

Word of God and Word of Man as an Argument for Diachronic Differentiation in the Book of Jeremiah¹

Tobias Maurer

According to some scholars some of the oldest texts in the book of Jeremiah can be found in the words from the foe from the north in Jer 4–6. Originally these texts were words of the prophet and spoken from a human point of view. Their characterization as Words of YHWH and the divine perspective is therefore regarded as a result of the literary development of these texts and the theological reflection on the disaster of 587 BC. The paper will follow this approach. The possibilities and limits of the distinction between Word of God and word of man as an indication for literary development in the texts from the foe from the north shall be examined.

Keywords: Jeremiah, literary history, redaction criticism, Word of God

Introduction

It can hardly be denied that the Word of God or the Word of YHWH plays a significant role in the present, canonical version of the Book of Jeremiah. YHWH himself puts his words into the mouth of the prophet according to the report of his calling (Jer 1:9). The so-called word event formula (*Wortereignisformel*) “And the word of YHWH came to me” or a variation of it is found about forty times in the Book of Jeremiah.² Thus the words of Jeremiah are unmistakably identified as the divine word and authorised and legitimised as such.³ The same intention probably stands behind the frequent use of the

1 This paper was presented during a seminary from 04. to 06.05.2023 at the Protestant Theological Faculty in Prague in cooperation with the Theological Faculties of the Universities Heidelberg and Zurich. The observations shown here are part of my PhD-Thesis concerning the redactional history of Jer 2–10.

2 Cf. Reettakaisa Sofia Salo, Art. Wort Gottes (AT), WiBiLex, 2021, <https://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/34998/> (last accessed on 14.06.2023), 6 (page number refers to the PDF-version of the article).

3 Cf. also the characterization of the word event formula by Winfried Thiel, *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1–25*, WMANT 41, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973, 106f.

so-called messenger formula (Botenformel) “Thus saith YHWH” (156 times) compared to other prophetic books.⁴

This paper will not present a systematic account of the Word of God in the Book of Jeremiah, but I would like to focus on one particular aspect. Namely, how far the distinction between God’s word and man’s word can be used as an argument for diachronic distinctions within the prophetic sayings/oracles. Thus, within the first chapters of the book there are announcements of a coming enemy, some of which can be read as words of the prophet, i.e. as human words, while others, despite similar themes and imagery, are explicitly designated as God’s words and necessarily presuppose the divine perspective and authority. One way to explain this is to interpret it as a consequence of literary development. The paper will follow this approach, in accordance with scholars like Christoph Levin,⁵ Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann,⁶ Mark Biddle⁷ and Konrad Schmid,⁸ to gain an insight into the literary and theological historical complexity of thinking about God’s word in the Book of Jeremiah.

The Words of the Enemy from the North in Jer 4 and 6

Subsequent Characterisation as a Word of God

The largest space within Jer 4 and 6 is taken up by texts that announce or lament the coming of an enemy from the north. These include Jer 4:5–8, 13–17*, 19–21, 29–31* and Jer 6:1–5, 22–26. In their present literary context, these appear at least partly as God’s speech. For example, to begin at the end, 6:22–26 is introduced by the messenger formula “Thus says YHWH”. In

4 Cf. Jutta Krispenz, Art. Botensendung/Botenformel/Botenspruch, WiBiLex, 2006, <https://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/15657/> (last accessed on 14.06.2023), 3 (page number refers to the PDF-Version of the article).

5 Cf. Christoph Levin, *Die Verheißung des neuen Bundes. In ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt*, FRLANT 137, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985, 147–156.

6 Cf. Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Die Ferne Gottes – Studien zum Jeremiabuch. Beiträge zu den „Konfessionen“ im Jeremiabuch und ein Versuch zur Frage nach den Anfängen der Jeremiatradition*, BZAW 179, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1989, 181–192.

7 Cf. Mark E. Biddle, *A Redaction History of Jeremiah 2:1 – 4:2*, AThANT 77, Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 1990, 78f or 206f.

