



SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC READINGS OF JEREMIAH SCROLL: IN SEARCH OF A METHODOLOGY FOR JEREMIANIC STUDIES¹

Part II

*Leituras sincrônicas e diacrônicas dos rolos de Jeremias: Em busca de
uma metodologia para pesquisas em Jeremias*

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RESUMO

Enquanto a parte I apresentou o foco principal nas abordagens diacrônicas em Jr, a parte II visa enfatizar seus aspectos sincrônicos, considerando qual seria o período mais cedo onde Jeremias já estaria disponível como uma narrativa completa. O autor faz uso da crítica narrativa, tecendo algumas considerações ao método canônico, fazendo algumas adaptações modernas, e dando importância à coexistência da tradição oral ao lado de tradições textuais

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

ABSTRACT

Whilst part I focused mainly on diachronic approaches to Jer, part II aims to emphasize synchronic aspects of Jer, considering when the earliest period would be in which Jeremiah is available as a complete narrative. The author uses narrative criticism with some modern adaptation to the canonical method, giving importance to the coexistence of the oral tradition with textual traditions within communities.

Keywords: Jeremiah. Methodology. Synchronic. Diachronic.

1 INTRODUCTION

The rise³ of new literary theories and social scientific methods have, on the one hand, contributed significantly to biblical studies bringing new insights and adding a new dimension to the relationship between author, text and reader. On the other hand, strict literary readings detached from a thorough historical investigation naturally result in one imposing his/her self-projections on the text with the objective of justifying one's own theological, ideological or even political preferences. The use of new contemporary insights, such as migration and film studies, should be welcomed to the task of biblical hermeneutics shedding illuminating insights; however, it is equally important for the interpreter to use these contributions wisely and to search for mechanisms of control to prevent arbitrary decisions.

In part I of this essay⁴ I argued that although it is hard to establish a definite date for specific portions of Jer, comparisons between G-Jer and M-Jer and a close analysis of the prose and poetry relation present convincing evidence for diachronic approaches. In this second half, I shall propose that persuasive corroboration for diachronic perspectives should not rule out synchronic

³ This article is a revised version of a paper given during the Old Testament Studies Epistemology & Methods Network 2015 at *Uppsala universitet* in Sweden based on insightful responses from Dr. Martin Hallasckha from *Institut für Altes Testament, Fachbereich Evangelische Theologie, Universität Hamburg* in Germany.

⁴ YAN, Anderson. Synchronic and diachronic readings on Jeremiah scroll: In search of methodology for Jeremianic studies. In: **Vox Script. – Rev. Teol. Intern.** São Bento do Sul/SC, v. XXIV, n. 1 – jan – jun/2016, p. 13-30.

approaches since both \mathfrak{C} -Jer and \mathfrak{M} -Jer are now available in synchronic format. Thus, synchronic readings should not be downplayed as they provide a sense of how all parts fit together. However, synchronic readings should not be applied in an arbitrary fashion without any control mechanism. In order to prevent excessive subjectivism, the goal of part II is to propose a synchronic reading grounded on diachronic findings. In this second half, I shall attempt to find the possible earliest setting(s) in which a complete narrative/story of Jer could be available. This paper will be divided into three main sections: (2) preliminary issues; (3) synchronic reading; and (4) setting(s).

2 PRELIMINARY ISSUES

As was previously mentioned in part I, Jer survived in two different versions which differ in terms of length and organisation⁵. The DSS provide cogent proof that texts similar (but not identical) to \mathfrak{M} -Jer and \mathfrak{C} -Jer were already available as early as the 3rd century BCE (although some of them can be dated to the 2nd century CE)⁶. Besides that the Chester Beatty Papyri also support physical evidence of \mathfrak{C} between the 2nd and 4th centuries CE⁷. However, both the DSS and the Chester Beatty Papyri are fragmentary, making all the complete Jer manuscripts available (\mathfrak{M} -Jer and \mathfrak{C} -Jer) sometime in the Common Era.

In the case of \mathfrak{M} , even if we consider that the Masoretic activity was

⁵ TOV, Emanuel. Some aspects of the textual and literary history of the book of Jeremiah. In: BOGAERT, P.-M. (Ed.). *Le livre de Jérémie*. BETL LIV; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997, p. 148 and STIPP, Herman-Josef. *Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiasbuches*: Textgeschichtlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte. Freiburg: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994, p. 1.

⁶ See BAILLET, M. Textes des grottes 2Q, 3Q, 6Q, 7Q à 10Q. In: BAILLET, M. MILIK, D. T., VAUX, R. de and O. P. (Eds.). *Les “petites grottes” de Qumrân*: Exploration de la failasse Le grottes 2Q, 3Q, 5Q, 6Q, 7Q à 10Q. Le rouleau de cuivre. DJD 3; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962, p. 62-69 and CROSS, Frank Moore. The evolution of a theory of local texts. In: CROSS, Frank Moore and TALMON, Shemaryahu (Eds.). *Qumran and the history of the biblical text*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975, p. 308.

⁷ See PIETERSMA, Albert. Chester Beatty Papyri. In: NOEL, David (Ed.). *Anchor Bible dictionary*. Vol. 1; New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992, p. 901 and PETERS, Melvin K. H. Septuagint. In: NOEL, David (Ed.). *Anchor Bible dictionary*. Vol. 5; New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992, p. 1094.

already taking place between 500 and 1000 CE, it is still safe to argue that all **א** manuscripts are medieval, e.g., the Codex *Cairensis* (895 CE); Codex Aleppo (ca. 930 CE) and Codex *Leningradensis* (1009 CE)⁸. Nevertheless, it is important to observe that the Codex *Cairensis* contains only Prophetic literature. Likewise, the Codex Aleppo is also incomplete as most of the Pentateuch was destroyed. This makes the Codex *Leningradensis* the oldest complete Hebrew Bible available⁹.

ב's case is not significantly different. Even though the Chester Beatty Papyri are the earliest physical evidence of **ב**-Jer available¹⁰, they are also incomplete. In this sense, Codex *Vaticanus*, Codex *Sinaiticus* (both from the 4th CE) and Codex *Alexandrinus* (5th CE) are the earliest complete **ב** manuscripts available¹¹ due to the fragmentary nature of the Chester Beatty Papyri (like the DSS).

This, however, does not diminish the importance of the DSS and the Chester Beatty Papyri. Whilst the DSS present strong evidence of texts from the Hebrew Bible before the Common Era, the Chester Beatty Papyri indicate the existence of a Greek text available prior to its recensions and revisions¹², if one considers that (like **א**) **ב** also went through a long complex transmission process involving a number of revisions and recensions (e.g., *Kaige*; *Aquila*; *Symmachus* and *Theodotion*) between the 1st and 3rd CE¹³.

