

JEREMY R. BROWN

# Jonah in the Ethiopic Biblical Tradition

*Ethiopic Bible and Related Literature*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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Jeremy R. Brown

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Mohr Siebeck

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*For Heather and Braelynn*



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Washington, D.C., 2025

Jeremy R. Brown

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## List of Abbreviations

BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
BL	British Library
BM	British Museum
BnF	Bibliothèque Nationale
<i>E Ae</i>	<i>Encyclopedia Aethiopica</i>
EMDA	Ethiopian Manuscript Digital Archive
EMIP	Ethiopic Manuscript Imaging Project
EMML	Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library
IES	Institute of Ethiopian Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
RIÉ	Bernard, Étienne, Abraham Johannes Drewes, Roger Schneider, and Francis Anfray. <i>Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite. Tome I, les documents. Tome II, les planches. Tome III, Traductions et commentaires.</i> Paris: De Boccard, 1991–2000.
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
THEOT	Textual History of the Ethiopic Old Testament

## CHAPTER 1

# The Ethiopic Minor Prophets

Among the various books of the Ethiopic Bible, the twelve books of the Minor Prophets have relatively often been the subject of critical editions. Scholars selected these texts due to their brevity and the availability of manuscripts in European collections. Manuscripts such as Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Éthiopien d'Abbadie 35 (= BnF d'Abbadie 35), Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Éthiopien d'Abbadie 55 (= BnF d'Abbadie 55), Oxford, Bodleian, Aeth. d. 12 (= Bodl. Aeth. d. 12; also known as Huntington 625), Oxford, Bodleian, Bruce 74 (= Bodl. Bruce 74), and Frankfurt, Stadtbibliothek zu Frankfurt am Main, ms Orient. Rüpp. II, 4 (= Frankfurt Rüpp. II, 4) were just a few of the Ethiopian manuscripts repeatedly consulted in the earlier studies on the Ethiopic Minor Prophets.

Despite the amount of work that has been carried out on the Ethiopic Minor Prophets, there is still a great deal left to be done. An influx of previously unstudied manuscripts makes it possible for new questions of text type and textual development to be answered. These unstudied manuscripts clarify the state of the biblical text in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Moreover, the new manuscript evidence allows for in-depth analysis of the later forms of the text from the seventeenth century through the twentieth century. In this section, the earlier studies on the Ethiopic Minor Prophets are examined and then the work of these earlier studies are compared with the textual analysis of this study. This analysis sheds light on the question of *Vorlage* as well as on the development of the book of Jonah in Ethiopia.

### 1.1. History of Scholarship

The Minor Prophets were among the first works to be published in Ethiopic. Colleagues Johann Georg Nissel and Theodor Petraeus published several books of the Minor Prophets in 1660 and 1661.<sup>1</sup> Nissel published an edition of Zephaniah with a Latin translation in 1660, based on an unknown Ethiopic manuscript.<sup>2</sup> Petraeus published an edition of Jonah with a Latin translation in 1660 and editions of Joel and Malachi with Latin translations in 1661.<sup>3</sup> Petraeus did not identify the manuscript upon which these editions were based. However, the Jonah 1:01 reading of **ወደቤሎ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ለኖናስ፡** 'and God said to Jonah' is only attested in one of the witnesses analyzed for this study, Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625). Furthermore, Dillmann stated that Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625) was the base text for Petraeus' edition of Joel.<sup>4</sup> The singular reading of Jonah 1:01 and the evidence from Ethiopic Joel suggests that Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Hunting-

<sup>1</sup> Nissel, Johann Georg, *EAE*, III (2007), 1191b–1192a (S. Uhlig).

<sup>2</sup> Nissel 1660.

<sup>3</sup> Petraeus 1660, Petraeus 1661a, Petraeus 1661b.

<sup>4</sup> Dillmann 1879, 450.

ton 625) served as the base text for Petraeus' editions of Jonah and Joel as well as for the editions of Zephaniah and Malachi prepared by Nissel and Petraeus.

Benedictus Andreas Staudacher published an edition of Jonah with a Latin translation in 1706.<sup>5</sup> Although Staudacher did not identify the manuscript upon which the edition was based, his edition contained the same unique reading of Jonah 1:01 found in Petraeus' edition. Thus, it is probable that Staudacher either utilized Petraeus' printed edition or returned to the same manuscript. The majority of differences between the editions of Petraeus and Staudacher are orthographic. The agreement between Petraeus and Staudacher on **በከመ**: rather than the manuscript's reading **በከመ**: in Jonah 1:14 and the agreement between Petraeus and Staudacher on **አንተሰ: ትምሕክ**: rather than the manuscript's reading **አንተሰ: ኢ.ትምሕክ**: in Jonah 4:10 suggest that Staudacher utilized the edition printed by Petraeus rather than having appealed directly to Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625).