8 Cf. Konrad Schmid, *Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches. Untersuchungen zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer 30–33 im Kontext des Buches*, WMANT 72, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996, 330f; Konrad Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte des Alten Testaments. Eine Einführung*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2021, 167–170.

terms of content, however, the unit does not necessarily presuppose the divine perspective at any point.⁹ On the contrary, v. 24 (and v. 26) the speaking I even includes itself among those affected by disaster when it says “We have heard from them (sic. the enemies)”. Accordingly, the messenger formula, which is a recurring and structuring element within the chapter, should be regarded as an editorial addition at the beginning of v. 22.

For the other mentioned texts, observations can be made as well that suggest that the enemy-words were raised to the status of God’s speech subsequently. In the following, I would therefore like to take a brief look at the concerned verses.

4:6b

The voice of YHWH is already heard in 4:6b, because the statement “for I am bringing evil from the north and a great destruction” exceeds the competence of the prophet. At the same time, the sentence exceeds following statements that announce and lament the defeatist coming of the enemy (cf. 4:7, 13). Stylistically, 4:6b seems rather to be prose, which also marks a break with the context.¹⁰ There are clear, almost literal correspondences to 6:1, where the disaster coming from the north and the great destruction are mentioned as well, but not attributed to YHWH. Obviously, with 4:6b, with recourse to 6:1, the disaster announced and described in chapters 4 and 6 is attributed to YHWH’s responsibility and thus subsequently subjected to a (first) theological interpretation.¹¹

4:12

Jer 4:12 the speaking I announces to speak „judgments“ over the people and names itself as the originator of the destruction-bringing wind. Therefore, it reveals itself as the divine I. By stating “In that time” (בַּעַת הַהֵיאָ *bā’ēt hahî*), the passage 4:11–13 is connected to v. 9 and placed in the time frame opened

9 Cf. William McKane, *Jeremiah Volume I. Introduction and Commentary on Jeremiah I – XXV*, ICC, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986, 151; Pohlmann, *Die Ferne Gottes*, 152; Gunther Wanke, *Jeremia. Teilband 1: Jeremia 1,1 – 25,14*, ZBK AT 20.1, Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 1995, 84; Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1–20*, AncB 21 A, New York: Doubleday, 1999, 442.

10 Cf. Konrad Schmid, *From Lament to Guilt: The Beginnings of Theology in the Book of Jeremiah*, HeBAI 10, 405–422, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2021, 409; Christl Maier, *Jeremia 1–25*, IEKAT, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2022, 124.

11 Cf. Pohlmann, *Die Ferne Gottes*, 133; Wanke, *Jeremia 1*, 59f; Schmid, *Lament*, 410.

there through the introduction: “It will be/happen on that day” (וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם / *wəhāyā bayyôm-hahû*; v. 9aα).¹² The v. 11f dominating motif of the wind appears also in v. 13, but in a different way. While in v. 11 the wind itself is the subject, v. 13a makes a comparison with the wind as the image field.¹³ In this metaphorical manner of speaking, v. 13 seems to continue v. 5–8 across v. 9–12, since, on the one hand, the description of the enemy coming up is continued (v. 7, while the same verb עָלָה / *ālā* is used) and, on the other hand, v. 13b takes up the call to lament from v. 8.¹⁴ Accordingly, both v. 9f and v. 11f can be separated as later additions.¹⁵ Furthermore, both passages show themselves through their introduction as a closer definition of what was described previously and thus demonstrate their commentary intention.¹⁶ At the same time, v. 11f anticipates the following and interprets the wind metaphor from v. 13, thus the wind gets transformed into a metaphor of YHWH’s judgement of the people.¹⁷

4:17b

The announcement of the enemy in v. 15–17a is followed by a justification introduced by כִּי / *ki* (v. 17b). On the one hand, this is identified as God’s word by the phrase “saying of YHWH”. On the other hand, the statement that the people had “been rebellious against me” can be logically related to YHWH. In the present textual context, v. 17b appears as the conclusion of the unit v. 15ff. However, v. 18 requires a forward connection, since אֵלֶּה / *’ēllē* (“this”) refers to what has been described before.¹⁸ Thus, v. 17b can be classified as an interpretative and explanatory extension of the announcement of doom.¹⁹

12 Cf. Rüdiger Liwak, *Der Prophet und die Geschichte. Eine literar-historische Untersuchung zum Jeremiabuch*, BWANT 121, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1987, 225. According to him, the announcement of doom gets dehistoricised (“enthistorisiert”, *ibid.*) by this statement.