⁸ See MULDER, Martin Jan. The transmission of the biblical Text. In: MULDER, Martin Jan (Ed.). **Mikra**: Text, translation, reading & interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism & Early Christianity. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004, p. 98, 104-7, 111, 116 and TOV, Emanuel. The status of the Masoretic Text in modern text editions of the Hebrew Bible: The relevance of canon. In: MCDONALD, Lee Martin and SANDERS, James A. (Eds.). **The canon debate**. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002, p. 234-235.

⁹ WIDDER, Wendy. **Textual criticism**. LMS; Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013, p. 54-57.

¹⁰ The Chester Beatty Papyri contain a small 3rd century CE fragment (P. VIII), which correspond to Jer 4.30 – 5.34 cf. PIETERSMA, 1992, p. 901.

¹¹ See PARKER, D. C. Parker. Codex Vaticanus. In: NOEL, David (Ed.). **Anchor Bible dictionary**. Vol. 1; New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992, p. 1074; CHARLESWORTH, James H. Codex Sinaiticus. **Anchor Bible dictionary**. Vol. 1; New York, NY: Doubleday, p. 1074; PETERS, 1992, p. 1094 and DINES, Jennifer M. and KNIBB, Michael A. **The Septuagint**. London: T&T Clark, 2004, p. 5-7.

¹² Cf. PIETERSMA, 1992, p. 901 and PETERS, 1992, p. 1094.

¹³ See AITKEN, James K. Introduction. In: AITKEN, James K. (Ed.). **The T&T companion to the Septuagint**. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015, p. 5-6; SHEAD, Andrew G. Jeremiah. In: AITKEN, James K. (Ed.). **The T&T companion**

Nevertheless, one important common feature shared by these manuscripts above is, perhaps, their physical format of codex, which tended to be more predominant in Christian communities¹⁴. Not only did the codex play an important part towards the idea of canon as a physical book, but it also succeeded its predecessor, the scroll¹⁵. This had a profound impact in terms of how texts were appreciated because before the establishment of the codex the shape of the scroll inevitably led the reader to a linear reading whilst the introduction of the codex allowed new possibilities of readings free of the physical limitations imposed before by the format of the scroll¹⁶. Once different volumes were gathered into a single one, new hermeneutical possibilities emerged, opening the door for a grand narrative of a library as a single volume. However, almost simultaneously, theological boundaries also started taking place¹⁷.

3 SYNCHRONIC READING

As was pointed out in part I, De Saussure's contribution brought a significant impact on literary studies mainly represented by the New Criticism movement and consequently had a huge impact on biblical studies¹⁸. Nevertheless, the terms synchronic and diachronic acquired a different connotation from their

to the Septuagint. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015, p. 469-472; DINES and KNIBB, 2004, p. 80-90 and BROTZMAN, Ellis R. **Old Testament textual criticism: A practical introduction.** Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1994, p. 72-80.

¹⁴ KRAFT, Robert A. Kraft. The codex and canon consciousness. In: MCDONALD, Lee Martin and SANDERS, James A. (Eds.). **The canon debate.** Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002, p. 229-233.

¹⁵ KRAFT, 2002, p. 229-233.

¹⁶ See TOORN, Karen van der. **Scribal culture and the making of the Hebrew Bible.** Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007, p. 20-23 and PETTERGREE, Andrew. **The book in the renaissance.** New Haven, NY: Yale University Press, 2010, p. 1-3.

¹⁷ ULRICH, Eugene. The notion and definition of canon. In: MCDONALD, Lee Martin and SANDERS, James A. (Eds.). **The canon debate.** Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002, p. 30.

¹⁸ For a short overview, see MCKNIGHT, Edgar V. and MALBON, Elizabeth Struthers. Introduction. In: MCKNIGHT, Edgar V. and MALBON, Elizabeth Struthers (Eds.). **The new literary criticism and the New Testament.** LNTS 109; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994, p. 15-26.

original Saussurean meaning in the field of biblical studies since they were both employed in a symbolic sense, in which the former refers to the “final form” of the text interpreted in contrast to the latter meaning its growth process¹⁹.

In this way, synchronic approaches consider the text itself as the object of study. For the Saussurean hierarchical system the priority of the synchronic dimension is based on the simple fact that the text is what gives immediate access to (the literary) reality²⁰.

Thus, the focus on the “final form” of the biblical text shifted the perspective from author to text (and even reader) centred angle(s). However, like the diachronic approach, a synchronic approach is a broad umbrella, which involves a number of methods, but because of limitations of space in this paper, I shall draw attention to only two of them: the narrative and the canonical criticisms.

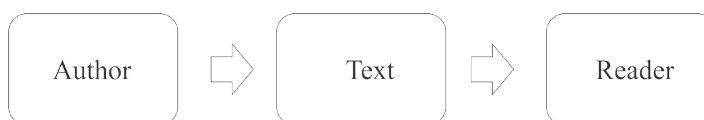
As part of new criticism, narrative criticism offers valuable tools for film studies and biblical scholars have benefited immensely from its insights. Within this method, the literary critic examines how a story is told. Unlike historical critical methods, the critic considers the text as a mirror from which he/she decides “to look at the text, not through it, and whatever insight is obtained will be found in the encounter of the reader with the text itself”²¹. Since the text functions as a mirror and not a window, it gives access to the social historical situation described in the text itself. In Jer’s case, the late pre-exile and exile periods situate the

¹⁹ Cf. BARR, James. The synchronic, the diachronic and the historical: A triangular relationship? In: MOOR, Johannes C. (Ed.). **Synchronic or diachronic?** A debate on method in Old Testament exegesis. OS XXXIV; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995, p. 8-9; HOFTJZER, Jacob. Holistic or compositional approach? Linguistic remarks to the problem. In: MOOR, Johannes C. (Ed.). **Synchronic or diachronic?** A debate on method in Old Testament exegesis. OS XXXIV; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995, p. 98-99; STONE, Lawson G. Redaction criticism: whence, whither, and why? Or, going beyond source and form criticism without leaving them behind. In: CARPENTER, Eugene E. **A Biblical itinerary**: In search of method, form and content: Essays in honor of George W. Coats. JSOT Sup. 240; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997, p. 77-78 and BARSTAD, Hans M. What prophets do. Reflections on past reality in the book of Jeremiah. In: BARSTAD, Hans M. & KRATZ, Reinhard G. (Eds.). **Prophecies in the book of Jeremiah**. BZAW 388; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009, p. 10-20.