The book of Jonah was again published in 1802 by Johannes-Josephus Marcel.<sup>6</sup> Marcel's edition followed the printed editions of Petraeus and Staudacher in the unique readings discussed above. His orthographic choices were more similar to Staudacher than to Petraeus. For instance, Staudacher and Marcel read **ወወወወ**: in Jonah 1:14, while Petraeus read **ወአወወወ**:. Similarly, Staudacher and Marcel read **ወበፀአ: ብፀአተ**: in Jonah 1:16, while Petraeus read **ወበፀዐ: ብፀዓተ**:. Thus, the variants and the orthographic evidence suggests that Marcel based his Ethiopic text upon Staudacher's edition rather than upon Petraeus's edition or directly upon Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625). One important note is that Marcel printed his Ethiopic text entirely using the first-order vocalization of each consonant, likely due to limitations with the type-face.<sup>7</sup>

Another edition of Jonah was edited by William Wright in 1857.<sup>8</sup> In this edition, Wright edited the book of Jonah in Aramaic, Syriac, Ethiopic, and Arabic. Each text was accompanied by a comprehensive glossary. Wright described the purpose of the book as “[to provide] at least a slight knowledge of the principle cognate dialects” to students who have already learned Hebrew.<sup>9</sup> Wright introduced the Ethiopic text as follows: “The Aethiopic text is from the edition of Petraeus (P. in the variants), collated with one ms in the Bodleian Library and one in the British Museum.” Unfortunately, Wright did not provide the shelf marks of these two manuscripts. In the introduction to his edition of the Minor Prophets, Löfgren identified Wright's Bodleian Library manuscript as Bodl. Bruce 74.<sup>10</sup> After examining the manuscripts available to William Wright from the British Museum and comparing the readings of these manuscripts against the variants listed in the apparatus of Wright's edition of Jonah, I have identified Wright's British Museum manuscript as London, British Library, Add. 16,189 (= BL Add. 16,189). Wright was motivated to edit the Ethiopic text towards the Hebrew and so elevated readings from the later Standardized text type to the base text and relegated older readings from Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (via Petraeus) to the apparatus. For instance, Wright elevated the Jonah 1:09 reading **ዕብራዊ: አነ**: ‘I am a Hebrew’, which is close to

<sup>5</sup> Staudacher 1706.

<sup>6</sup> Marcel 1802.

<sup>7</sup> Thus, Marcel actually reads **ወወወወ**: in Jonah 1:14 and **ወበፀአ: ብፀአተ**: in Jonah 1:16. In the quotes above, I adapted Marcel's text to the standard vocalization for the sake of comparison.

<sup>8</sup> Wright 1857.

<sup>9</sup> Wright 1857, v.

<sup>10</sup> “Mit W[right] bezeichne ich den Text, mit W[right]V<sup>ar</sup> die ohne Ursprungsbezeichnung angeführten, mit W[right]O<sup>x</sup> die der Oxforder Hs. (= O<sub>2</sub>) entstammenden Varianten der Wrightschen Ausgabe.” The sigla O<sub>2</sub> refers to Bodl. Bruce 74. See Löfgren 1930, vii.

the Hebrew עִבְרִי אֲנִי 'I am a Hebrew'. In elevating this reading, Wright relegated to the apparatus the older reading ገብረ: እግዚአብሔር: አነ: 'I am a servant of God', which is motivated by the Greek δοῦλος κυρίου ἐγώ εἰμι 'I am a slave of the Lord'. Wright's editorial choices were motivated by his stated purpose of creating a text that helped students of Hebrew learn to read Ethiopic.

The next publication of the Ethiopic Minor Prophets was August Dillmann's edition of Joel in 1879.<sup>11</sup> Dillmann utilized Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625) as the base text for his edition. He then edited this manuscript with five additional manuscripts: BnF d'Abbadie 35, BnF d'Abbadie 55, Bodl. Bruce 74, BL Add. 16,189, and Frankfurt Rupp. II, 4.

Johannes Bachmann soon thereafter published an edition of Obadiah in 1892 and an edition of Malachi in 1893.<sup>12</sup> Both of these editions were diplomatic editions of Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625). Bachmann then listed variants from Bodl. Bruce 74 and Frankfurt Rupp. II, 4 in an apparatus. After both editions, Bachmann included text-critical remarks and a Greek retroversion of the Ethiopic text.