13 Cf. Liwak, *Prophet*, 229.

14 Cf. Wanke, *Jeremia 1*, 61; Wolfgang Werner, *Das Buch Jeremia. Kapitel 1–25*, NSK AT 19/1, Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1997, 74.

15 Cf. Wanke, *Jeremia 1*, 61.

16 Cf. Werner H. Schmidt, *Das Buch Jeremia. Kapitel 1–20*, ATD 20, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008, 128.

17 Cf. Werner, *Jeremia 1–25*, 74. Cf. also Maier, *Jeremia 1–25*, 125. In her opinion, however, the image of the wind 4,11aβ.b is a fragment of older, preexilic tradition (ein “Fragment alter Tradition”, *ibid.*).

18 Cf. McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 101.

19 Cf. Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia*, KHC XI, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1901, 52; Wanke, *Jeremia 1*, 62; Maier, *Jeremia 1–25*, 125.

4:22

Similarly, in 4:22, the accusation of not knowing “me” presupposes YHWH as the speaker. In contrast, v. 19–21 form an emotionally charged lament about the approaching disaster, probably spoken by the prophet, using the role of a personified city (similar 10:19f).²⁰ In addition, v. 22 introduces sapiential categories to justify the guilt of the people (foolish; lacking understanding; not knowing how to do good).²¹ They have no basis in the preceding statements and also go beyond the accusations made so far (v. 14 and 18).²² Furthermore, sapiential ideas and terminology are also found in the closer context in other, apparently secondary passages (e.g. 5:20–24; 9:22–23). Thus, there was obviously an editorial concern to correlate Jeremiah’s proclamation with wisdom theology.²³

Characteristics of the Assumed Basic Stock of the Words from the Foe from the North

In the remaining basic stock of enemy words, the coming of an enemy from the north is described and lamented with threatening images. Like a predator, a lion (4:7) or a force of nature, a storm wind (4:13), he comes up, with correspondingly devastating consequences for land and people. Like watchmen (4:16–17a) or shepherds with their flocks (6:2–3), his troops siege the cities of Judah. In the process, the texts reveal a dramatic gradient that depicts the enemy’s movement towards Jerusalem and the escalation

20 Cf. Maier, *Jeremia 1–25*, 121f. The problem of the changing speaker is mentioned by Duhm, *Jeremia*, 53; William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, Hermeneia, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986, 163 or Sara Köhler, *Jeremia – Fürbitter oder Kläger? Eine religionsgeschichtliche Studie zur Fürbitte und Klage im Jeremiabuch*, BZAW 506, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2017, 20. Cf. also Robert P. Carroll, *Jeremiah. A Commentary*, OTL, London: SCM press, 1986, 167, describing v. 22 as a commentary on v. 19–21.

21 Cf. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 163 (for him v. 22 is an addition in the context of the Second Scroll (cf. Jer 36), cf. *ibid.* 150f.); Wanke, *Jeremia 1*, 64; Werner, *Jeremia 1–25*, 76; Hans Jürgen Hermisson, *Weisheit im Jeremiabuch*, in: Reinhard G. Kratz – Thomas Krüger – Konrad Schmid (eds.), *Schriftauslegung der Schrift. Festschrift für Odil Hannes Steck zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, BZAW 300, 175–191, Berlin – New York: De Gruyter, 2000, 179f; Schmidt, *Jeremia 1–20*, 134.

22 Cf. McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 105, Maria Häusl, *Bilder der Not. Weiblichkeits- und Geschlechtermetaphorik im Buch Jeremia*, HBS 37, Freiburg i.Br.: Herder, 2003, 176.