²⁰ Cf. SAUSSURE, Ferdinand de. **Cours de linguistique générale**. Publié par Charles Bally et Albert Séchehaye avec la collaboration de Albert Riedlinger. Édition critique préparée par Tullio. Posface de Louis-Jean Calvet; Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, 1916, p. 119-120.

²¹ POWELL, Mark Allen. **What is narrative criticism?** A new approach to the Bible. Foreword by N. T. Wright. London: SPCK, 1993, p. 8.

narrative within a “historical” context (cf. *Jl*-Jer 1.1-3). However, because the text is approached as a piece of literature, the reader is informed of the world presented by the text without significant concern for its historicity²². In this sense, the veracity of events described in the story is not in the critic’s interest as his/her concern focuses on the techniques employed to deliver the story. For instance, *Jl*-Jer 28 presents the story about the conflict between prophet Hananiah and Jeremiah. Hananiah, whose name means Yahweh is gracious²³, pronounces a “gracious” oracle prophesying a short exile with the imminent return of the people. Jeremiah, by contrast, gives a harsh message supporting the submission of the whole world (including Judah) to the Babylonians as the new masters of the world order. In the narrative critic’s view, the text is a vehicle of communication involving a horizontal relation between sender, message and the receiver, which corresponds respectively as author, text and reader²⁴. Another example can be taken from the story of Jehoiakim burning the scroll in *Jl*-Jer 36, which can be interpreted as an apologetic treaty or propaganda to legitimize the scribal institution.



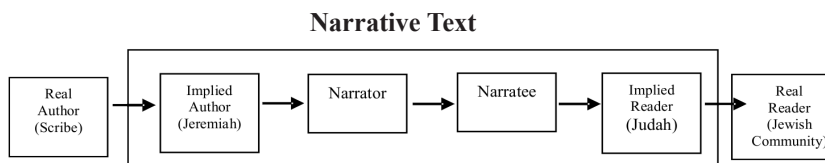
In this manner, for narrative criticism, author and reader do not necessarily represent real people. They are viewed as implied author and audience instead (e.g., the character Jeremiah is regarded as the implied author whilst Judah is taken as the implied reader). This implied author incorporates the sum of attributes about the alleged author based on the information provided by the

²² This is in clear contrast to historical critical methods, where scholars dispute the date of different portions of Jer (e.g., whilst Hyatt rejects that Jeremiah was contemporary to King Josiah cf. HYATT, J. Philip. *Jeremiah and Deuteronomy*. In: **JNES**. Chicago, IL, v. 1. n. 2, April/1942, p. 156-173), Stipp favours that the prophet was already active during the late pre-exilic period cf. STIPP, Hermann-Josef. *Die joshijanische Reform im Jeremiabuch. Mit einem Seitenblick auf das Deuteronomitische Geschichtswerk*. In: STIPP, Hermann-Josef. **Alttestamentliche Studien: Arbeiten zu Priesterschrift, Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk und Prophetie**. BZAW 442; Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2013, p. 487-517.

²³ Cf. KOEHLER, Ludwig et al. **The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament**. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000, p. 335.

²⁴ POWELL, 1993, p. 8-9.

literary world (e.g., Jer 1.1).²⁵ The chart below illustrates how narrative critics represent the model of narrative communication in the case of Jer.²⁶



Narrative criticism depends on some pillars that are fundamental for its methodological operation (e.g., perspective, narrator, structure, plot, character and settings). In terms of perspective, it is crucial to distinguish story and discourse/rhetoric²⁷. Whilst the former refers to the content of the narrative the latter talks about the way in which the story is presented with the goal of causing a response/reaction from the reader/audience²⁸. In this sense, all the elements involved in the

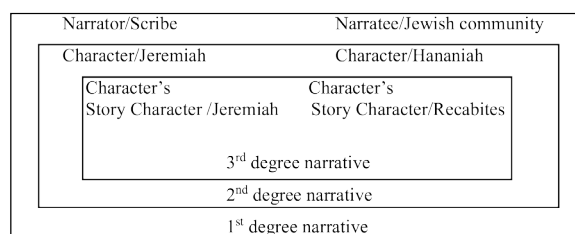
²⁵ Cf. WIMSATT, William K. and BEARDSLEY, Monroe C. The intentional fallacy. In: WIMSATT, William K. (Ed.). **The verbal icon**: Studies in the meaning of poetry. Kentucky, MA: University of Kentucky, 1967 and ALTER, Robert. **The world of biblical literature**. London: SPCK, 1992, p. 53-70 and POWELL, 1993, p. 19-21.

²⁶ Table adapted from CHATMAN, Seymour. **Story and discourse**: Narrative structure in fiction and film. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978, p. 151.

²⁷ Pohlmann observes that part of the so-called Deuteronomistic sections are clearly in the service of *gōlāh* apologetics. He points out that the final shape of the scroll privileges the Babylonian גולה as the legitimate remnants, rejecting those left behind in the land, and disqualifying the refugee in Egypt from the perspective after the invasion of the Babylonians. Pohlmann notices that the promises of salvation are directed to those in exile, which contrast with the sharp criticism addressed to other groups, and Jeremiah is presented as well treated by the Babylonians cf. POHLMANN, Karl-Friedrich. **Studien zum Jeremiabuch**. FRLANT 118; Göttingen, DL: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978, p. 183-191, 194-197. Similarly, Rom-Shiloni suggests that an ideological conflict (pro-Judeans versus pro-*gōlāh* voices) behind Jer taking place during the Persian period cf. ROM-SHILONI, Dalit Rom-Shiloni. Group identities in Jeremiah: Is it the Persian conflict? In: ZVI, Ehud Ben, EDELMAN, Diana V. and POLAK, Frank (Eds.). **Palimpsest**: Rhetoric, ideology, stylistics, and language relating to Persian Israel. PHSC 5; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009, p. 11-46.

²⁸ See GUNN, David M. and FEWELL, Danna Nolan. **Narrative in the Hebrew Bible**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 189-205; GENETTE, Gérard. **Narrative discourse**: An essay in method. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980, p. 161-90; BERLIN, Adele. **Poetics and biblical narrative**. Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1983, p. 43-82; STERNBERG, Meir. **The poetics of biblical narrative**. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983, p. 129-185; Powell, 1993, p. 23 and Chatman, 1978, p. 141-262.

story (e.g., characters, settings, events, plot, structure, etc.) are delivered through the perspective of the narrator to serve his/her interests/agenda²⁹. This perspective, however, is subdivided into two lenses: narrator and the implied author. The former, expressed in the text and the players' view, is given in the story³⁰. Thus, the view presented by the narrator differs from that given via the character Jeremiah. In this manner, the way in which the narrator presents the characters influences the reader's reaction towards them (e.g., the reader's opinion about kings Jehoiakim and Zedekiah³¹). Likewise, the tone expressed to describe speeches and actions inevitably expresses the angle of the implied author's perspective. This differentiation functions as a door through which the narrator can have immediate access to the audience, allowing different sophisticated levels of narrative in the same story³².



