[31]For the feelings of desolation experienced by the exiles see especially Psalm 137. Even a cursory glance at Ezra indicates the Jews in Palestine in the early post-exilic period were dispirited and discouraged.

The paradigmatic nature of the confessions in their redactional context is illustrated by the first two confessions. In the first confession, Jeremiah is referred to by the image of a tree (11:19).[32] This simple image is given deeper significance when the wider context is taken into account: God describes Israel as a tree laden with olives (11:16). What Jeremiah's enemies propose to do to him God is going to do to the entire nation.

Blank draws attention to the fact that in the middle of the confessions there occurs a passage in which Jeremiah is clearly described in paradigmatic terms--Jer 16:1-10.[33] This passage picks up the "mother" imagery which Holladay and O'Connor highlight in Jeremiah 14-15.[34]

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[32]The contrast between Jeremiah and his opponents is highlighted by the juxtaposing of the first two confessions. In the second confession it is the opponents who are described (although not named) as trees laden with fruit.

[33]Blank, "Paradigm", 123. In terms of the paradigm, what Jeremiah experiences now, Israel will experience later. It should be noted that Blank does not primarily argue his case from redactional evidence but from psychological probability. He suggests that the paradigmatic nature of the confessions may have become evident to Jeremiah himself who subsequently authorised their publication ("Paradigm", 124-25). The events surrounding the confession of Baruch are suggested as a likely catalyst for this development. It must be stressed that the paradigmatic nature of the confessions in their redactional context does not depend on such hypothetical reconstructions.

[34]Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 422; O'Connor, Confessions, 107).

Smith goes further and links this "mother" imagery to other feminine imagery in chapters 13-15.[35] The presence of mother imagery in this context (Jer 13:21; 15:7-9) resonates with the reference to Jeremiah's mother in the confessional material (15:10-14). Indeed, in the context, the fate of the city and people is parallel to the fate that Jeremiah himself is already experiencing.[36]

The logic of the paradigmatic role of the confessions in their final redactional setting becomes even more apparent if the proposals of Patterson regarding the structure of the book are accepted.[37] He suggests that the structure of the book grows out of the twofold nature of the call of Jeremiah to be a prophet: first to the nations (Jer 1:4-12), and second to his own nation (Jer 1:13-19).[38] These two themes are then developed in inverse order in the two major blocks of material in the book (Jer 2-24; 25-51). Thus the

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[35]Smith, Laments, 51-52. These female images include the hypothetical title הָרַבָּה--emended to the feminine form from the MT's הָרָב ("great")--(Jer 13:9); the symbolic use of "prostitute" (Jer 13:22, 26-27); Jerusalem's lamentation (Jer 14:2); and, the phrase בְּתוּלַת בַּת־עַמִּי ("virgin daughter" (Jer 14:17).

[36]Smith, Laments, 52. Smith actually uses the word "paradigmatic" to describe Jeremiah's role in the extended unit.

[37]Patterson, "Literary Clues", 109-31. Acceptance of Patterson's views regarding the authorship of Jeremiah--that the entire book (poetry and prose) has its origin in Jeremiah or Baruch--is not inherent in acceptance of his view of structure.

[38]Patterson, "Literary Clues", 113-14.

confessions form an integral part of the proclamation concerned with Judah. Their inclusion in such a setting certainly suggests a paradigmatic role for them.[39]

The "I" at this point remains the individual Jeremiah and yet the focus is not on him as much as it is on the community. Jeremiah is important because he is a model for Israel in crisis.[40]

Heightening of Judicial Emphasis

We have already noted that Jeremiah's use of the law suit *Gattung* always has a corporate reference.[41] The editing of the confessions heightens their judicial flavouring and by implication increases the degree of their corporality. This is especially evident in the placement of Jer 12:1-6 immediately after Jer 11:18-23. Wimmer points out that this sequence creates the impression of an "appeal" after a verdict has been

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[39]It must also be recognised that as attractive as Patterson's proposed structure is, other scholars present quite different proposals for structuring the book. For an alternative view, see A. Rofé, "The Arrangement of the Book of Jeremiah", ZAW 101 (1989), 390-98. P. House proposes yet another structure based on an analysis of plot ("Plot, Prophecy and Jeremiah", JETS 36 [1993], 297-306).

[40]Blank, "Paradigm", 111-130.

[41]See Chapter 2, above.

rendered.[42] However, he does not recognise that the sequencing is secondary.[43]

Another area where redaction has served to heighten the judicial emphasis is the placement of 17:12-13 immediately before the fifth confession.[44] Here the effect is more subtle.[45] However, verse 12-13 are variously described as a "doxology of judgment"[46] or a "judgment oracle".[47] The juxtaposing of the two units

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[42]Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 174-78.

[43]Smith, Laments, 43.

[44]A number of scholars think that Jer 17:12-18 should be treated as a single unit (Baumgartner, Poems, 53; Berridge, Prophet, 160; Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 235-237; Jones, Jeremiah, 243-46; Polk, Persona, 133;). However, most divide the passage into (at least) two units (Chambers, "Prophetic Ambiguity", 69-70; O'Connor, Confessions, 46-48; Bright, Jeremiah, 111; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 402-05; Carroll, Jeremiah, 361; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 501-02; Nicholson, Jeremiah, 1: 155-59; Thompson, Jeremiah, 423-26; Brueggemann, Pluck Up, 154-58; Overholt, "Jeremiah", 623; Counturier, "Jeremiah", 316-17; Diamond, Confessions, 80-81; Lundbom, Jeremiah, 88; Feinberg, "Jeremiah", 485-88; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 954-56; Smith, Laments, 15-18).
The crucial argument for separating verses 12-13 from 14-18 is the shift from first person plural in the earlier block to first person singular in the latter (Diamond, Confessions, 80). Verses 5-8 (and possibly vvs 9-10) appear to have more in common thematically with the confession than with vvs. 12-13 (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 501).

[45]The majority of people who read the two units in close conjunction still regard the confession as an individual lament. Even Wimmer acknowledges that "the judicial component may be barely obvious at first" ("Prophetic Experience", 237).

[46]Brueggemann, "Pluck Up, 154.

[47]Diamond, Confessions, 166-67.

means that Jeremiah's confession is introduced by a pericope which focuses attention on the elevated throne of God--his judgement seat.[48] The overall effect is to make the confession into a lament before an incorruptible judge.

The effect of this juxtaposition on the "I" of this confession is less subtle. There is a clear corporate reference in verses 12-13, with the clearest Psalmonic parallel for such an introduction being in the community lament Psalm 80.[49] This parallel confirms the overall tendency of Jeremiah to use "lawsuits" corporately.

Jeremiah as a Representative Figure[50]

The representative role of Jeremiah is heightened by the editing of the confessions themselves. The placement of Jer 15:13-14 between vss. 10-12 and vss. 15-21 clearly indicates a representative role. Of course, if

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[48]Wimmer traces this theme throughout the Psalms ("Prophetic Experience", 237-38). He further points out that such an introductory focus is characteristic of earlier Sumerian invocations--which clearly had a judicial focus (Ibid. 236; c.f., Baumgartner, Poems, 53).

[49]Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 500 cf Carroll, Jeremiah, 358.