23 Cf. Hermisson, *Weisheit*, 189f; Hans-Jürgen Hermisson, „Der Feind aus dem Norden“ (Jer 4–6). Zu einem Gedichtzyklus Jeremias, in: Friedhelm Hartenstein u.a. (eds.), *Schriftprophetie. FS Jörg Jeremias*, 233–251, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2004, 251; Maier, *Jeremia 1–25*, 126.

of the military situation, up to the surrounding of the capital.²⁴ As a reaction to the oncoming disaster, little more than mourning and lamentation remains (4:8, 13b, 19–21, 31; 6:24). However, YHWH's relationship to the events described remains conspicuously underdetermined. That he is their originator is not explicitly stated at any point. At most, the statement in 4:8b that the fury of YHWH's wrath has not been turned away – if it could still be counted among the basic stock – suggests a correlation between the raging of the enemy and the work of YHWH. Wherein this exactly consists, however, remains unstated. Beyond the text probably stands the implicit idea that YHWH can and, if necessary, will withdraw his protection from Judah and Jerusalem. Thereby, as Konrad Schmid has pointed out, Zion-theological ideas, in the form of Ps 48, are consciously taken up and inverted.²⁵ Anyway, a divine perspective is not required for the description of the disaster, as it occurs in the basic stock of the words. From an earthly and human point of view, it seems perfectly conceivable to imagine the advent of a hostile war force from the north and the destruction and devastation that would come with it. Especially since the experience of Sanherib's campaign against Judah in 701 and its devastating consequences. In their original form, the words of the enemy from the north in Jer 4 and 6 are obviously spoken as human words. A dark foreshadowing of impending disaster for the land and its people that emanates from their midst.

The Enemy-Word Jer 5:15–17

Within chapter 5 there is also an announcement of the enemy in verses 15–17,²⁶ which seems to be similar to those in Jer 4 and 6. However, this is explicitly formulated as a speech of God. The speaking I proves to be YHWH's I by announcing that he himself will bring the foreign and hostile nation against Israel. In this way, the passage differs in content from comparable texts in Jer 4 and 6 (cf. above). According to them, the enemy seems to come up of his own accord and apparently without divine command (cf. 4:7, 16; 6:1, 3, 22). There is a clear overlap between Jer 5:15–17

24 Cf. Josef Schreiner, *Jeremia 1–25, 14*, NEB, Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1981, 48; Hermisson, *Feind*, 238f; Schmidt, *Jeremia 1–20*, 156.

25 Cf. Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 332f.

26 Cf. McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 123. Cf. also Schmidt, *Jeremia 1–20*, 148 referring to Liwak, *Prophet*, 259.

and the announcement of curse in Dt 28:49–53 in terms of structure and wording. Both texts speak of YHWH bringing a people from afar with a foreign language against Israel, which destroys the crops of the land (Jer 5:17a/Dt 28:51, formulated in both passages with “devour” אכל/*k*) and its (fortified) cities (Jer 5:17b/Dt 28:52). According to the common view, Jer 5:15–17 was taken up in the at least exilic extension Dt 28:49–53²⁷ and expanded (as a prose text)²⁸ in order to ground the later prophecy of judgement in Moses’ announcement of the curse.²⁹ However, the opposite direction of dependence cannot completely be ruled out,³⁰ especially since references to the Mosaic tradition can be found more frequently in the Book of Jeremiah, showing the prophet in the succession of Moses or maybe even surpassing him.³¹ The convergence of Jeremiah’s prophecy of judgement with that of Moses, and thus to subordinate it to his authority or even to draw it upon it, can also be seen as a possible intention of the editors of the Jeremianic tradition.

Although a literary dependence on Dt 28:49–53 cannot necessarily be proven, there are further reasons for distinguishing Jer 5:15–17 from the other enemy words in Jer 4 and 6 in terms of literary history. Although these also speak of the destruction brought by the announced enemy, 5:15–17 seems to follow a programme of withdrawal of fundamental blessings, namely the descendants (cf. for example Gen 13:15–16; 22:17) and the yield of the land in fruit and cattle (cf. Num 13:23; Deut 8:8, where the vine and the fig tree are mentioned as exemplary fruits of the land).