Frederich Oswald Kramer published a critical edition of Zechariah in 1898.<sup>13</sup> Although Kramer was aware of twenty-seven manuscripts in European collections containing the Ethiopic Minor Prophets, he collated just three of them: Frankfurt Rupp. II, 4, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München Cod. aeth. 26 (= Munich aeth. 26), and Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Äth. 16 (= Wien 16).

Francisco Maria Esteves Pereira published an edition of Amos in 1917 with an accompanying Portuguese translation.<sup>14</sup> Pereira produced a diplomatic edition of BnF d'Abbadie 55 and included variants from BnF d'Abbadie 35 in an apparatus that followed the text edition.

In 1930, Oscar Löfgren published an edition of Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.<sup>15</sup> Löfgren utilized Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625) as the base text of the edition and then edited it against several other manuscripts and printed editions. The book of Jonah was edited with eight manuscripts and four printed editions.<sup>16</sup> The book of Nahum was edited with eight manuscripts and one printed edition.<sup>17</sup> The book of Habakkuk was edited with eight manuscripts and two printed editions.<sup>18</sup> The book of Zephaniah was edited with eight manuscripts and one printed edition.<sup>19</sup> The book of Haggai was edited with nine manuscripts and one printed edition.<sup>20</sup> The book of Zechariah was edited with seven manuscripts and two printed edi-

<sup>11</sup> Dillmann 1879, 449–458.

<sup>12</sup> Bachmann 1892. Bachmann 1893.

<sup>13</sup> Kramer 1898.

<sup>14</sup> Pereira 1917, 10–44.

<sup>15</sup> Löfgren 1930.

<sup>16</sup> Codices: BnF d'Abbadie 35; BnF d'Abbadie 55; Berlin Or. Quart. 986; Frankfurt Rupp. II, 4; BL Or. 501; BL Add. 24,991; Munich aeth. 26; Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625). Editions: Bassano 1925, IV; Ludolf 1701; Petraeus 1660; Wright 1857.

<sup>17</sup> Codices: BnF d'Abbadie 35; BnF d'Abbadie 55; Berlin Or. Quart. 986; Frankfurt Rupp. II, 4; BL Or. 501; BL Add. 24,991; Munich aeth. 26; Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625). Editions: Bassano 1925, IV.

<sup>18</sup> Codices: BnF d'Abbadie 35; BnF d'Abbadie 55; Berlin Or. Quart. 986; Frankfurt Rupp. II, 4; BL Or. 501; BL Add. 24,991; Munich aeth. 26; Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625). Editions: Bassano 1925, IV; Ludolf 1701.

<sup>19</sup> Codices: BnF d'Abbadie 35; BnF d'Abbadie 55; Berlin Or. Quart. 986; Frankfurt Rupp. II, 4; BL Or. 501; BL Add. 24,991; Munich aeth. 26; Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625). Editions: Bassano 1925, IV.

<sup>20</sup> Codices: BnF d'Abbadie 35; BnF d'Abbadie 55; Berlin Or. Quart. 986; Frankfurt Rupp. II, 4; BL Or. 501; BL Add. 24,991; Munich aeth. 26; Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625); Bodl. Bruce 74. Editions: Bassano 1925, IV.

tions.<sup>21</sup> Lastly, the book of Malachi was edited with six manuscripts and two printed editions.<sup>22</sup> Löfgren included an apparatus of variants as well as an apparatus of orthographic differences. The apparatus of orthographic variants was far from comprehensive and gave a false sense of uniformity as to the orthography of the manuscripts.

The most recent editions of the Ethiopic Minor Prophets were edited by Hans Ferdinand Fuhs. Fuhs published an edition of Micah in 1968.<sup>23</sup> At the time of publishing the edition of Micah, Fuhs was aware of twenty-two Ethiopic Minor Prophets manuscripts in European collections. Of these twenty-two manuscripts, Fuhs collated eighteen for the edition of Micah.<sup>24</sup> Following many of the editors who preceded him, Fuhs chose to base the edition upon the text of Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625).<sup>25</sup> This was the first edition of the Ethiopic Minor Prophets to arrange the manuscripts into groups and offered a visualization of the relationship between the groups. The manuscript groupings and the textual development presented by Fuhs in his edition of Micah are compared below with those set forth in this study of Jonah.