[50]The concepts of Jeremiah as a "paradigm" and as a "representative figure" obviously overlap. The most significant difference is that the concept of paradigm suggests the idea of a model to be copied, whereas a representative figure stands in the place of another person or group (The Macquarie Encyclopedia Dictionary, edited by A. Delbridge, Sydney: Macquarie Library, 1992, 685, 806).

verses 13-14 are taken as original to this setting in the confession,[51] the representative nature of Jeremiah is inherent in the confession. However, it is reinforced by the repetition of the major ideas contained in Jer 17:3-4. What happens to Jeremiah is a "type" of Israel's fate.[52]

God's response to Jeremiah's third confession in Jer 15:11 hinges on the word "enemies"--just as Jeremiah's complaint focuses on his opponents. The enemies are immediately associated with national enemies by the use

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[51]So Reventlow, Liturgie, 210-12; Wimmer, "Prophetic Experience", 194-96; Thompson, Jeremiah, 393-94 cf Jones, Jeremiah, 219-20, who considers the redactional unity of the passage impossible to unpick. However most commentators see these verses as secondary in this context, even if authentic to Jeremiah (eg Peake, Jeremiah, 1: 211; Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 941; Nicholson, Jeremiah, 1: 138; Baumgartner, Poems, 46-51, 71-73; O'Connor, Confessions, 37; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 345; Patterson, "Jeremiah", 548; Bright, Jeremiah, 109-10; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1:449). The arguments they adduce for such a position are powerful. These are listed by O'Connor as: a) Verses 13-14 do not fit into the context of the confession, addressing first the people (v. 13) and then the prophet (v. 14); b) the verses function in a similar way to redactional additions to earlier confessions--explaining and expanding the previous verse; c) the verses contradict verse 15 in which Jeremiah prays for God's vengeance promised in verse 14.

[52]It can also be noted that Jeremiah's reference to God as a "waters that fail" (Jer 15:18) echoes the description of the Israelite leaders failure to find water during the drought (Jer 14:3). The drought is a punishment for the nation's sins (Jer 14:7). Once again Jeremiah seems to be experiencing something of the nation's punishment as a paradigm.

of the word בַּרְזֶל ("iron") in verse 12.[53] The clear implication is that verses 13-14 refer to the Babylonian exile. If such is the case, Israel is being addressed, and not Jeremiah. He was never an exile *in Babylon*.

The representative nature of Jer 15:13-14 is reinforced by the material that is placed between the fourth confession and Jer 17:3-4. Chapter 16 opens with two acted parables: Jeremiah's failure to marry (Jer 16:1-4) and his failure to engage in mourning rituals (Jer 16:5-9). In both of these acted parables Jeremiah represents the nation's future.[54]

To these parables is appended an explanation, (Jer 16:10-13) which was probably originally an independent

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[53]The theme of the foe from the North is important in Jeremiah. References are made to it within the redactional context of the confessions (Jer 13:20 cf 16:15). This theme has generated a great deal of discussion. (See, above, chapter 3, footnote 69).

[54]At this point the distinction between "representative" and "paradigm" is admittedly becoming blurred. However, "representative" is suggested here by the use of the term "parable".

piece.[55] In it the thought of Israel serving in a land they have not known is repeated.[56]

Chapter 16 ends with a collection of material referring to the restoration of Israel (verses 14-21). This material picks up an important theme from Jer 15:13-14--the land. Israel has been scattered to a land she does not know (Jer 15:13; c.f., 16:13; 17:3-4) but the people are now promised a return to "their own land" (16:14), which God calls "my land" (16:18).[57]

This section not only picks up a key theme from the redactional addition to the confessions, it is replete with echoes of the third and fourth confessions themselves. Thus צָפוֹן ("north") in Jer 16:15 echoes (and explains) the usage in Jer 15:12. The description of God as Israel's עֹז ("strength"), מָעוֹז ("stronghold"), and מָנוֹס ("refuge") (Jer 16:19) reflects his promises to Jeremiah

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[55]The acted parables are generally regarded as authentic to Jeremiah (eg Bright, Jeremiah, 112; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 468; Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 216) but verses 10-13 have often been labelled Deuteronomic (Hyatt, "Jeremiah", 946; Carroll, Jeremiah, 342; Jones, Jeremiah, 232; McKane, Jeremiah, 1: 369). Furthermore, Holladay points to the absence of shared vocabulary between the two sections as evidence of their redactional juxtaposing (Jeremiah, 1: 467).

[56]Both Jer 15:14 and 17:4 (cf 5:19) speak of serving "your enemies", whereas 16:13 refers to serving "other gods". However, the meaning of the two phrases is closely related. The chief servant of the Babylonian gods was the king, who was also the leader of Israel's enemies (Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 190-91).

[57]In the fourth confession it is Jeremiah (not the land) which is "called by your [ie God's] name.

(Jer 15:20-21). The theme of Israel's restoration in the entire section develops the theme of God taking Jeremiah "back" (Jer 15:19). The nations will be "taught" by Israel's restoration (Jer 17:21), just as Israel will be taught by "God's mouth" upon Jeremiah's return to his task (15:19). The promise to punish Babylon (16:17-18) echoes Jeremiah's petition that his opponents be punished (15:15).[58]

By the addition of Jer 15:13-14 to the third confession and by the placement of the confessional material in close relationship with Jer 16:1-17:4, the significance of the confessions has been changed. Jeremiah is still clearly visible, but once again the focus has subtlely moved from him to the community which he represents.

Conclusion

The confessions of Jeremiah grew out of his individual experience as a prophet to recalcitrant Israel. They were a crucial feature in his attempts to establish his credentials with the people. However, by

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[58]It may be objected that the lament of Jeremiah--the essence of his confession--is not developed in the redactional setting. This point has to be conceded. However, the clear evidence that Jeremiah here serves as a representative character implies that his lamentation was representative also. For clear evidence that the exilic community did in fact lament their fate as Jeremiah did see Ps 137.

the time the book of Jeremiah was compiled/written (during or after the exile), that battle had been won.

Through a redactional process which impacted on the confessions in three ways (within the text, in the ordering of the confessional units, and in the placement of material in proximity to the confessions), the focus of the confessions was changed. More attention is now drawn to the culpability of the nation in rejecting Jeremiah than to his attempts at defending his prophetic integrity. The nation's attitude to Jeremiah, illustrated in the confessions, is seen as the culmination of their failure to listen to God's word, a failure which ultimately leads to their exile in Babylon. Jeremiah is transformed into both a paradigmatic and representative figure. The judicial atmosphere (which in Jeremiah has corporate overtones) is subtly heightened.

The fact of Jeremiah's individualist confessions being put to more corporate use should neither surprise nor disturb us. An analogous process can be seen with regard to the book of Psalms. Numerous royal Psalms have been democratised and used by common people.[59] This

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[59]Thus, while there is no absolute consensus regarding the original function of Psalm 23, Croft lists the following evidence for it being a royal Psalm: a. evidence of royal style ("my shepherd", verse 1); b. evidence of a special relationship between the Psalmist and God; c. the victory banquet in the presence of the king; and, d. annointing with oil (Identity, 130 cf J.H. Eaton, Kingship in the Psalms, Studies in Biblical Theology, Second Series 32 [London: SCM, 1976], 36-38)

process is thought to have begun possibly even before the book of Psalms was completed.[60] An analogous trend--but in the opposite direction--is seen with the confessions. In their case, an originally individualist composition is given a more corporate reference.[61]

Anderson regards the suggestion as "plausible" (Psalms 1-72, 196).