Worthy of consideration here is a correspondence within the Rabshakeh speech 2 Kings 18:31³². In the context of Sanherib’s campaign against Jerusalem in 701 (at least at the level of the narrated time), the messenger

27 Cf. for example Georg Braulik, *Deuteronomium II. 16,18–34,12*, NEB, Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1992, 203; Udo Rütterswörden, *Das Buch Deuteronomium*, NSK AT 4, Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2006, 180; Otto, Eckart, *Deuteronomium 12–34. Zweiter Teilband: 23,16–34,12*, HThKAT, Freiburg i.Br.: Herder 2017, 1999f.

28 Cf. Wilhelm Rudolph, *Jeremia*, HAT 12, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 31968, 39; Thiel, *Redaktion 1–25*, 97 (n. 64); Wanke, *Jeremia 1*, 73; Schmidt, *Jeremia 1–20*, 149.

29 Cf. Otto, *Deuteronomium 23,16–34,12*, 2013.

30 For example Paul Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia*, KAT X, Leipzig: Deichert, 1922, 65; Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1–20*, 393 or Georg Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, HThKAT, Freiburg i.Br.: Herder, 2005, 246f.

31 Cf. Fischer, *Jeremia 1–15*, 98f, with explanation of some examples.

32 Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, 247, calls this verse the closest parallel (“nächste Parallele”, *ibid.*) to Jer 5:17.

of the Assyrian king warns the people of Jerusalem not to trust their king Hezekiah. Instead they should surrender to the king of Assyria. Then, he promises them (among other things): “everyone shall eat of his vine and his fig tree” (ואכלו איש-גפנו ואיש תאנתו) *wā'iklū ṯš-gapnô wā'š tā'enātô*) and has in consequence no need to fear destruction. According to Jeremiah's words in chapter 5, this announcement, spoken in a similar situation of the threat of Jerusalem as a result of uprising against the Mesopotamian supremacy, will come true, but in a negative way. A salvation and sparing of Jerusalem, similar to the events of 701, will not happen again, as YHWH himself announces (Jer 5:14f). Therefore, the text shows a discursive character that suggests a point of view after 587 and seems to be developed in confrontation with opposing positions (such as the narrative processing of the Zion-ideology in 2 Kings 18–19/Isa 36–37). The disaster foreseen by the prophet is subjected to theological reflection, wherein the empty space or perhaps implicit idea of the surrounding words of doom (cf. above), in which relation YHWH stands to the emerging enemy, is fulfilled. He himself makes use of him and the catastrophe of the people thus follows his counsel. Thereby the description 5:17 seems to mirror the events of the year 587 and to verbalise the experience of conquest, destruction and exile in a hyperbolic way. The collective trauma is brought up as an abortion and reversal of any blessing. But on the other hand, contrary to the supposed defeat, YHWH's superiority gets asserted and Jeremiah gets shown as his legitimate prophet rather than an enemy propagandist.

The enemy word Jer 5:15–17 is preceded by a statement that explicitly concerns the nature and work of YHWH's word (5:14): “Therefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts; Because ye speak such words, behold, I will make my words fire in your mouth, and this people firewood, that they may be devoured.” The keyword “devour” creates a correspondence to the devastation brought by the enemy, as described v. 17.³³ Thus his ravage gets an example of YHWH turning his word into a consuming fire.³⁴ Furthermore, Jeremiah's calling is taken up by the announcement 5:14b (1:9: “behold, I put my words into your mouth” *הנה נתתי דברי בפִּיךָ/hinnē nātattî dābārāy bəpīkā*). This statement about the origin and legitimacy of the prophetic word is expanded with an indication of its purpose and goal. Apparently, in reference to