Concerning the narrator, he/she presents the story to the reader and the narrator can be either hidden or visible in the story expressing himself/herself directly using the first person to express his/her ideas or through the third person via a character within the story (**Jer** 35)³³. The narrator normally does not

²⁹ See ALTER, Robert. **The art of biblical narrative**. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1981, p. 88-113; POWELL, 1993, p. 23-34; GUNN, 1993, p. 146-73; BAR-EFRAT, Shimon, **Narrative art in the Bible**. London: T&T Clark, 2004, p. 15-16 and CHATMAN, 1978, p. 139-160.

³⁰ Chatman provides a sophisticated distinction between slant and filter cf. CHATMAN, Seymour. **Coming to terms: The rhetoric of narrative in fiction and films**. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990, p. 139-160.

³¹ For a detailed study about the kings mentioned in Jer see JOB, John Brian. **Jeremiah's kings: A study of the monarchy in Jeremiah**. SOTSS; Adershot: Ashgate, 2006.

³² CHATMAN, 1990, p. 144.

³³ See BAR-EFRAT, 2004, p. 13-45 and ALTER, 1981, p. 63-87. Lanser provides detailed analysis regarding the introduction of the narrator's perspective into the story cf. LANSER, Susan. **The narrative acts: point of view in prose fiction**. Princeton, NJ:

participate in the story, although he/she is still able to provide extra information in the story (ⲁⲓ-Jer 36.32). Besides that, the narrator is not confined to a specific geographical location as the narrator can be transposed to different places (e.g., ⲁⲓ-Jer 28.1 and ⲁⲓ-Jer 52.31). Normally, the implied author speaks through the narrator's voice, which in this sense works as a rhetorical instrument, but on other occasions, the narrator's voice can come from someone else (ⲁⲓ-Jer 45).

Another major concern of narrative criticism is how the story is structured because it also influences the implied reader as a hermeneutical guide³⁴. In this sense, the way in which ⲉ-Jer and ⲁⲓ-Jer are organised serve different purposes. Whilst the structure of ⲉ-Jer maintains the oracles against the nations in the middle after chapter 25 as with the other major prophets without presenting major disruption to the narrative, the arrangement of the oracle against the nations at the end of ⲁⲓ-Jer fits within a three column scheme formed by chapters 1, 25 and 50-51³⁵. In ⲁⲓ-Jer 1.10 Jeremiah not only is called to be a prophet to יהודה, but also על-הגוים ועל-הממלכות³⁶. ⲁⲓ-Jer 25 functions like a hinge, which summarises the first half and introduces the second half of the scroll³⁷. The fates of Judah and Babylon are reversed in the second half of the scroll³⁸. The tripartite structure of ⲁⲓ-Jer seems to make this reversal more evident as chapters 50-51 describe the fate of Babylon at the end followed by a hope for Judah in the last chapter³⁹. The structure also involves a number of techniques (e.g., changes of plot, the combination of more than one story, word plays, etc.). The use of repetition works as a device to stress the importance of certain aspects and there are comparative and contrasting examples to instigate the audience's evaluation⁴⁰.

Moving on to the plot, this is related to a sequence of interconnected

Princeton University Press, 1981.

³⁴ BAR-EFRAT, 2004, p. 197-217; ALTER, 1981, p. 88-113; GUNN, 1993, p. 147-164 and POWELL, 1993, p. 32-34.

³⁵ Cf. KESSLER, Martin. The scaffolding of the book of Jeremiah. In: KESSLER, Martin (Ed.). **Reading the book of Jeremiah: A search for coherence**. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004, p. 57-66.

³⁶ KESSLER, 2004, p. 57-66.

³⁷ KESSLER, 2004, p. 57-66.

³⁸ KESSLER, 2004, p. 57-66.

³⁹ KESSLER, 2004, p. 56-66.

⁴⁰ BAR-EFRAT, 2004, p. 197-217; ALTER, 1981, p. 88-113; GUNN, 1993, p. 147-64.

occurrences joined “by temporal succession and causality”⁴¹, which make the way in which the story is delivered more important than its content. It is crucial, however, to make a distinction between the representation of time in the story and that of the discourse/rhetoric, which is the sequence of the story given by the narrator⁴². Another element connected to the plot is the length of the event; and finally, regularity reveals the importance of certain aspects⁴³.

Regarding character, there are different types and the narrator can provide the narratee with his/her evaluation regarding these characters in different ways (e.g., kings Jehoiakim and Zedekiah). One way of achieving this is when the narrator states an opinion regarding the character in a direct fashion. Another way, is doing this indirectly by showing the reader the actions and third hand opinions about certain characters (e.g., the decisions taken by King Zedekiah)⁴⁴. Moreover, characters can also fall into two main categories. Some characters are consistent and predictable through the story whilst others present significant fluctuations (e.g., Jeremiah and King Zedekiah)⁴⁵.

Concerning setting, this refers to the temporal and spacial place in which the events and the dynamics between the characters of the story occur. The importance of the setting may vary, as in some cases it might play an essential role (e.g., Jerusalem, Babylon and Egypt)⁴⁶. Similarly, even if Jer is read as fiction, historical information from a specific age also may execute an important part (e.g., pre-exilic and exilic settings)⁴⁷.

Amongst the diverse options under the umbrella of synchronic approaches, canonical criticism is one of the methods which attempts to bring sense

⁴¹ MOORE, Stephen D. **Literary criticism and the gospels**: The theoretical challenge. New Haven, NY: Yale University Press, 1989, p. 14.

⁴² BAR-EFRAT, 2004, p. 93-140; ALTER, 1981, p. 155-77 and GUNN, 1993, p. 101-28. M-Jer organises the structure of the book in order to accomodate its three column scheme (cf. KESSLER, 2004, p. 57-66). This does not necessarily match with the chronology given by Jer's prose narrative sections.

⁴³ BAR-EFRAT, 2004, p. 141-96.

⁴⁴ BAR-EFRAT, 2004, p. 64-92 and GUNN, 1993, p. 46-89.

⁴⁵ BAR-EFRAT, 2004, p. 64-92 and GUNN, 1993, p. 46-89. Further details about the construction of characters can be found in FOSTER, E. M. **Aspects of the novel**. London: Arnold, 1927.