If Croft and Eaton are correct, this Psalm provides a good illustration of the democratization of the Royal Psalms for no other psalm has established itself in the affections and devotions of ordinary people (Craigie, Psalms 1-50, 208 cf E. Gerstenberger, Psalms [Part 1], FOTL 14 [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991], 114).

[60]Thus while Anderson considers it "plausible" that Ps 23 was originally a royal Psalm, he is adament that "it would not apply to its application in the post-Exilic community" (Psalms 1-72, 196). He further argues that the Psalms collection was not finalized in its present form until "the end of the third century BC" (page 28).

[61]Bellinger's comments, although made with the Psalms in view are equally relevant here: "A Psalm written for an individual's use could have been modified through the years to make it more applicable to the community in a changed situation" (Psalmody, 25).

Summary and Conclusion

The approach taken to the question of the "I" of the confessions in this thesis has begun with the tools provided by form criticism and finished by looking at the final redaction of Jeremiah (especially chapters 10-21). In so doing an attempt has been made to ascertain whether the "I" in the confessions is a specific individual, viz., the prophet Jeremiah, or a representative depiction of the nation of Israel, of or a group within the nation.

This approach has been historical rather then theological. Our argument has been cumulative and our conclusions can be summarised as follows:

1. Jeremiah is familiar with the lawsuit *Gattung* and it is used throughout the book. Its use is always corporate in reference. The confessions do not fit this *Gattung* form-critically, despite the attempts of Wimmer to show otherwise.

2. Jeremiah is familiar with the individual lament *Gattung*. His usage of this *Gattung* generally has a clear individualistic reference. Those interpreters who see the confessions corporately attempt to understand the laments in a similar way (e.g., Robert Carroll). However, in the individual laments there is generally a

clear distinction drawn between the lamenter and other Israelites. The most likely reading of the laments is that they have an individual reference. The only exception to this pattern is those laments which are so small that it is impossible to determine anything about the identity of the lamenter (e.g., Jer 23:9). No individual lament in Jeremiah has a clear corporate reference.

Exactly the same pattern is seen with the confessions. Many of them contain a clear differentiation between the speaker and other Israelites. None of them has a clear corporate reference, although some appear to have corporate elements.

3. A theological analysis of the poetry and prose of Jeremiah shows that the prose appears to reflect the situation of the exile more than the poetry does. However, the confessions have more points of contact with the poetry then with the prose. This pattern is confirmed by an analysis of vocabulary distribution. These facts suggest an individualistic reference for the confessions, since a corporate reference would be more likely in a work of exilic origin.

4. The confessions originally functioned as a means of prophetic legitimisation for Jeremiah. This fact suggests that they were public utterances made by the prophet during his life-time. However, this function is

not the only one they serve in the final redaction of the book of Jeremiah. The emphasis and focus of the confessions could be changed by three types of redaction: within the confessions, in the ordering of the confessions, and in the placement of the confessions in regard to other material.

The redaction of the confessions shows an increased concern to use them to explain the exile; to portray Jeremiah as a paradigmatic and representative figure; and to heighten their judicial "feel". The effect of this redaction is to move the focus from the individual Jeremiah to the community. Thus there is a increase in the corporate focus of the material.

In conclusion the material that was originally exclusively individualistic has been overlayed by corporate overtones in the process of redaction, so that today both individual and corporate features are readily discernible.

Appendix 1

VOCABULARY DISTRIBUTION IN THE CONFESSIONS

This appendix began as a series of working documents in the study of the confessions. It consists of four charts. The first chart shows the distribution of all the main words in the confessions. It consists of twelve columns. The first lists the words in the order in which new vocabulary is used in the confessions. Columns two to nine give the verse(s) containing the word spread while also indicating which block of confession material it comes from. Column ten gives the total number of times the word is used in the confessions; column eleven the total number of times it is used in Jeremiah; and, column twelve the total number of times it is used in Psalms.

In producing the chart some text variants and conjectural emendations in the confessions have been noted. No account has been taken of textual variants and conjectural emendations in the rest of the book of Jeremiah or in the book of Psalms. As a general rule particles, conjunctives, personal names, and pronouns have been left out of this chart. Hence, despite the

size of the chart, no claim can be made for its total accuracy or comprehensiveness. It is a working document designed to give an overview, no more. The vocabulary distribution for the books of Jeremiah and Psalms were worked out using The Vocabulary of the Old Testament by F.I. Anderson and A.D. Forbes (where possible);[1] Lisowsky's Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament and Mendelkern's Veteris Testamenti Concordantiae Hebraicae atque Chaldaicae have also been used.[2]

The second chart summarise the key data from chart 1. The items of vocabulary used more than twice in the confessions are listed in the first column. The second column gives the total number of times the word is used in the confessions; the third column gives the number of confessional blocks it is found in; and, the fourth column gives the total number of times the word is used in Jeremiah.

The third chart lists those words which are used in the confessions, but are not found elsewhere in Jeremiah.

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[1]F.I. Anderson and A.D. Forbes, The Vocabulary of the Old Testament (Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Roma: 1992). Due to difference in lemmatization it was not possible to use this book for totalling up the use of verbs. It was also no help in getting totals for any word that occurs less than forty times in the Old Testament.

[2]G. Lisowsky, Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament (Stuttgart, Wüttembergische Bibelstalt: 1958); S. Mandelkern, Veteris Testamenti Concordantiae Hebraicae atque Chaldaicae (Graz, Akademische Druck- U. Verlagsanstalt: 1955).

This column indicates the distinctive confession vocabulary. The fourth chart gives the words used in the confessions and elsewhere in Jeremiah, but not in Psalms.

The form of the Hebrew words in all the charts is that which is found in the Brown, Driver and Briggs lexicon. Following the style of that lexicon, hypothetical forms are enclosed in square brackets

Chart 1: Vocabulary Distribution in the Confessions

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	11:18-23	12:1-6	15:10-14	15:15-21	17:14-18	18:18-23	20:7-13	20:14-18			
אָב		12:6						20:15	2	63	19
אָבַד						18:18			1	23	26
אֶבְיוֹן							20:13		1	5	23
אָבַל		12:4							1	5	0
[אָהָה]					17:16				1	1	4
אוֹ			15:10						1	8	1
[אוּץ]					17:16[3]				1	1	0
אוֹצָר			15:13						1	11	2
אָח		12:6							1	16	7
אַחֲרִית		12:4							1	10	5
אָיַב			15:11,14						2	19	74
אִישׁ			15:10 x 2[4]					20:15,16	4	114	39
אֶכְזָב				15:18					1	1	0

[3]The LXX reads ἐκοπίασα ("wearied").

[4]The first occurance of אִישׁ ("man") is absent in some Hebrew manuscripts. The shorter reading is reflected in the LXX and Symmachus.