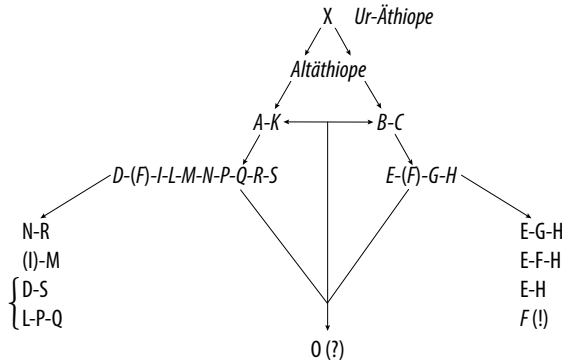


Fig. 1: Schematic Representation of the Grouping of Fuhs' Micah Manuscripts<sup>26</sup>

Fuhs followed his work on Micah with a critical edition of Ethiopic Hosea in 1971.<sup>27</sup> Fuhs was aware of twenty-seven manuscripts in European collections that transmitted the text of Ethiopic Hosea. Of these twenty-seven manuscripts, Fuhs fully collated twenty manuscripts.<sup>28</sup> Of the

<sup>21</sup> Codices: BnF d'Abbadie 35; BnF d'Abbadie 55; Frankfurt Rüpp. II, 4; BL Or. 501; BL Add. 24,991; Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625); Bodl. Bruce 74. Editions: Bassano 1925, IV. Kramer 1898.

<sup>22</sup> Codices: BnF d'Abbadie 35; BnF d'Abbadie 55; BL Or. 501; BL Add. 24,991; Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625); Bodl. Bruce 74. Editions: Bassano 1925, IV; Bachmann 1893.

<sup>23</sup> Fuhs 1968.

<sup>24</sup> Codices edited by Fuhs for the edition of Micah: A = Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625); B = BL Or. 501; C = BnF d'Abbadie 55; D = Bodl. Bruce 74; E = BnF d'Abbadie 35; F = BL Add. 24,991; G = BL Or. 496; H = BL Or. 498; I = BnF d'Abbadie 30; K = BnF d'Abbadie 195; L = BL Or. 488; M = BL Or. 490; N = BL Add. 24,990; O = BL Or. 491; P = BL Or. 493; Q = BL Or. 497; R = BL Or. 499; S = BL Or. 502.

<sup>25</sup> "Nach alledem ist es wohl selbstverständlich, daß diese Handschrift der Ausgabe von Micha zugrunde gelegt wurde." Fuhs 1968, 6.

<sup>26</sup> Fuhs 1968, 31.

<sup>27</sup> Fuhs 1971.

<sup>28</sup> Codices edited by Fuhs for the edition of Hosea: B = BL Or. 501; C = BnF d'Abbadie 55; Ca = Cam Add.

remaining seven, Fuhs partially collated four of the manuscripts and did not consult the final three.<sup>29</sup> Fuhs was unable to utilize Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625) as his base text as the folios that once contained the book of Hosea have been lost. In the absence of Bodl. Aeth. d. 12 (= Huntington 625), Fuhs utilized London, British Library, Or. 501 (= BL Or. 501), BnF d'Abbadie 55, and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Éthiopien d'Abbadie 195 (= BnF d'Abbadie 195) as the foundation for his text.<sup>30</sup> Whenever these manuscripts differ, Fuhs selected the reading that was closest to the Greek. He admitted that this choice is problematic, and that it was possible that this choice obscured the original Ethiopic text rather than uncovering it.<sup>31</sup> Just as in his edition of Micah, Fuhs grouped his manuscripts into families and described the textual development of these groups. The manuscript groups described by Fuhs for Ethiopic Hosea are compared below with the groups identified in the book of Jonah.

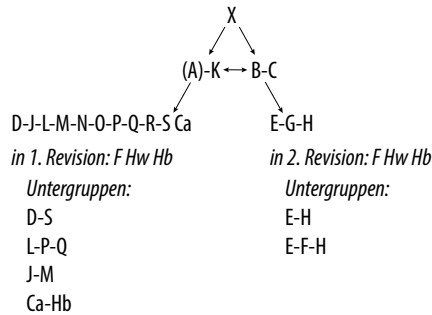


Fig. 2: Schematic Representation of the Grouping of Fuhs' Hosea Manuscripts<sup>32</sup>

## 1.2. Availability of Manuscripts

Although a great deal of work has already been done on the Ethiopic Minor Prophets, an influx of newly available manuscripts has made possible a far more in-depth analysis of the texts and their development. The previous scholarship discussed above collectively utilized twenty-four unique manuscripts of the Ethiopic Minor Prophets. Although many of these publications sought to edit the earliest attested version of the text, the crucial period of the fourteenth to the sixteenth century was not well represented. The twenty-four manuscripts consulted in the earlier scholarship discussed above can be grouped by date as follows:

**14<sup>th</sup> century:** 1 manuscript

**15<sup>th</sup> century:** 2 manuscripts

1570; D = Bodl. Bruce 74; E = BnF d'Abbadie 35; F = BL Add. 24,991; G = BL Or. 496; H = BL Or. 498; Hw = Wien 16; Hb = Berlin Or. Quart. 986; J = BnF d'Abbadie 30 (referred to as I in the edition of Micah); K = BnF d'Abbadie 195; L = BL Or. 488; M = BL Or. 490; N = BL Add. 24,990; O = BL Or. 491; P = BL Or. 493; Q = BL Or. 497; R = BL Or. 499; S = BL Or. 502.