33 Cf. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 188; Maier, *Jeremia 1–25*, 137f.

34 Cf. McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 123.

23:29³⁵, where it is said, also in the context of the discussion about true and false prophecy (cf. 5:12f, with parallels to 14:13–18³⁶): “Is not my word like a fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that shatters rocks?” In the context of Jeremiah’s confessions the image can be found as well (20:9).³⁷ Thus the statements made here about YHWH’s word stand in a book-wide horizon. In the closer literary context, the accusation “because of your speaking this word” probably refers to the quotation 5:12.³⁸ This includes statements which can be attributed to the peace prophets in other parts of the book of Jeremiah and beyond (23:17: “No evil will come upon you” (לֹא-תָבוֹא עֲלֵיכֶם / *lōʾ-tābōʾ ʾalēkem rāʾā*), cf. also Mic 3:11; Am 9:10; Jer 14:13, 15: “Not will you see sword and famine” (לֹא-תִרְוּ הֶרֶב וָרָעָב / *lōʾ-tirʾū ḥereb wārāʾāb*), cf. also Am 9:10).³⁹ From the Jeremian point of view, they are false prophets (cf. also the accusation 5:31). The criticism of their deceptive prophecy of salvation is also found in the surrounding chapters Jer 6:14; 7:4 and 8:11 and can probably also be assumed to be part of the basic material of Jer 2. In its literary development, the Book of Jeremiah thus also bears witness to the struggle of what can truly and reliably be considered the divine word.⁴⁰

From Word of Man to Word of God

The stylistic shift of the announcements of the enemy from word of man to word of God goes along with a shift in content and theology, in that the disaster described is now identified and thus interpreted as active divine punishment. An intermediate step on that way can probably be seen in those texts which expand the early announcements of disaster by the dimension of the assignment of guilt and the call to repentance, addressed to a female

35 Cf. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1–20*, 395; Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, 245f; Schmidt, *Jeremia 1–20*, 146.

36 Cf. Maier, *Jeremia 1–25*, 142.

37 Cf., with reference to Jer 23:29 as well, Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 187; Adrian van Selms, *Jeremia. Deel I*, POuT, Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1989, 102; Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, 246.

38 Cf. Friedrich Giesebrecht, *Das Buch Jeremia*, HKAT, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 21907, 34; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 183; Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1–20*, 395, according to him the phrase is an „editorial supplement“ (ibid.); Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, 245.

39 Cf. Liwak, *Prophet*, 259; Wanke, *Jeremia 1*, 71; Maier, *Jeremia 1–25*, 142. Cf. also John Bright, *Jeremiah*, AncB 21, Garden City (NY): Doubleday, 1965, 40 and Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, 244.

40 Cf. especially with reference to Jer 5:12f Pohlmann, *Ferne*, 82–84.

personified figure (Jer 2:14–25*.33–37; 4:14.18.30; 6:8).⁴¹ Already therein the voice of YHWH himself is heard and the behaviour of the people, presumably in the sense of their policy of rebellion and alliance against Babylon, is mentioned as an offence against YHWH. However, at the level of these texts, YHWH neither declares himself to be the originator of the impending doom, nor indicates this as an expression of his punishment. Therefore, in terms of literary history, it seems reasonable to distinguish the corresponding passages from the statements dealt with here.⁴² The distinction between God's word and man's word in the Book of Jeremiah thus becomes an argument for diachronic differentiation not by itself, but through the coexistence of both stylistic forms in thematically related texts on the one hand and a correlating divergence of theological conceptions on the other. Thus, the growth and development of the Jeremiah tradition reveals a process of progressive theological reflection, in which the word of the prophet for people becomes the true, reliable and steady word of God.⁴³

Tobias Maurer, Mag.Theol.

Heidelberg University, Faculty of Theology

Kisselgasse 1, 69117 Heidelberg

Germany

Tobias.Maurer@stud.uni-heidelberg.de

41 Cf. Levin, *Verheißung*, 156–159; Biddle, *Redaction history*, 55 and 79; Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 332 and 336f; Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte*, 167f.

42 Differently Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 337.

43 Cf. Christoph Levin, *Das Wort Jahwes an Jeremia. Zur ältesten Redaktion der jeremianischen Sammlung*, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 101 (2004), 257–280, 257f. In this essay he reconstructs (based on some other texts than those dealt with in this paper) a redactional layer (“Jahwewort-Bearbeitung”, *ibid.*, 258) responsible for the formation of an oldest form of the book of Jeremiah and focused on presenting the words of the prophet as word of YHWH (cf. his summary *ibid.*, 276–279).