⁴⁶ See WILLS, Lawrence. **The Jewish novel in the Ancient World**. New York, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995, p. 132-57.

⁴⁷ WILLS, 1995, p. 132-57.

to the totality of biblical text within a coherent narrative. Although I acknowledge a valid contribution from Child's canonical method in terms of trying to make sense of the biblical text as a whole, I also find some issues with this method alongside the idea of the "final form", which I shall address in the next section due to its close connection with the following topic.

4 SETTINGS

The previous section attempted to show the emphasis of synchronic approaches on the literary reality and drew some examples of narrative criticism applied to Jer. Because of the focus on the text itself rather than the author(s), synchronic approaches have often been labelled as a-historical. Part of this caricature can relate to the abusive use of the idea of "final form" as a *Deus ex machina* device applied to biblical texts, which attempts to bring easy solutions to a long complex history of composition and transmission. It is important to point out that even within the Saussurean usage the term never discarded the historical reality⁴⁸, whether it is a short or long interval of time, there will always be a time-span involved in the synchronic dimension of language⁴⁹. For this reason, a pure literary reading sounds more like a fallacy as any reading is always placed in a historical location. Even if one decides to work with *MT* taking the DSS as evidence for the existence of a text that witnesses *MT*, they are not identical. In this sense, he/she cannot ignore the fact that *MT* represents a medieval text⁵⁰. Thus, the area of study is no longer Old Testament/Hebrew Bible studies, but medieval Jewish studies (and even other areas) instead. This raises serious questions regarding what we mean with the term "final form" of the text? Do we take into account the history of transmission or are we talking about the story?

As was demonstrated in part I, a simple comparison between *MT*-Jer and *G*-Jer does not just provide strong proof for a literary development of Jer, but if we also include the DSS into the equation, then one can conclude that even during the Middle Judaism⁵¹ Jer did not reach a fixed form, but it was still a fluid text

⁴⁸ Cf. SAUSSURE, 1916, p. 119-120.

⁴⁹ BARR, 1995, p. 2-3.

⁵⁰ BARR, 1995, p. 4-5.

⁵¹ The term Middle Judaism was first coined by Boccaccini to avoid value judgment with

instead. This strongly suggests a move “from a pluriformity to a uniformity of the text”⁵². This indicates that from an early period, there were multiple versions of coexisting biblical texts allowing some kind of fluidity, which was not an exclusive phenomenon of Qumran, as this can also be observed in other Jewish and early Christian communities in which multiple versions were part of an exegetical process, where both oral and written activities were intimately involved⁵³. In this sense, it may be possible that there were more than two versions of Jeremiah in circulation, however, only **א** and **ב** survived⁵⁴.

The situation of **ב** is to some extent similar to the DSS because although it reflects a text much earlier than **א**, the Chester Beatty Papyri are also fragmentary. The earliest codices represent Patristic usage. Therefore, in this case one would be venturing in the terrain of Patristic studies. Despite the fact that there is no dispute that **ב** reflects a translation of a Hebrew text no longer available, the orthography of the codices reveal that they are far removed from the period in which the translation took place (without considering the issues involving different revisions and recensions).

Nevertheless, the Saussurean synchronic meaning could still be applied in theory in this case if it is applied to **ב** very loosely as **ב** reflects a translation into

the goal of presenting just a chronological view of Judaism(s) between 300 BCE and 200 AD cf. BOCCACCINI, Gabriele. **Middle Judaism: Jewish thought 300 B.C.E. to 200 C. E.** Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991, p. 9-13.

⁵² SÆBØ, Magne. **On the Way to Canon: Creative Tradition History in the Old Testament.** JSOTS 191; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998, p. 46.

⁵³ Cf. NORTON, Jonathan D. H. **Contours in the text: Textual variations in the writings of Paul, Josephus and the Yāḥad.** LNTS; London: T&T Clark, 2011, p. 178-181 and PERSON, Raymond F. A rolling corpus and oral tradition: A not so literate solution to a highly literate problem. In: DIAMOND, A. R. Pete; O’CONNOR, Kathleen M. & STULMAN, Louis (Eds.). **Troubling Jeremiah.** JSOTS 260; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999, p. 263-271. A similar process regarding Jesus’s tradition can be observed in the Gospels cf. PARKER, D. C. Parker. **The living text of the Gospels.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 204-205. This phenomenon also extends to other literature cf. MARTIN, Gary D. **Multiple originals: New approaches to Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism.** TCS 7; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010, p. 11-61.

⁵⁴ Popović suggests that in the late Second Temple Period different editions of biblical writings were available alongside parabiblical writings cf. POPOVIĆ, Mladen, Prophet, books and texts: Ezekiel, Pseudo-Ezekiel and the authoritativeness of Ezekiel traditions in Early Judaism. In: POPOVIĆ, Mladen (Ed.). **Authoritative scriptures in Ancient Judaism.** JSJ Sup. 141; Leiden: Brill, 2010), p. 247-9. See also TOV, 2004, p. 239-240.

Koine Greek. Unlike classical Greek, *Koine* was a dialect derived from Attic used for communication between different Greek groups, brought as a lingua franca by Alexander's hordes bridging the West and East in the antiquity⁵⁵. However, the inexistence of texts from the time in which the translation took place makes this task unpractical. On the other hand, the metaphorical sense of a synchronic approach seems more viable as there is enough information to build a case for a synchronic reading of *Ṭ*-Jer within the Hellenistic setting of the diaspora. Although the existing *Ṭ* manuscripts available reflect a much later period than the time in which the translation took place, Sir. 1.1-2 (132 BCE) presumes the existence of *του νομου και των προφητων και των αλλων*⁵⁶. In addition, despite its legendary character, the Ep. Arist. agrees with Sirach that the Pentateuch was the first Jewish work translated sometime between 280 and 250 BCE⁵⁷. This corroborates with the evidence based comparison between *Ṭ*-prophetic literature and *Ṭ*-Pentateuch, which suggests that the vocabulary of the former seems highly dependent on the latter⁵⁸. In other words, in terms of the literary history of *Ṭ*, the Pentateuch probably comes before the Prophets. In addition, late Jewish writers (e.g., Philo and Josephus) make direct and indirect references to *Ṭ*⁵⁹.

As the DSS point out, Jer did not reach a fixed form even in the period of Middle Judaism. It seems that during the Middle Judaism period the story of Jer was already widespread, but also subject to an ongoing transformation as Jer's story was retold in different communities acquiring different versions. Perhaps the following analogy might elucidate this point. As with popular stories, songs or plays that were significantly widespread, but with no original, these can be interpreted and improvised with some degree of freedom by different storytellers, musicians or directors and still be recognisable as the same story, song or play⁶⁰.