אָכַל				15:16[5]					1	38	26
אֱלֹהִים		[12:4][6]		15:16					1	3	238
אֵלּוּף	11:19								1	3	2
אַלְמָנָה						18:21			1	5	5
אִם			15:10					20:14,17	3	9	12
אָמֵן		12:6		15:18					2	4	15
אָמַר	11:21 x 2	12:4	15:11[7]	15:19	17:15	18:18	20:9	20:15	11	515	101
	11:22[8]										
אֱנוֹשׁ	11:21,23					18:21	20:10		4	48	19
[אֲנָךְ]							[20:16][9]				
[אֲנַשׁ]				15:18	17:16[10]				2	5	0
אַף			15:14	15:15		18:23			3	24	35
[אָרַר]								20:14,15	1	6	1

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[5]The LXX reads συντέλεσον ("consume") translating כִּלָּם ("eat") rather then the MT's וְאֹכְלָם ("and I ate").

[6]Absent in the MT. However the LXX reads ὁ θεὸς ("God").

[7]The LXX reads γένοιτο ("So be it") translating אָמֵן ("truly") rather then the MT's אָמַר ("say").

[8]Absent in the LXX.

[9]Absent from the MT but implied in the LXX reading ἐν θυμῷ ("in anger").

[10]The LXX reads ἀνθρώπου ("man") translating אֱנוֹשׁ ("man) rather then the MT's אָנַשׁ ("fatal", lit, "disaster").

[אָרֵךְ]				15:15[11]						1	1	3
אֶרֶץ		12:4,5	15:10,14				20:10,12[12]			6	271	190
אֵשׁ			15:14				20:9			2	39	28
אִשָּׁה					18:21					1	22	0
[בָּגַד]		12:1,6								2	9	5
בֶּגֶד		12:1								1	9	5
בָּדָד				15:17						1	2	1
בְּהֵמָה		12:4								1	18	11
בּוֹא					17:15,18	18:22				3	210	78
בּוֹשׁ					17:18 x 2		20:11			3	23	33
בָּז			15:13							1	5	0
בָּחוּר	11:22					18:21				2	9	3
בָּטַח	11:20	12:3					20:12[13]			3	6	9
בָּטַח		12:5								1	16	44
בַּיִת		12:6				18:22				2	146	53
בֵּן	11:22					18:21		20:15		3	225	104
[בָּעַר]							20:9			1	6	11
[בָּצַר]				15:20						1	3	1
בֹּקֶר								20:16		1	2	18
[בָּקַשׁ]	11:21									1	22	27

[11]The LXX reads μακροθυμιαν ("long-suffering"). This reading lends support to the BHS editor's suggested repointing of לְאֶרֶךְ ("slow") to לְאֹרֶךְ ("length").

[12]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

[13]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

						20:14	1	4	69
[בָּרַךְ]							2	8	5
בַּרְזֶל			15:12 x 2[14]			20:15	1	1	3
[בָּשַׂר]						20:18	1	6	7
בֹּשֶׁת							1	41	12
בַּת	11:22								
							1	7	2
גָּאוֹן		12:5					1	19	12
גִּבּוֹר						20:11	2	24	3
גָּלָה	11:20					20:12[15]	1	4	5
גְּבוּל			15:13		18:22		1	1	2
גְּדוּד									
						20:10	1	1	1
דָּבָה						20:8[16],9	5	115	55
[דָּבַר]		12:1,6		15:16 x 2 17:15	18:20		6	205	69
דֶּבֶר					18:18 x 2	20:8	1	57	66
דֶּרֶךְ		12:1							

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[14]The second occurance of בַּרְזֶל ("iron") in this verse is absent in the LXX.

[15]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apperatus, on Jer 20:12).

[16]The LXX reads πικρῷ λόγῳ μου ("my bitter speech").

הָיָה	11:23		15:18[17],19	18:21 x 2 18:23	20:7,8 20:9	20:14 20:16[18],17	13	264	104
הָלַךְ		12:2[19]		18:18 x 2			3	69	25
[הָלַל]					20:13		1	13	84
הָפַךְ						20:16	1	6	10
הָרַג				18:21			1	3	8
הַרְיָה		12:3					1	3	0
הָרָה						20:17	1	2	1
זָכַר	11:19		15:15	18:20	20:9		3	16	54
זָכָר						20:15	1	2	0
[זָלַל]			15:19				1	1	0
זָעַם			15:17[20]				1	3	4
זָעַק					20:8[21]		1	8	5
זְעָקָה				18:22		20:16	2	6	0

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[17]Some scholars suggest emending הָיוֹ ("is") to הוֹי ("alas"), (e.g., BHS margin; c.f., Bright, Jeremiah, 106).

[18]The LXX reads ἔστω ("Let be ...") translating יְהִי rather then the MT's וְהָיָה ("and shall be"). The BHS editors suggest a conjectural emendation to הַיּוֹם.

[19]The LXX reads ἐτεκνοποιησαν ("they have fathered children") apparently translating יָלָדוּ ("they fathered") instead of the MT's יָלְכוּ ("they grow"). Some modern scholars conjecturally emend the text to יַלְהוּ ("they are fresh") (see Carroll, Jeremiah, OTL, 283).

[20]The LXX reads πικρίας ("bitterness").

[21]The LXX reads γελάσομαι ("I will laugh").

חוֹמָה				15:20								1	13	2
חָנֵק									20:7			1	15	5
חִטָּאת			15:13				18:23					2	13	13
חַיִל			15:13									1	32	20
חָכָם							18:18					1	11	2
חָמָה							18:20					1	17	12
חָמֵס									20:8			1	4	14
חֵרֶב	11:22						18:21 x 2					3	71	18
חָרָה		12:5										1	2	5
חֶרְפָּה				15:15					20:8			2	12	20
חָשַׁב	11:19						18:18					2	12	17
[חָתַת]					17:18 x 2							2	18	0
[טָבַח]	11:19											1	20	1
טִבְחָה		12:3[22]										1	1	1
טוֹב		12:6	15:11				18:20 x 2					4	37	69
טָמֵן							18:22					1	7	5
[יָבַל]	11:19											1	2	6
יָבֵשׁ		12:4										1	4	4
יָגוֹן											20:18	1	4	4
יָד	11:21			15:17,21			18:21		20:13			5	117	94
יָדַע	11:18 x 2													
	11:19	12:3	15:14	15:15[23]	17:16		18:23					8	77	97

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[22]Absent in the LXX.

[23]Absent in the LXX.

יהוה	11:18,20 11:21 x 2 11:22[26]	12:1,3[24]	15:11	15:15 15:16 15:19,20	17:14 17:15	18:19 18:23	20:7,8 20:11,12[25] 20:13 x 2	20:16	23	726	695
יום		12:3			17:16-18		20:7,8	20:14 x 2 20:18	8	137	115
ילל				15:20			20:7,9-11[27]		5	15	10
ילד			15:10			18:18 x 2		20:14 x 2 20:15	6	20	9
יצא				15:19				20:18	2	70	35
[יקד]			15:14						1	2	0
יקר				15:19					1	1	4
[יריב]						18:19			1	1	1
ישב		12:4		15:17					2	154	66
[ישע]				15:20	17:14 x 2				3	19	56
כאב				15:18					1	1	1
כבש	11:19								1	1	0
כהן						18:18		*	1	41	5
[כול]							20:9		1	4	2

[24]Some scholars suggest omitting on metrical grounds, but without textual support (Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 175).

[25]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apperatus, on Jer 20:12).

[26]Absent in the LXX.