<sup>29</sup> Codices partially transcribed by Fuhs for the edition of Hosea: Frankfurt Rüpp. II, 4; BL Add. 16,189; Munich aeth. 26 (mistakenly labeled Cod. aeth. 16 in the edition); Oxford, Bodleian, Aeth. d. 3.

<sup>30</sup> Fuhs 1971, 26.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 25–26.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

- 16<sup>th</sup> century: 2 manuscripts
- 17<sup>th</sup> century: 11 manuscripts
- 18<sup>th</sup> century: 8 manuscripts
- 19<sup>th</sup> century: 0 manuscripts
- 20<sup>th</sup> century: 0 manuscripts

Recent microfilm and digitization projects have greatly increased the number of manuscripts available for study. At the time of my writing, there are 130 Ethiopic Minor Prophets manuscripts now known to the academic world. These manuscripts can be grouped by date as follows:

- 14<sup>th</sup> century: 2 manuscripts
- 15<sup>th</sup> century: 11 manuscripts
- 16<sup>th</sup> century: 12 manuscripts
- 17<sup>th</sup> century: 30 manuscripts
- 18<sup>th</sup> century: 31 manuscripts
- 19<sup>th</sup> century: 25 manuscripts
- 20<sup>th</sup> century: 19 manuscripts

The number of manuscripts available for the earliest centuries (the fourteenth through the sixteenth century) of the extant manuscript tradition has increased from five to twenty-five. Additionally, it is now possible to analyze the later developments in the tradition with forty-four manuscripts from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Moreover, there are undoubtedly many more still contained in churches and monasteries in Ethiopia and Eritrea that may become available for analysis in the future. This dramatic increase in available manuscripts allows for a more thorough analysis of historical trends and provides further insight into the text types of the Ethiopic Bible.

### 1.3. *Vorlage of the Ethiopic Translation of the Books of the Hebrew Bible*

The question of *Vorlage* for the Ethiopic translation of the Hebrew Bible has long been a cause for debate. Over the past several centuries, scholars have proposed arguments in favor of Greek, Hebrew, Coptic, Syriac, and Arabic as the original source for the translation of the Ethiopic Bible. However, recent scholarship has shifted towards a consensus that the Greek Septuagint served as the *Vorlage* for the Ethiopic text.

The use of a Greek *Vorlage* corresponds with the historical data. Inscriptions from the Aksumite period as early as the sixth century contain biblical quotations and references.<sup>33</sup> For example, RIÉ 191 quotes Psalm 23:8.<sup>34</sup> RIÉ 192 quotes extensively from the Psalms and from Exodus 14:14.<sup>35</sup> RIÉ 195 quotes Psalm 67:2, Psalm 65:16–17, Psalm 19:8–9, Matthew 6:33, and

<sup>33</sup> The list of inscriptions that follows comes from Knibb 1999, 46–54. See also 'Bible', *EAE*, I (2003), 563a–564a (S. Uhlig) and 'Biblical text criticism', *EAE*, I (2003), 565b–569a (S. Uhlig).

<sup>34</sup> Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991a, 271–274. See also Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991b, plates 129–132.

<sup>35</sup> Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991a, 274–278. See also Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991b, plates 133–137.

references the prophet Isaiah.<sup>36</sup> RIÉ 232 quotes Job 14:1, John 6:54, and Isaiah 26:19.<sup>37</sup> RIÉ 250 quotes Psalm 139:2.<sup>38</sup> This suggests that the translation of the Bible into Gəʿəz began soon after the conversion of the Aksumite Empire in the fourth century and that portions of the work had been completed by the sixth century.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, the argument for a Greek *Vorlage* is strengthened by the evidence of a “Greek-using minority” residing in the Aksumite Empire during the conversion and initial spread of Christianity in the region.<sup>40</sup>

Many editors have found that the evidence from the manuscripts argues for a Greek *Vorlage* of the Ethiopic translation of the works of the Hebrew Bible. Already in the seventeenth century Hiob Ludolf concludes that the Ethiopic is translated from the Septuagint.<sup>41</sup> More recent studies of books of the Hebrew Bible have agreed with these findings, such as the editions of Genesis, Chronicles, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and Micah.<sup>42</sup>