⁵⁵ MUSSIES, Gerard. Greek. In: NOEL, David (Ed.). **Anchor Bible dictionary**. Vol. 4; New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992, p. 197.

⁵⁶ ALEXANDER, Di Lella, A., and SKEHAN, Patrick William. **The wisdom of Ben Sira**. ABC 39; New Haven, NY: Yale University Press, 2008, p. 8-10.

⁵⁷ DINES and KNIBB, 2004, p. 40-42.

⁵⁸ DINES and KNIBB, 2004, p. 40-46.

⁵⁹ DINES and KNIBB, 2004, p. 46.

⁶⁰ I am thinking about the popularity and the long life of urban myths that are kept alive in the collective memory, which is exposed with fresh insights cf. HEATH, Chip & HEATH, Dan. **Made to stick**: Why some ideas take hold and others come unstuck. London: Arrow Books, 2008, p. 3-24.

In this sense, these complete narrative(s) of Jer probably gave birth to what we know now as \mathfrak{G} -Jer and \mathfrak{A} -Jer (and perhaps other lost versions). In this sense, it may be possible that one of Jer's versions (a pre- \mathfrak{G} *Vorlage*) was translated into what is known as \mathfrak{G} -Jer, providing one of the earliest synchronic interpretations of Jer. As Schmid states, " \mathfrak{G} -Jeremiah stellt eine zum Zeitpunkt der Übersetzung vorgenommene synchrone Auslegung des ihr vorliegenden, gestuften hebräischen Textes dar"⁶¹. My point here is not to ignore the recensions and revisions of \mathfrak{G} , but to show that at some point in time a complete version (yet not fixed) of Jer was translated into Greek paradoxically preserving and bringing fresh meaning to the new audience. As Gadamer argues:

[...] So wird der sprachliche Vorgang besonders aufschlußreich, in dem ein Gespräch in zwei einander fremden Sprachen durch Übersetzung und Übertragung ermöglicht wird. Der Übersetzer muß hier den zu vertehenden Sinn in den Zusammenhang hinübertragen, in dem der Partner des Gesprächs lebt. Das heißt bekanntlich nicht, daß er den Sinn verfälschen darf, den der andere meint. Der Sinn soll vielmehr erhalten bleiben, aber da er in einer neuen Sprachwelt verstanden werden soll, muß er in ihr auf neue Weise zur Geltung kommen. Jede Übersetzung ist daher schon Auslegung, ja man kann sagen, sie ist immer die Vollendung der Auslegung, die der Übersetzer dem ihm vorgegebenen Wort hat angedeihen lassen.⁶²

This alongside Egyptian inscriptions from the 3rd to the 2nd centuries BCE and Elephantine papyri provides reasonable grounds to place the earliest audience of \mathfrak{G} -Jer in the midst of the Egyptian Diaspora community, which would gather in the $\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\epsilon$, sometime in 3rd century BCE⁶³. In this way, it is possible to

⁶¹ SCHMID, Konrad. **Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches**: Untersuchungen zur Redaktions – und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer 30 – 33 im Kontext des Buches. VMAN 72; Zürich: Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener Verlag, 1996, p. 20.

⁶² Cf. GADAMER, Hans-Georg. **Hermeneutik I**: Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010, p. 387-388. G-Jer frequently translates יהוה as $\tau\omega\ \alpha\gamma\omega\ \iota\sigma\rho\alpha\eta\lambda$. This might indicate the influence of G-Isaiah in G-Jeremiah as $\tau\omega\ \alpha\gamma\omega\ \iota\sigma\rho\alpha\eta\lambda$ is a recurrent theme in Isaiah (cf. G-Isaiah 43.3, 14; 45.11; 47.4; 48.17 and 49.7) cf. OSWALT, John N. **The Holy One of Israel**. Studies in the Book of Isaiah. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2014, p. 41.

⁶³ Cf. GRIFFTHS, J. Gwyn. Egypt and the Rise of the Synagogue. In: URMAN, Dan and FLESHER, Paul V. M. (Eds.). **Ancient synagogues**: Historical Analysis and Archaeological Discovery. Leiden, Brill, 1998, p. 4-5; GRABBE, Lester L. Synagogues in Pre-70 Palestine: A Reassessment. In: URMAN, Dan and FLESHER, Paul V. M. (Eds.). **Ancient synagogues**: Historical Analysis and Archaeological Discovery. Leiden, Brill, 1998, p. 17-19 and GRIFFTHS, J. Gwyn. The legacy of Egypt in Judaism.

set some boundaries and control in order to prevent excessive subjective readings, as new literary methods pose some risks in this regard.

One of the disadvantages of using \mathfrak{G} -Jer is of course the limitation of the translation missing word plays and properties singular to the Hebrew language, which cannot be reproduced in the Greek translation⁶⁴. For this reason, the next option might be more attractive. The fact that \mathfrak{G} -Jer is a translation presupposes the pre-existence of a Hebrew text of Jer. Although this text is no longer available, it suggests that at some point in time there was (a) complete narrative(s) of Jer, but not in a fixed form.

More recently scholars have argued that prophetic literature probably emerged in Yehud during the Persian period c. 450 BCE⁶⁵. To some extent this view should not be a surprise. Late references of Jeremiah tradition about the length of the exile already appear in Dan 9.2 during the early Maccabean period⁶⁶; however, this does not necessarily prove that this tradition was known only later as it is possible to find consciousness about Jeremiah tradition earlier. Texts from the Persian period, such as Ezr and 2 Ch, indicate that some form of Jeremiah tradition was already known sometime during the postexilic era⁶⁷. Leaving the question of the reliability regarding the connection between Jeremiah and King Josiah aside, Ezr 1.1; 2 Ch 36.12, 21-22, 25 attribute the title נביא to Jeremiah and show awareness about Jeremiah's confrontation with King Zedekiah and also

In: HORBURY, William; DAVIES, W. D. and STURDY, John (Eds.). **Judaism**. Vol. 3. The Early Roman Period. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 1029.

⁶⁴ LAW, Timothy Michael. **When God spoke Greek**: The Septuagint and the making of the Christian Bible. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 33-35.

⁶⁵ See essays in EDELMAN, Diana V. and ZVI, Ehud Ben (Eds.). **The production of prophecy**: Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud. London: Equinox, 2009.

⁶⁶ MONTGOMERY, James A. **A critical and exegetical commentary on the Book of Daniel**. ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927, p. 96-97 and COLLINS, John Joseph & COLLINS, Adela Yarbro. **Daniel**: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), p. 25, 38.