[27]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition in verse 12, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

כָּלָה									20:18	1	13	21
[כִּלְיָה]	11:20	12:2						20:12[28]		3	4	5
כִּלְמָה								20:11		1	3	7
כָּף				15:21						1	5	21
כִּפֶּר							18:23			1	1	3
כָּרָה							18:20[29],22			2	2	6
כָּרַת	11:19									1	27	13
כָּשַׁל							18:23	20:11[30]		2	11	7
לֹא	11:19 x 2	12:4	15:10,11	15:17-19	17:16	18:18	20:9 x 2	20:16,17				
	11:21, 23		15:13[31],14				20:11 x 2			20	514	337
[לָאָה]		12:5					20:9			2	5	1
לֵב	11:20	12:3					20:9[32],12[33]			5	57	102

[28]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

[29]The LXX reads συνελάλησαν ("they have spoken") translating דִּבֶּר ("speak") rather then the MT's כָּרָה ("dug").

[30]The LXX reads νοῆσαι ("perceive") translating וְהַשְׂכֵּל ("act wisely, prudently") rather then the MT's יִכָּשְׁלוּ ("stumble").

[31]Absent in the LXX.

[32]Absent in the LXX.

[33]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

לֵבָב			15:16					1	8	35
[לָחַם]			15:20					1	16	5
לֶחֶם	11:19[34]							1	9	19
לָכַד					18:22			1	21	3
[לָעַג]						20:7		1	1	4
לָקַח			15:15[35]			20:10		2	65	13
לָשׁוֹן					18:18			1	6	35
מָאֹד						20:11		1	16	35
[מָאֵן]			15:18[36]					1	10	2
מָגוֹר						20:10[37]		1	6	1
מָדוֹן		15:10						1	1	1
מַדּוּעַ	12:1							?	16	0
מוֹצָא				17:16				1	1	6
מוּת	11:21						20:17	4	45	15
	11:22 x 2									
מָוֶת					18:21,23			2	11	19
מָחָה					18:23			1	1	6
מָחִיר		15:13						1	1	1
מַחְסֶה				17:17				1	1	12

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[34]In this verse the word לֶחֶם ("fruit") is sometimes conjecturally amended to [בֶּחֶ] ("sap"), (e.g., Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25, 175). The BHS editors regard this emendation as "probable" (see BHS textual apparatus on Jer 11:19).

[35]Absent in the LXX.

[36]The LXX reads πόθεν ("whence? wherefore?") translating מֵאַיִן rather then the MT's מֵאָז.

[37]The LXX reads πολλῶν συναθροιζομένων ("many gathering around").

מַחֲשָׁבָה 11:19			18:18			2	12	6
מְחִתָּה		17:17				1	2	1
מַיִם		15:18				1	29	50
מַכָּה		15:18				1	10	1
מָלֵא[38]		15:17				1	18	22
מָלֵא[39]	12:6[40]					1	7	6
מִלְחָמָה			18:21			1	24	10
[מַעֲלָל] 11:18						1	17	5
מָצָא		15:16[41]				1	26	16
מִשְׁגֶּה		17:18				1	3	0
מִשְׁפָּט	12:1					1	32	65
[נָאַס]		15:20				1	176	2
[נָבָא] 11:21						1	40	0
נָבִיא			18:18			1	5	0
[נָגַד]				20:10 x 2[42]		2	27	19
[נָגַר]			18:21			1	1	3
[נחם]					20:16	1	14	12

[38]Verbal form.

[39]Adjectival form.

[40]Some scholars conjecturally emend to כָּלָם ("complete, finish"). The editors of BHS regard this emendation as "probable" (BHS text apparatus, on Jer 12:6).

[41]The LXX reads ὑπο των αθετούντων ("from the ones who despise") translating מִמְּאֲסֵי ("from those who despise") rather then the MT's נִמְצְאוּ ("were found").

[42]The LXX reads ἐπισύστητε καὶ ἐπισυστῶμεν ("conspire and let us conspire").

נְחֹשֶׁת		15:12	15:20				2	14	1
נָטַע	12:2						1	16	6
[נָכָה]					18:18	20:7	2	29	14
נָכַח				17:16			1	1	0
נֶפֶשׁ	11:21				18:20	20:13	3	10	1
נָצַח			15:18				1	3	17
[נָצַל]			15:20,21			20:13	3	10	45
[נָקַם]			15:15				1	7	3
נְקָמָה	11:20					20:10,12[43]	3	11	5
נָשָׂא			15:15				1	6	1
נָשָׁה[44]		15:10 x 2					2	2	1
נָתַן		15:13	15:20		18:21		3	148	189
[נָתַק]	12:3[45]						1	7	2
סָבִיב						20:10	1	26	13
סוֹד			15:17				1	4	6
סוּס[46]	12:5						1	15	5
[סָפָה]	12:4						1	1	0
עָבַד		15:14					1	3	1
עוֹלָם						20:11 20:17	2	35	143

[43]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

[44]With the sense of "lend, become a creditor" and not with the sense "to forget".

[45]Absent in the LXX.

[46]With the sense of "horse" and not with the sense of "swallow, swift".

עָוֹן				18:23			1	24	31
עוֹף	12:4						1	9	4
עִיר						20:16	1	137	21
[עָלוֹ]			15:17[47]				1	4	6
עִם			15:20	18:15			2	165	120
עָמַד			15:19	18:20			2	28	32
עָמַל						20:18	1	1	13
עֵצָה				18:18,23			2	8	11
עֶצֶם					20:9		1	7	15
עָצַר					20:9[48]		1	4	1
עָרִיץ			15:21		20:11		2	2	3
עֵשֶׂב	12:4						1	2	7
עָשָׂה	12:2,5			18:23			3	152	104
פֶּגַע		15:11					1	4	0
פָּדָה			15:21				1	2	14
פֶּה	12:2		15:19				2	28	67
פֶּחָ				18:22			1	3	9
פָּנִים			15:17,19 17:16	18:20,23 x 2			6	128	133
פָּקַד 11:22			15:15				2	39	7
פְּקֻדָּה 11:23							1	9	1
פְּרִי	12:2						1	11	11

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[47]The LXX reads εὐλαβούμην ("I was cautious").

[48]The LXX reads φλέγον ("flaming").

פָּתָה[49]					20:7 x 2 20:10		3 1	3 5	1 2
פִּתְאֹם				18:22					
צאן		12:3[50]					1	18	17
צָבָא	11:20,22[51]			15:16	20:12[52]		4	88	23
צָדַק	11:20						1	6	49
צַדִּיק		12:1			20:12[53]		2	3	52
[צהר]						20:16	1	3	3
[צְלְחָצְלַחַת]		12:1					1	7	4
צָלַע					20:10[54]		1	1	2
צָפוֹן			[15:11][55] 15:12				1	25	3
צָרָה			15:11				1	8	24

[49]With the sense of "be simple" and not with the sense of "be spaceous, wide, open".

[50]Absent in the LXX.

[51]Absent in the LXX.

[52]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

[53]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

[54]The LXX reads ἐπίνοιαν ("intention").

[55]Absent in the MT but supported by the Peshitta.