The evidence from the book of Jonah clearly demonstrates that the *Vorlage* for all of the text types is the Greek Septuagint, with the exception of a single family: That of the Latin *Vorlage*. Whenever the text between the Septuagint and the Hebrew Masoretic Text differ, the Ethiopic text follows the Greek. Below are three passages that illustrate that the Septuagint is the source for the Ethiopic translation of Jonah:

**1:09****HEBREW**

:הָאֵלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵלֹהֵי הַיָּם אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵלֹהֵי הַיַּבֵּשׁוֹת אֲנִי יְהוָה

And he said to them, “I am a Hebrew. And I fear the Lord, God of the heavens, who made the sea and the dry land.”

**GREEK**

καὶ εἶπε πρὸς αὐτοὺς δοῦλος κυρίου ἐγὼ εἰμι καὶ τὸν κύριον θεὸν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐγὼ σέβομαι ὃς ἐποίησε τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηρὰν

And he said to them, “I am a slave of the Lord, and I worship the Lord, God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.”

**EARLIEST ATTESTED 1**

**ወይዘሎም፡ ዮናስ፡ ገብረ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ እነ፡ ወአምላኪዮ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ አምላክ፡ ሰማይ፡ ዘገብረ፡ ባሕረ፡ ወየብሰ፡**

And Jonah said to them, “I am a servant of God. And my Lord is God, Lord of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.”

<sup>36</sup> Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991a. See also Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991b, plates 143–144.

<sup>37</sup> Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991a, 323–324. See also Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991b, plate 165.

<sup>38</sup> Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991a, 336–337. See also Bernard, Drewes, Schneider, and Anfray 1991b, plate 173.

<sup>39</sup> ‘Bible’, *EAE*, I (2003), 563a–564a (S. Uhlig). See also ‘Bible *Vorlage*: Greek’, *EAE*, I (2003), 564a–565a (R. Zuurmond).

<sup>40</sup> Phillipson 2012, 48.

<sup>41</sup> Ludolf 1681, Lib.III.c.4.

<sup>42</sup> For Genesis, see Edele 1995, 250. For Chronicles, see Grébaud 1932, 529. See also Clear 1971, 237–240. For Jeremiah, see Schäfers 1912, vii–viii. See also Heider 1902b, 4. For Ezekiel, see Knibb 2015, 29–33. See also Knibb 2008, 413–421. For Daniel, see Löfgren 1927, xlvi–l. For Hosea, see Fuhs 1971, 120–122. For Micah, see Fuhs 1968, 35–38.

The Ethiopic reading of **גִּבְלוֹ: לְגִבְלוֹ, לְגִבְלוֹ**: ‘servant of God’ translates the Greek *δούλος κυρίου* ‘slave of the Lord,’ rather than the Hebrew **עִבְרִי** ‘Hebrew.’<sup>43</sup>

### 2:06a

#### HEBREW

**וַיִּמְצָא מַיִם עַד-רַגְלֵי שְׂפָתַי וְיָמֵי עֲרִבְתִּי עַד-בְּרִיחִי**

Waters encompassed me as far as life; the deep encircled me.

#### GREEK

*περιεχύθη μοι ὕδωρ ἕως ψυχῆς ἀβυσσος ἐκύκλωσέ με ἐσχάτη*

Water poured over me as far as my life; the deepest abyss encompassed me.

#### EARLIEST ATTESTED 1

**ውሕዘ: ማይ: እስከ: ነፍሰየ: ወዐገተኒ: ቀላይ: በታሕቱ:**

Water flowed as far as my life and the abyss with its lowest part encompassed me.

The Ethiopic reading of **ውሕዘ: ማይ:** ‘water flowed’ is closer to the Greek *περιεχύθη μοι ὕδωρ* ‘water poured over me’ than to the Hebrew **וַיִּמְצָא מַיִם** ‘waters encompassed me’. Moreover, Ethiopic renders the Greek word *ἐσχάτη* ‘deepest’ with **በታሕቱ:** ‘in its lowest’. There is no source for **በታሕቱ:** ‘in its lowest’ in the Hebrew text.

### 3:04b

#### HEBREW

**וַיִּקְרָא וַיֹּאמֶר עוֹד אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְנִינְוֵה תִפְּקָת**

And he cried out and he said, “Still forty days and Nineveh will be overturned.”

#### GREEK

*καὶ ἐκήρυξε καὶ εἶπεν ἔτι τρεῖς ἡμέραι καὶ Νινευη καταστραφήσεται*

And he preached and he said, “Still three days and Nineveh will be overturned.”

