



**Kiss, Jenö**

***Die Klage Gottes und des Propheten: Ihre Rolle in der Komposition und Redaktion von Jer 11–12, 14–15 und 18***

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Accepted as a doctoral dissertation (B. E. J. H. Becking, supervisor) by the theology faculty of the University of Bucharest in the winter of 2000/2001, this study begins with the observation that in three complexes (Jer 11–12; 14–15; and 18) divine lament and prophetic lament stand in sequence. Its task is to investigate these two lament genres in the book of Jeremiah with respect to their characteristics and their reciprocal relationships. Its methods are those of classical source and redaction criticism, with particular attention paid to the rhetorical functions (*Aussageabsicht*) of the various components and layers that constitute the final form of the text. Three major sections offer detailed analyses of the three lament compositions, and a fourth section summarizes the major results of the study regarding relationships between the divine laments, the prophetic laments, and their contexts and outlines the composition and redaction history of the three books of material.

Kiss identifies four layers of material in these three complexes. In a few instances (14:10, 11–12; 18:5–6), Jeremiah's disciples supplemented authentic Jeremianic material (Jer 11:15 $\alpha$ , 16 $\alpha$ , 18, 19a,  $\beta\alpha_1$ ; 12:4a, $\beta\alpha_1$ , 10b, 14:2 $\alpha$ , b–7; 18:2–4) in an effort to warn those remaining in the land during the early exile against false security (Jer 18:6) and reliance on Egyptian aid (14:10, 11–12). Surprisingly, Kiss identifies only a relatively limited

Deuteronomistic redaction (18:11–12; 11:9–14) with interests in establishing the inevitability and propriety of YHWH's judgment. The exilic and postexilic periods saw the addition of a number of poetic (14:8–9; 14:19a, 20–22) and prose (11:3b, 5b, 6–8; 11:4–5a; 12:14–15, 16–17; 14:13–16; 15:2–4; 18:7–10) texts to the growing corpus. Kiss argues that the poetic material represents laments employed in exilic public lamentations that dealt with the problem emblematic of the late exilic period: a crisis of faith. The prose texts, on the other hand, represent a Deuteronomistic orthodoxy concerned with Judah's return, Israel among the nations, and the centrality of obedience to the law as a precondition for return.

Based on his investigation of Jer 12:7–12; 15:5–9; and 18:13–17, Kiss finds the designation “divine lament” appropriate. Combining elements of the prophetic announcement of judgment in order to articulate the incomparability and incomprehensibility of the people's behavior and the pain it causes God and an undertone of true lament, these texts express the painful paradox that judgment impacts the author of judgment, YHWH, most. YHWH struggles internally to reach the decision, finally, to punish his beloved. The prophetic laments or “confessions,” by contrast, focus on the prophet's experience of distress, threat, and isolation, a theme not present in the so-called second (12:1–6\*) or fourth (18:19–23\*) confessions. Instead, they problematize the wisdom topic of a universal ethical order on the individual (Why do the just suffer while the unjust prosper?) and international (God deals with nations in accordance with their behavior) levels.

Kiss offers a solid contribution to Jeremiah studies, including a number of keen exegetical observations along the way, noting, for example, the dual accusation/lament character of Jer 15:5–9 and the universalist tendency of Jer 18:7–10. Of course, as pertains to the nature of source and redaction analysis, readers will differ on individual points, although, on the whole, his source criteria are mainstream and his application judicious. This source- and redaction-critical orthodoxy, however, may also be the chief weakness of this study. It is particularly surprising to note echoes of nineteenth-century source criticism in Kiss's identification of authentic prophetic material. Without a known specimen for comparison, any search for the *ipsissima verba* seems doomed to circularity. On a related note, the task as Kiss defines it leaves little room for the concerns of more recent varieties of redaction and composition criticism, namely, the dynamics of dialogue and structure created by redactors and inherent in the final product. What, for example, is to be made of the observation that the most extended complex, Jer 14–15, juxtaposes divine lament, prophetic lament, *and* popular lament in a rich theological counterpoint? Of course, authors must limit their projects. Perhaps Kiss will treat some of these points in a subsequent volume.