קֶבֶר								20:17		1	4	3
[קָדַח]			15:14							1	2	0
קָדַשׁ		12:3								1	9	0
קוֹל						18:19				1	79	59
[קָלַל]			15:10							1	1	2
קֶלֶס							20:8			1	1	2
קָרָא		12:6[56]		15:16			20:8			3	63	56
קָרוֹב		12:2								1	5	9
[קָשַׁב]						18:18,19				2	8	8
רָאָה	11:18	12:3[57]		15:11?								
	11:20	12:4					20:12 x 2[58]	20:18		8	70	96
רַב							20:10			1	41	61
רֶגֶל						18:22				1	5	31
רִגְלִי		12:5								1	1	0
רָדַף				15:15	17:18		20:11			3	6	21
רוּץ		12:5								1	6	5
רֶחֶם								20:17 x 2 20:18		3	4	3
רָחַק		12:2								1	8	7

[56]Some scholars conjecturally emend the text to קָשְׁרוּ ("they conspired"). The BHS editors regard this emendation as "probable" (BSH textual apparatus, on Jer 12:6). The LXX reads ἐπισυνηχθησαν which partially supports the proposed amendment.

[57]Absent in the LXX.

[58]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

רִיב[59]		12:1							1	7	6
רִיב[60]	11:20		15:10				20:12[61]		3	6	7
רַע	11:23	12:4	15:11	15:21	17:17,18	18:20			7	123	64
רָעָב	11:22					18:21			2	33	2
רָעָה					17:16[62],18		18:20?		3	28	8
[רָעַע][63]			15:12[64]				20:13		2	13	14
רָפָא				15:18	17:14 x 2				3	12	6
רָשָׁע		12:1							1	28	82
שָׂדֶה		12:4							1	27	10
שָׂחַק				15:17					1	3	5
שָׂחוֹק							20:7		1	4	1
שָׂכַל							20:11		1	5	25
שָׂמַח/שִׂמְחָה								20:15 x 2	2	6	52

[59]Used as a verb.

[60]Used as a noun.

[61]The BHS editors consider this to be an addition here, derived from its proper setting in Jer 11:20 (BHS textual apparatus, on Jer 20:12).

[62]The LXX reads κατακολουθῶν ("following"). Symmachus and Aquila read ἀπὸ κακίας ("from evil") translating מֵרָעָה ("from evil") rather then the MT's מֵרֹעֶה ("from a shepherd").

[63]With the meaning of "break" in Jer 15:12 and "to be evil, bad" in Jer 20:13. Symachus has the meaning "to be evil, bad" in both verses.

[64]Some manuscripts read הֵיֵּדַע ("know")which is the basis of the LXX and Theodotian reading, γνωσθήσεται ("be known").

שִׁמְחָה			15:16					1	7	13
שָׁפָה				17:16				1	1	28
שָׁשׁוֹן			15:16					1	7	5
שְׁאֵרִית	11:23							1	24	1
שָׁבַר				17:18				1	28	20
שִׁבָּרוֹן				17:18				1	1	0
שׁוּב			15:19 x 3		18:20			4	113	71
שׁוֹד						20:8		1	3	1
שׁוּחָה					18:20[65],22[66]			2	3	0
[שָׁחַת]	11:19[67]							1	19	3
שִׂיחָה					18:22			1	1	2
[שִׁיר][68]						20:13		1	1	26
[שָׂכוֹל]					18:21			1	1	0
שָׂכַח						20:11		1	13	31
[שָׂלָה]		12:1						1	1	1
שָׁלוֹם		12:5				20:10		2	31	27
[שָׁלַם]					18:20			1	7	16
שָׁם	11:21		15:16			20:9		3	55	109

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[65]The LXX reads ῥήματα ("words") translating שִׂיחָה ("concern, occupation of thought") rather then the MT's שׁוּחָה ("pit"), (so Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 527).

[66]The qere reads שׁחה ("pit"). The LXX reads λόγον ("word") translating שִׂיחָה ("concern, occupation of thought") rather than the MT's שׁוּחָה ("pit"), (so Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 527).

[67]The LXX here reads ἐμβάλωμεν ("let us put in") reading נַשְׁלִיכָה ("fall off, drop off") for the MT's נַשְׁחִיתָה ("let us destroy").

[68]As a verb rather than as a noun.

שָׁמַע					18:19,22	20:10	20:16	4	184	79
שָׁמַר						20:10		1	13	70
שָׁנָה	11:23							1	44	16
שָׁפַט	11:20							1	4	32
[שָׁרָה]			15:11[69]					1	1	0
[שָׁרַשׁ]		12:2						1	1	2
תְּהִלָּה				17:14[70]				1	6	30
תְּרוּעָה							20:16	1	3	5

[69]The editors of BHS acknowledge that the text is corrupted at this point. Several text variants exist. Some (e.g., שַׁרוֹתִךְיִךְ ["I have 'enemied' you"] and שֵׁרִיתִךְיִךְ ["I have served you"]) are forms of שָׁרָה ("let loose"). Another variant is שְׁאֵרִיתִךְ ("it shall be well with your remnant"). The LXX reads κατευθυνόντων ("their prosperity"). Recent scholars conjecturally emend the text to שֵׁרַתִּיךָ ("I have served you"), (so Bright, Jeremiah, 109).

[70]Some scholars conjecturally emend תְּהִלָּתִי ("my praise") to תֹּחַלָּתִי ("my hope"), (e.g., Holladay, Jeremiah, 1: 504; BHS textual apparatus).

Chart 2: "Typical" Vocabulary in the Confessions

יהוה[71]	23	8	726
לא	20	8	514
הָיָה	13	5	264
אָמַר	11[72]	8	515
יָדַע	8	7	77
יוֹם	8	4	137
רָאָה	8?	5	70
רַע	7	6	123
אֶרֶץ	6	3	271
דָּבַר	6	4	205
יָלַד	6	3	20
פָּנִים	6	3	128
[דָּבָר]	5	3	115
יָד	5	4	117
יָכַל	5	2	15
לֵב	5	3	57
אֱנוֹשׁ	4	3	48
אִישׁ	4	2	114
טוֹב	4	3	37
מוּת	4	12	45
עָבָא	4	4	88
שָׁמַע	4	3	148
שׁוּב	4	2	113
אַף	3	3	24
אָם	3	2	9
בָּחַן	3	3	6

[71]By contrast אֱלֹהִים ("God") only occurs once in the confessions (in conjunction with יהוה ["Yahweh"]) and only three times in the entire book of Jeremiah. However, in the book of Psalms, although יהוה ("Yahweh") occurs almost as frequently as in Jeremiah (695 times), אֱלֹהִים ("God") is used much more often (238 times).

[72]The subject of this verb in the confessions shows an interesting pattern. Although the confessions are basically laments of Jeremiah, he is the subject only once (Jer 20:9). Of the remaining ten instances, the subject is Jeremiah's enemies (Jer 11:21; 17:15; 18:18) or the people of Israel generally (Jer 12:4) five times; God four times (Jer 11:21; 15:11,19); and a human messanger once (Jer 20:15).

בֵּן	3	3	225
בּוֹשׁ	3	2	210
זָכַר	3	3	16
חָרַב	3	2	71
יָלַד	3	2	69
[יָשַׁע]	3	2	19
[כָּלְיָה]	3	3	4
[נָעַל]	3	2	10
נָתַן	3	3	148
נֶפֶשׁ	3	3	10
נָקָמָה	3	2	11
עָשָׂה	3	2	152
פָּתָה	3	1	3
קָרָא	3	3	63
רָעָה	3	2	28
רָדַף	3	3	6
רָפָא	3	2	12
רָחַם	3	1	4
רִיב[73]	3	3	6
שָׁם	3	3	55

[73]Taken as a noun.