⁶⁷ Whilst Knoppers allows some flexibility regarding the date of Chronicles (cf. KNOPPERS, Gary N. **1 Chronicles 1 – 9**: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. ABC 12; New York, NY: Doubleday, 2004, p. 101-116), others hold the preference for the 300 BCE (cf. MYERS, Jacob M. Myers. **II Chronicles**: Introduction, Translation and Notes. ABC 13; New Haven, NY: Yale University, 1965, p. 215-216; CURTIS, Edward Lewis and MADSEN, Albert Alonzo. **A critical and exegetical commentary on the Book of Chronicles**. ICC; New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910, p. 5-6 and BATTEN, Lorin W. **A critical commentary on the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah**. ICC; New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913, p. 2-3).

mention the seventy years in exile⁶⁸. It may be possible that 2 Ch 36.12 might have played a significant role in the development of *AI*-Jer since the titles, such as נבאי and ספר, referring to Jeremiah and Baruch are less frequent in the shorter *GI*-Jer. A careful comparison between these two versions suggests a development of both characters and gives the impression of a move to the *beatification* of Jeremiah as a prophet⁶⁹. The prophetic title (נבאי) seems to have been employed only later after the destruction of the Temple (586 BCE) during the exile covering a variety of cultic offices (e.g., כהנים and ראה)⁷⁰. Possibly the absence of the temple during this period seems to have contributed significantly to the transition from the ancient Yahwistic religion to early Judaism, where practices of divination in worship gave more room for written texts⁷¹. In this sense, the scribal title, embodied in the metaphorical figure of Baruch, seems to be vital in this process of transformation of the religious institution⁷².

Fischer dates Jer to c. 400 BCE, although he favours *AI*-Jer⁷³. On the

⁶⁸ Ch seems to make distinction between prophets and inspired messengers. The former is frequently accompanied by the use of prophetic titles whilst the latter lacks them. Whilst individuals with prophetic titles offer interpretation of events, those who lack these titles function as interpreters of the scriptures. Jeremiah seems to fall in the first category cf. BEENTJES, Pancratius C. **Construct of prophecy in the former & latter prophets and other texts**. ANEM 4; Atlanta, GA, 2011, p. 23-24.

⁶⁹ BOGAERT, 1994, p. 168-173.

⁷⁰ See GONÇALVES, Francolino J. Les “prophètes Écrivains” étaient-ils des נביאים? In: DAVIAU, P.M. Michèle WEVERS, John William and WEIGL, Michael (Eds.). **World of the Arameans: Biblical Studies in honour of Paul-Eugène Dion**. JSOTSup. 324; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001, p. 85-144; EDELMAN, Diana V. From prophets to prophetic books. In: EDELMAN, Diana V. and ZVI, Ehud Ben (Ed.). **The Production of prophecy: Constructing prophecy and prophets in Yehud**. London: Equinox, 2009, p. 47; GERSTENBERGER, Erhard S. Persian-empire spirituality and the genesis of prophetic books. In: EDELMAN, Diana V. and ZVI, Ehud Ben (Ed.). **The production of prophecy: Constructing prophecy and prophets in Yehud**. London: Equinox, 2009, p. 111-112 and AULD, A. G. Prophets through the looking glass: Between writing and Moses. In: **JSOT**. Edinburgh, vol. 27, n. 1983, p. 7-8.

⁷¹ EDELMAN, 2009, p. 47.

⁷² See BRUEGGEMANN, Walter. **The theology of the book of Jeremiah**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 2-3 and THELLE, Rannfrid I. MT Jeremiah: Reflections of a discourse on prophecy in the Persian period. In: EDELMAN, Diana V. and ZVI, Ehud Ben (Ed.). **The Production of prophecy: Constructing prophecy and prophets in Yehud**. London: Equinox, 2009, p. 185-87, 195-200.

⁷³ FISCHER, Georg. **Jeremia 1 – 25**. HThKAT; Freiburg im Breisgau: Verlag Herder, 2005, p. 39-47, 120-122.

one hand, Fischer seems more radical than Carroll⁷⁴ as he argues that: “Der Autor von Jer ist uns Heutigen nicht mehr zugänglich. Er ist ein Künstler und Theologe, verborgen in seinem Buch und hinter seinem Propheten, wobei gerade diese Beziehung zu Jeremia offen bleibt”⁷⁵.

On the other hand, Fischer gives the impression that he really believes in a single authorship of Jer. Although I have no problem with the idea that between 450 and 400 BCE some form of complete Jer narrative (not a fixed text) was already available and widespread, I reject the claim that this complete narrative could be attributed to one single author. The variation of styles and content exposed in part I provides enough evidence to believe that Jer reflects a long complex compositional process. For this reason, I would modify Fischer’s proposal and apply his suggestion of a single author to an implied author, which is not a real person, but a literary character. It is highly possible that the real author(s), on the other hand, could be a/the scribe(s).

Nevertheless, although both settings (Hellenistic and Persian) have solid grounds to be sustained, the placement within either of them leads to an impasse with canonical criticism. As it is widely accepted, the notion of canon appears only later in the Common Era. As previously mentioned, all manuscripts available that preserve the order of the Hebrew Canon (Aleppo and *Leningradensis*) are Medieval. Another problem is that those manuscripts which include the NT preserve the order of Θ (*Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus*). This raises questions regarding Childs’ arbitrary criteria for the Hebrew canon as his preference for the Hebrew Scriptures seems to ignore the fact that communities play an important role in deciding which text format and content should be adopted in their official text⁷⁶.

On a positive note, Childs’ reaction against the fragmentary legacy

⁷⁴ Carroll is remarkably sceptical in terms of finding the historical prophet, he argues that any information about the Jeremiah is provided by the Deuteronomistic editors cf. CARROLL, Robert P. **From Chaos to Covenant: Uses of Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah**. London: Xpress Reprints, 1981, p. 5-30.

⁷⁵ FISCHER, 2005, p. 122.

⁷⁶ It is possible that some variation might have resulted from theological disputes or another possibility is that they were already present by the time of these disputes, but specific variants were adopted according to theological preferences cf. MARTIN, 2010, p. 270.

of historical criticism attempts to bring coherence to the biblical text⁷⁷. On the negative side, his theological-literary proposal does not give justice to the plurality of communities, and consequently to the diversity of canons available. In this sense, it seems that not only Childs' theological decision rules over literary perception⁷⁸, but also (un)consciously ends up falling into a kind of reader response category⁷⁹. It is curious, however, that Childs himself seems to accept that the Hellenistic age was the point in history in which the collection of Hebrew writings was received⁸⁰.