#### EARLIEST ATTESTED 1

**ወደቤ: እስከ: ሠሉስ: መዋዕል: ት-ት-ገፈታእ: ነነዌ:**

And he said “Three days from now Nineveh will be overturned.”

The Ethiopic and the Greek texts agree that the time frame is three days. This is against the Hebrew, which states that the time frame is forty days.

The evidence from these three passages demonstrates a clear affiliation between Ethiopic Jonah and the Greek as the Ethiopic attests a reading that corresponds more closely to the Greek than to the Hebrew whenever the two differ. Thus, the evidence from the book of Jonah corresponds with the earlier studies of the Ethiopic Bible in concluding that the Greek Septuagint is the *Vorlage* of the Ethiopic translation of the books of the Hebrew Bible.

This evidence further strengthens the argument against a *Vorlage* other than the Greek. As will be demonstrated in this study, cross-pollination with the Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic texts of the Hebrew Bible occur in the later stages of the textual development of the Ethiopic Bible rather than

<sup>43</sup> Jack M. Sasson argues that the cause for this variant in the Septuagint is due to variation in the Hebrew. The word **עִבְרִי** ‘Hebrew’ is attested in the Masoretic Text. The text before the Septuagint translator had either already been changed to **עִבְרִי** or the translator misread the resh of **עִבְרִי** as a dalet. Either way, the translator then understood the yod to be an apocopated form of the divine name **יהוה**. Thus, **עִבְרִי יְהוה** ‘servant of God’, which motivates the Greek *δούλος κυρίου* ‘slave of the Lord’. See Sasson 1990, 115–119.

in the earliest stages of its development.<sup>44</sup> This corresponds with Delamarter, Niccum, and Lee's argument that "Previous theories about Syriac influence depended upon faulty philology, failure to distinguish between Old Ethiopic witnesses and those having been revised against an Arabic translation of the Peshitta, and uncritical interpretation of the Nine Saints legend."<sup>45</sup> Thus, in this study Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic are considered as sources of new readings arising in later revisions. However, there is no evidence that these languages are the *Vorlage* of the Ethiopic translation of the books of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>46</sup>

#### 1.4. Textual Development of Ethiopic Jonah

The text of Ethiopic Jonah has undergone a number of stages between the initial translation from Greek by the fifth or sixth centuries and the creation of the modern Textus Receptus in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Before examining the stages of textual development that the extant manuscript tradition attests, it is important to consider the overall character of the tradition. First, the textual history of Ethiopic Jonah is characterized by a high degree of uniformity, with the exception of the Latin *Vorlage* text type. The text types of Ethiopic Jonah are stages of revision of an earlier form of Ethiopic Jonah. The text types are not a new translation from a different *Vorlage* nor are they a comprehensive reworking that could be characterized as a recension. This corresponds with Fuhs' work on the Minor Prophets, in which he determines

A first and very important statement we can make is that the textual tradition of all manuscripts is essentially uniform, i. e. the entire Ethiopian tradition of the prophet Micah can be traced back to a common Ur-Micah. In the places where the manuscripts diverge – there are certainly not a few – the cause is either text corruption or intentional alteration of a later date of the original text. There has not been any real re-translation, such as from Syro-Arabic or Hebrew, but, as we shall see, corrections of corrupted or otherwise inadequate passages according to one of these *Vorlagen*.<sup>47</sup>

For Jonah, the only text type that could be considered a recension is the Latin *Vorlage* text type, which is a translation of an edition of the Latin Vulgate (this is discussed below on pg. 26). Although not a factor for Jonah, another potential opportunity for re-translation occurs in books in

<sup>44</sup> Due to the negative connotations that accompany the term "contamination", I follow Curt Niccum and others in using "cross-pollination" in its place. For the use of cross-pollination, see Niccum 2014, 47–48. See also Holmes 2010, 83–84.

<sup>45</sup> Delamarter, Niccum, and Lee 2016, 350. Also, Paolo Marrassini has convincingly argued against the evidence for a "Syriac origin of the Ethiopic translations" in Marrassini 2012, 209–219. See also Polotsky 2012, 187–196. Stuart Munro-Hay has argued against an uncritical reading of the "Nine Saints" in Munro-Hay 2012, 221–252. Niccum further discusses this topic in Niccum 2014, 1–19.

<sup>46</sup> This corresponds with the findings of Michael Knibb. For example, see 'Bible *Vorlage*: Syriac, Hebrew, Coptic, Arabic', *EAE*, I (2003), 565ab (M. Knibb). See also Knibb 1999, 29–35. See also Knibb 2015, 31–32. This also follows Zuurmond's findings in the Ethiopic Gospels. See Zuurmond 1989, 107–108. See also Bausi 2000, 5–13.