Chart 3: Distinctive Vocabulary in the Confessions

אָהַב
[אוֹן]
אָכַל
[אָרַךְ]
[בָּשַׂר]
גָּדוֹל
דָּבָה
[זָלַל]
חֲבָתָה
[יָקַד]
[יָרִיב]
כְּרָה
כְּאֵב
כֶּבֶשׂ
כִּפֶּר
[לָעַג]
מָחָה
מַחְסֶה
מָדוֹן
מוֹצָא
מָחִיר
נָגַר
נִכַּח
עָמַל
עָרִיץ
פְּתָאֹם
צָלַע
[קָלַל]
[קָלֶם]
רָגְלִי
שָׂפָה
[שָׂכוֹל]
[שָׂלָה]
[שָׂרָה]
[שָׂרַשׁ]
שִׁבָּרוֹן
[שִׁיר]
שִׁיחָה

Chart 4: Non-Psalmic Vocabulary in the Confessions

אָבַל
אוֹן
אַכְזָב
[אָנַשׁ]
בּוּז
הֲמוֹנָה
זָכַר
[זָלַל][74]
זָעָקָה
חָתַת
[יָקַד]
כָּבַשׁ
מַשָּׂאָה
[נָבָא]
נָבִיא
נָכַח
פָּנַע
[קָדַח]
קָנַשׁ
רַגְלִי
[שָׂכִיל]
שִׁבָּרוֹן
שִׁחָה

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[74]Suprisingly, this is the only word on this list which is used only in the final confession. The last confession, unlike the others, is not in the form of an individual lament, but is a self-curse. This change of form is one factor leading O'Connor to deny this block of material a place in the confessions (Confessions, 75-80). It would be expected that this confession would contain considerable vocabulary not found in the Psalms. However, such is not the case.

Appendix 2

A NOTE ON THE RELEVANT ISSUES IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Two specific issues that we have noted in our study of the confessions have also elucidated comment by students of the book of Psalms: the role and significance of judicial language and the identity of the "I". These two issues are intertwined and inseparable. However, for the sake of clarity they will be dealt with separately here. No attempt is made to be comprehensive. However, this survey will attempt to summarise the major ways in which these issues have been dealt with in the Psalms.

The Identify of the "I" in Psalms

In pre-critical times, the "I" of the Psalms was universally regarded as King David, the putative author of most of the Psalms. In the earliest period of historical criticism a comprehensively collective view was widely adopted.[1] Under the influence of Gunkel and others a more individualistic view was again adopted.[2]

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[1]See for example, R. Smend, "Über das Ich der Psalmen", ZAW 8 (1888), 49-147.

[2]Gunkel and Begrich declare the corporate view to be "a final vestige of the allegorical sense previously

Since Gunkel's time there has been a fresh reaction against a strongly individualistic position. H. Wheeler Robinson has attempted to explain the "I" in terms of "corporate personality".[3] S. Mowinckel, in the process of defending a cultic setting for the Psalms, suggests that "the 'I' [of the Psalms] is very often the king or another cultic representive of the congregation".[4] The position of A.R. Johnson and J.H. Eaton is that the "I"

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applied everywhere to Holy Scripture" (Einleitung in die Psalmen, Handkommentar zum Alten Testament, [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1933, 175 as quoted and translated in H.W. Robinson, Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1964], 38). For similar--although not so strongly stated--conclusions see Eissfeldt, Old Testament, 115.

Gunkel admits the possibility of a corporate interpretation under specific circumstances, viz, where intense suffering is being experienced and where the poet explicitly indicates a corporate meaning, or where the plain sense of the passage demands it. Otherwise "the explanation of the "I" as the poet himself is the preferable one; indeed it is the natural and self-evident explanation" (H. Gunkel, The Psalms: A Form Critical Introduction, Facet Books, [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967], 15).

[3]Robinson, Corporate Personality, 37-39. The concept of "corporate personality" has recently come under sustained attack (e.g., J.R. Porter, "Legal Aspects of Corporate Personality", VT 15 [1965], 361-80; J.W. Rogerson, "The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality: A Reconsideration", JTS, 21 [1970], 1-16). The criticisms of Porter and Rogerson have some validity, but are somewhat overstated (Kaminsky, Corporate Responsibility, *passim*).

[4]Mowinckel, Psalms, 1: 46. However, in the same context Mowinckel protested against the view that the "I" should *always* by understood collectively in the Psalms.

is virtually always the king as the representative of the nation as a whole.[5]

A more nuanced position is adopted by S. Croft in the most recent monograph published on the issue.[6] Croft argues for fluidity in understanding the identity of the "I". (It is in various Psalms the king, a cultic official, or a private individual).[7] Johnson's theory of royal sacral drama is rejected, but Croft does see a role for the king in Israel's cultus that is essentially in the tradition represented by Eaton and Johnson. Certainly, he sees a greater number of royal Psalms than did Gunkel.[8]

Clearly, on all but a corporate reading of all the "I" Psalms, there is room for either a corporate or individualistic interpretation of Jeremiah's laments. It may be thought that the confessions would have linguistic and thematic connections to a certain sub-group within

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[5]A.R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1962), *passim*; Eaton, Kingship, *passim*.

[6]Croft, Identity, *passim*.

[7]Croft, Individual, 179-81.

[8]Gunkel saw a total of 10 royal psalms: 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 101, 110, 132, 144:1-11 (Psalms, 23). Croft extends this list considerably: 2, 3, 5, 7, 9-10, 16, 17, 18, 20 (mixed type), 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 31, 38, 40, 44, 45 (mixed type), 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 66, 69, 71, 72, 89, 92, 94, 101, 108, 110 (mixed type), 116, 118, 132, 138, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144--a total (including mixed types of 47 (Identity, 73-132; 179-81).

the laments in the Psalms, connections which might provide an interpretive key. Such does not appear to be the case. The psalm which appears to have the greatest shared vocabulary with the confessions is Psalm 35, a psalm which Croft classifies as a genuine individual prayer.[9] However, this common vocabulary does not form a pattern with other genuine individual laments (as opposed to community laments in individual form). Thus, unless one wishes to defend the unlikely thesis that Jeremiah modelled his confessions on Psalm 35, the concentration of confessional language they share must be regarded as coincidental[10]

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[9]Croft, Identity, 42, 142. So also Weiser, (Psalms, 302); C. Westermann (The Psalms: Structure, Content and Message, [Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1980], 53); Kraus, (Psalms 1-59, 394); Gerstenberger, (Psalms, 153); and Fohrer (Introduction, 287). However, the individual interpretation of Psalm 36 is not universally shared. Mowinckel understands the Psalm to be a community lament and identifies the "I" with the king (Psalms, 1: 219; so also Eaton, Kingship, 41-42; Craigie, Psalms 1-50, 285). W.R. Taylor suggests that the Psalm is a composite work with different sections reflecting different situations and (probably) different authors ("The Book of Psalms: Exegesis Psalms 1-71, 93, 95-96, 100, 120-138, 140-150", IB, edited by G.A. Buttrick [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1955], 4: 181-82). Anderson (Psalms, 275-76) does not venture an opinion as to the identity of the "I" of this Psalm.