The DSS by no means indicate that particular versions were canonised, but they do suggest that certain literary works had significant authoritative status⁸¹. It seems that during the period of Middle Judaism this authoritative accreditation was influenced by three factors: (a) The age of the content; (b) the social status of those in charge of the transmission of this content; and (c) the context of the origins of the debate. Firstly, "the authoritativeness of the Scriptures in the late Second Temple period is the presumed antiquity of the Scriptures or of the traditions they contain"⁸². Secondly, the social status of those who carry and transmit the Scriptures (e.g., scribes, sages, officials and/or priests) is equally as important as the content⁸³. Thirdly, the occasions in which the Scriptures are quoted or mentioned are usually within the polemical context involving a debate⁸⁴.

⁷⁷ See CHILDS, Brevard S. Retrospective Readings of the Old Testament Prophets. In: **ZAW**. New Haven, NY, v. 108, n. 3, 1996, p. 368-369 and CHILDS, Brevard S. **Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture**. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979, p. 39-41.

⁷⁸ BARTON, John. **Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study**. 2nd Edition; London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1996, p. 91-92.

⁷⁹ BARR, 1995, p. 12-14.

⁸⁰ Cf. CHILDS, Brevard S. Retrospective readings of the Old Testament prophets. IN: **ZAW**, New Haven, NY, vol. 108, n. 3, 1996, p. 368-369.

⁸¹ I deliberately used the term "literary works" here to avoid using the term "books" as it implies the format of the codex, which is only available later during the Hellenistic and Roman eras cf. TOORN, 2007, p. 23-25 and PETTERGREE, 2010, p. 1-10. It seems that in the Antiquity, the authoritative status was not attached to the form of certain literature, but it was related with the importance accredited to the literary work in itself cf. ULRICH, 2002, p. 30.

⁸² POPOVIĆ, Mladen. Introducing Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism. In: POPOVIĆ, Mladen (Ed.). **Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism**. JSJ Sup. 141; Leiden: Brill, 2010, p. 2.

⁸³ POPOVIĆ, 2010, p. 2-3.

⁸⁴ POPOVIĆ, 2010, p. 3.

These criticisms against a canonical approach, however, should not be enough reason to completely dismiss canonical criticism. The fact that the notion of canon was a much later phenomenon does not necessarily mean that the books/stories/traditions that later would be included within what we know as canon were not available. Perhaps Childs' canonical approach needs some adaptation. In this regard, contemporary studies on communication, media broadcasting and migration ghettos can bring valuable contributions. Despite the inexistence of a canon as fixed lists, Jer alongside other literature/stories/traditions was already available to both communities (during the Persian and Hellenistic eras), functioning as a sort of mental canon. In this way, complete stories were read and listened to side-by-side without worrying about their growth process⁸⁵. The aural aspect is extremely important because the way in which ancient communities appreciated the texts was different from how modern readers approach the texts. Ancient texts were read aloud to the community as part of a communal practice, which required a significant amount of concentration and the use of memory due to some factors, such as scarce texts available for the whole community and a high degree of illiteracy⁸⁶. Besides the causes just mentioned above, the absence of visual aids (frequently available in the modern world through TV and films) demands the stimulus of imagination⁸⁷. There are even studies that suggest that the auditory sense might have closer connections to memory and imagination than the visual one⁸⁸.

In this sense, the effect caused by radio broadcasting has a similar effect, enabling a process of visualisation in which mental pictures are produced connecting the listeners to an imaginary community promoting a sense of identity⁸⁹.

⁸⁵ Miller points out that a need for distinction exists between different uses of intertextual approaches in the OT/HB. One attempts to work out the intertextual relations considering the development of biblical texts whilst others intend to read texts side-by-side cf. MILLER, Geoffrey D. Intertextuality in Old Testament Research. In: **CBR**, St Louis, MO, v. 9, n. 3, 2010, p. 283-309.

⁸⁶ See HARRISON, Carol. **The art of listening in the Early Church**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 1-10 and TOORN, 2007, p. 10-20.

⁸⁷ HARRISON, 2013, p. 10.

⁸⁸ See DOUGLAS, Susan J. **Listening in: Radio and the American imagination**. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2004, p. 5-4, 22-34, HARRISON, 2013, p. 10 and BADDELEY, Alan D. **Essentials of human memory**. Hove: University of Bristol, 1999, p. 10-16.

⁸⁹ DOUGLAS, 2004, p. 5-4, 22-34.

It is important, however, to distinguish different phases of radio broadcasting because there were different reactions in different periods. Whilst radio during the 1920's and the migrant radio stations reflected a more communal spirit promoting conversation after broadcasting a soap opera, a novel or another programme⁹⁰, the same cannot be said from the late 1960's, as it also was subject to a phase of rebellion resulting in isolation, individualism and fragmentation in addition to commercialisation⁹¹.

6 CONCLUSION

The comprehension of the process of how the text achieved the current form is equally as important as the understanding of how the parts fit together. However, the frequent abusive use of the term synchronic referring to face value readings of unchangeable texts needs a reassessment as no matter what form, any text is always situated at some point in time. The different versions of Jer challenges the rigid concept of "final form". Perhaps one could enquire when the complete Jeremiah tradition was available instead of a fixed text. For this reason, a synchronic approach is not free from rigorous historical investigation. This paper suggests two viable options: the Hellenistic and the Persian settings. Despite the rich contribution of recent literary theories and social science, the use of these new concepts cannot be applied without careful criticism. This essay attempts to integrate contemporary studies in biblical studies bringing fresh insights addressing the problem of the inexistence of any canon during the Hellenistic and Persian periods using the analogy of radio within ghettos. These minority communities have a mental canon, which comprise shared stories about their distant home land.

⁹⁰ DOUGLAS, 2004, p. 55-82, 85. The BBC played a similar role shaping the British identity building the rhetoric of imperialism between the 1920s and the end of the World War II cf. HAJKOWSKI, Thomas. **The BBC and the National Identity in Britain, 1922 – 53**. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010, p. 19-82. After WWII a wave of migrants from Europe moved to America. As a consequence, there was a need for newspapers in their native language as most of the first generation did not speak English. The broadcasting in many different languages met the needs of these emerging migrant communities and preserving their identity cf. BROWNE, Donald. Speaking in Our Own Tongues: Linguistic Minority Radio in the United States. In: KEITH, Michael C. (Ed). **Radio Cultures: The Sound Medium in American Life**. New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008, p. 23-46.

⁹¹ DOUGLAS, 2004, p. 256-283.

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