<sup>47</sup> "Eine erste und sehr wichtige Feststellung, die wir treffen können, ist, daß die Textüberlieferung aller Handschriften im wesentlichen einheitlich ist, d. h. die gesamte äthiopische Tradition des Propheten Micha läßt sich auf einen gemeinsamen Ur-Micha zurückführen. An den Stellen, an denen die Handschriften auseinandergelassen – es sind gewiß nicht wenige –, ist die Ursache entweder Textverderbnis oder aber absichtliche Änderung des ursprünglichen Textes von späterer Hand. Eine wirkliche Neuübersetzung, etwa nach syrisch-arabischer oder hebräischer *Vorlage*, hat es nicht gegeben, wohl aber, wie wir noch sehen werden, Korrekturen verdorbener oder sonstige unzulänglicher Stellen nach einer dieser *Vorlagen*." Fuhs 1968, 16. Fuhs draws a similar conclusion in his work on Hosea. See Fuhs 1971, 15–16. This is also consistent with the findings of Delamarter, Niccum, and Lee 2016, 350–352.

which the old text has gaps. Löfgren describes the gaps in Daniel chapter 11 as the only occurrence of re-translation in the book. Otherwise, the story of Daniel is similar to that of Jonah, in that the historical development of the book is also one of textual unity with revisions of the earlier form of the text due to “text corruption or deliberate change of later revision activity.”<sup>48</sup>

A second characteristic of the textual history of Ethiopic Jonah is the date range of the extant manuscripts and the limitations that this places upon describing the period between the initial translation from Greek and the earliest manuscripts. The extant manuscript tradition for the Ethiopic Minor Prophets ranges from the fourteenth century to the twentieth century. The earlier Aksumite inscriptions do not contain any allusions to – much less quotations of – the Minor Prophets. In the face of this lack of evidence for the period between the initial translation and the extant manuscripts, early scholarship on the Ethiopic translation of the books of the Hebrew Bible often claims that the text of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is largely unchanged from the text of the fifth and sixth centuries. The inscriptions are often utilized as evidence for this argument. The inscriptions containing quotations from the Psalms bear a very close resemblance to the earliest extant Psalter manuscript.<sup>49</sup> Thus, some scholars have taken the next step to claim that this same resemblance must apply for the entire biblical text. However, the Psalms are likely to be a unique case due to their use in the Church. Perhaps due to their liturgical use, the Psalms have largely gone unrevised throughout the extant manuscript tradition, with the exception of their titles.<sup>50</sup> Thus, the textual development of the Psalms is an anomaly within the Ethiopic biblical tradition and should not be utilized as evidence for the stability of the entire Ethiopic Bible for the period of silence between the inscriptions and the earliest manuscripts. This use of a lack of evidence to explain the development of the biblical text prior to the fourteenth century is a hazardous argument from silence. The evidence from the extant manuscript history demonstrates a tradition that revises the biblical text often, with four text types occurring between the fourteenth and twentieth centuries. As Bausi argues, “The processes of transmission also imply *breaks and changes*.”<sup>51</sup> Thus, it is improbable that the text remained unchanged from the sixth century to the fourteenth century. Due to this, claims concerning what can be known about the Ethiopic Minor Prophets during the period for which there are no manuscripts must remain limited.

In this section, the text types of the textual history of Ethiopic Jonah are examined and characterized. This section introduces the textual development of Ethiopic Jonah, but detailed analysis of each of the text types and their characteristics is found in the introductions to the following chapters dedicated to each text type. In addition, the findings concerning Jonah are compared with those of Fuhs on Hosea and Micah in order to gain a more robust understanding of the Ethiopic Minor Prophets as a whole.

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<sup>48</sup> “Wir stellen zunächst fest, daß die Textüberlieferung sämtlicher Hss. im ganzen einheitlich ist, d. h., auf einen gemeinsamen Urtext zurückführt. Wo die Hss. auseinandergehen, ist die Ursache entweder Textverderbnis oder absichtliche Änderung späterer Revisionstätigkeit. Eine wirkliche Neuübersetzung findet sich fast nur dort, wo der alte Text Lücken aufweist, vor allem in Kapitel XI, das für sich behandelt werden muß.” Löfgren 1927, xxxix.

<sup>49</sup> See Knibb 1999, 46–54.

<sup>50</sup> Personal conversation with Steve Delamarter and Albert Ten Kate on their findings after transcribing variants from forty-six Psalters representing the full range of the extant manuscript tradition. See also Delamarter 2017, 122–125.

<sup>51</sup> Bausi 2016, 52.

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