J.C. McCann's comments are apposite: "The very presence of such different proposals is sufficient indication that the language and imagery of Psalm 35 are open-ended enough to be applicable to a variety of circumstances" ("The Book of Psalms: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections", New Interpreter's Bible, ed L.E. Keck [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1996], 4: 819).

[10]William Holladay, while acknowledging that the dating of the psalm is uncertain, argues that the

Judicial Language in the Psalm Laments

Any interpretation of the judicial language of the Psalms is largely determined by the student's understanding of the indentity of the "I" of the Psalms and of the identity of the enemies. The judicial language has often been understood in metaphorical ways.[11] However, some specific proposals have been made in which this language is regarded as having literal reference.

Hans Schmidt has argued that the judicial language arose in the setting of a formal cultic judicial procedure during which the accused prayed to God against their accusers.[12] If God's response, mediated through the priests, was positive and the accusation was dismissed, the petitioners might add a prayer of praise to the

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language of Ps 35 is archaic and that Jeremiah drew on it both in the confessions and elsewhere (Jeremiah, 2: 67).

However this must remain problematical. Dating most of the Psalms is extremely difficult--and this Psalm is not an exception. Obviously, those scholars who see the King as the petitioner see the Psalm as pre-exilic (see previous footnote). This position is also accepted by Gerstenberger, (Psalms, 153). However, Anderson suggests an early post-exilic date, (Psalms 1-72, 276). Others, like Fohrer, are not prepared to suggest a date at all (Introduction, 287).

[11]E.g., Anderson, Psalms (1-72), 427, commenting on Ps 57.

[12]H. Schmidt, Das Gebet des Angeklagten im Alten Testament, BZAW 49 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1928), *passim*. Schmidt's proposal did not take in all of the individual laments. In fact he attempted to illustrate his proposed judicial procedure with "some twenty of the laments" (Eaton, Kingship, 6).

petition.[13] Schmidt's argument is based on a number of prose texts (I Kgs 8:31-32; Deut 17:8f; 21:1-8; Exod 22:6f; Num 5:11f). However, as Eaton points out, these texts are of a diverse nature and none of them refer to the singing of a psalm. He also observes that Schmidt deals arbitrarily with some of the Psalms. He concludes that the theory "is not firmly grounded either in the prose texts or the Psalms".[14]

L. Delekat uses the institution of asylum as the foundation for his reconstruction. He proposed that asylum seekers would write psalms of petition on the outer walls of the temple. If they were granted the asylum they sought, they would add a word of thanksgiving to their petition.[15]

Brevard Childs observes that Delekat has provided a plausible exegesis of the Psalms in terms of lament without first demonstrating that this is the context in which they should be interpreted.[16] J. Creach notes that the language of the Psalms and the legal language of asylum do not overlap sufficiently to support Delekat's

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[13]Schmidt, Das Gebet, *passim*.

[14]Eaton, Kingship, 6.

[15]L. Delekat, Asylie und Schutzorakel am Zionheiligtum (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967), *passim*.

[16]B.S. Childs, "Review of Asylie und Schutzorakel am Zionheiligtum by L. Delekat, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967)", JBL 88 (1969), 104-05.

view.[17] R.E. Clements argues that the Psalms can only be read autobiographically if the typical and metaphorical nature of their language is ignored.[18] Mowinckel argues that "the Psalms are--with very few exceptions--real cult psalms, made for cultic use".[19]

Delekat has provoked W. Beyerlin to re-examine the issue of the judicial language of the Psalms.[20] Rejecting the views of both Schmidt and Delekat, Beyerlin suggested that there are eleven Psalms which are indicative of a cultic institution, which he interprets in terms of "a cultic judgment of God at the Yahweh sanctuary to which the oppressed could turn as a type of last court of

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[17]J.F.D. Creach, Yahweh as Refuge and the Editing of the Hebrew Psalter, JSOTSS 217 (Sheffield: JSOTPress, 1996), 60-61.

[18]R.E. Clements, "Review of Asylie und Schutzorakel am Zionheiligtum by L. Delekat, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967)", JSS 14 (1969), 270-71.

[19]Mowinckel, Psalms, 1: 30. However, it must be acknowledged that most commentators take at least some of the language of the Psalms to be literal. Indeed, the different perspective on the meaning of individual psalms generally comes about because of a different understanding of the balance between literal and metaphorical elements (See McCann, "Psalms", 818). Even with this caveat in mind Delekat's views can still be described as "extreme" and his overliteralistic reading of the Psalmic language as "beyond any possible credibility" (Bellinger, Psalmody, 100).

[20]W. Beyerlin, Die Rettung der Bedrängten in den Feindpsalmen der Einzelnen auf institutionelle Zusammenhänge, FRLANT 99 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), p. 15.

appeal".[21] This proposal is supported by many of the same prose texts used by Schmidt and ultimately it suffers from the same telling criticism: neither the prose nor the psalmonic passages actually points to the institution being posited.[22] In the final analysis, the Psalms which Beyerlin posits as evidence for the cultic judgement he enisages easily allow for other interpretations.[23]

Recently, the positions of Schmidt and Beyerlin have been refined by W.H. Bellinger, Jr.[24] He suggests that the "falsely accused" are actually the object of malicious gossip.[25] However, such a matter is difficult to address adequately solely through legal procedure.[26]

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[21]G.F. Hasel, "Review of Die Rettung der Bedrängtenin den Feindpsalmen der Einzelnen auf institutionelle Zuammenhänge untersucht, by W. Beyerlin, FRLANT 99 (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970)", JBL 89 (1970), 470-72.

[22]J.H. Eaton, "Review of Die Rettung der Bedrängtenin den Feindpsalmen der Einzelnen auf institutionelle Zuammenhänge untersucht, by W. Beyerlin, FRLANT 99 (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970)", JTS n.s. (1971), 179-80; *idem*, Kingship, 9.

[23]Hasel, "Review", 472.

[24]W.H. Bellinger, Jr., "Psalms of the Falsely Accused: A Reassessment", Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers, Vol 25, ed. K.H. Richards (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars, 1986), 463-69.

[25]Such gossip would be taken more serious in ancient Israel than in the contemporary Western world because of the power perceived to be inherent in the spoken word, (J.N. Sanders, "Word, the", IDB, edited by G.A. Buttrick [Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1962], 4: 869).

[26]Bellinger points out that the Old Testament itself recognises that not all situations that arise in society can be dealt with through legal proceedings (i.e.,

He therefore suggests that the victim made appeal direct to God. Accordingly, the setting for these Psalms is not judicial but cultic.

Bellinger acknowledges that any proposed *Sitz im Leben* for the Psalms must be tentatively made.[27] However, his proposal is attractive. If valid it would go a long way towards answering one of the most searching criticisms of the individual interpretation of the confessions: How could Jeremiah use such stylised typical language to vent his own personal (unique) feelings? Since malicious gossip clearly appears to be in the background of some of the confessions (11:19; 15:10, 15b; 20:8b, 10), it would not be unnatural for Jeremiah to use the language of Psalms composed with precisely such a situation in mind.

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through the evaluation of evidence). He cites "trial by ordeal" as one alternative procedure. The Old Testament also gives evidence that malicious gossip was a problem in ancient Israelite society ("Psalms", 467).

[27]Bellinger, "Falsely Accused", 469.

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