

# The Journal of Hebrew Scriptures

*ISSN 1203-1542*

<http://www.jhsonline.org> and

<http://purl.org/jhs>



Articles in JHS are being indexed in the ATLA Religion Database, [RAMBI](#), and [BiBIL](#). Their abstracts appear in Religious and Theological Abstracts. The journal is archived by *Library and Archives Canada* and is accessible for consultation and research at the Electronic Collection site maintained by [Library and Archives Canada](#) (for a direct link, click [here](#)).

## **VOLUME 7, ARTICLE 16**

**PHILIPPE GUILLAUME,  
A RECONSIDERATION OF MANUSCRIPTS  
CLASSIFIED AS SCROLLS OF THE TWELVE  
MINOR PROPHETS (XII)**

## A RECONSIDERATION OF MANUSCRIPTS CLASSIFIED AS SCROLLS OF THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS (XII)

PHILIPPE GUILLAUME,  
SWITZERLAND

### 1. INTRODUCTION

I have raised questions in a previous article in this journal about the proposed original Malachi-Jonah sequence on the basis of 4QXII<sup>a</sup> (4Q76). In this article, I proceed with a reconsideration of the other manuscripts classified as scrolls of the Twelve Minor Prophets (XII).<sup>1</sup> It is my argument here that none or very few of the so-called 4QXII scrolls should actually bear the “XII” designation. To be sure, there are scrolls that contain fragments of several prophetic books, which were later characterized as “Minor Prophets.” (For simplicity, I will refer to them here as Minor Prophets). But the fact that a scroll contains fragments of several Minor Prophets does not prove it was a scroll of the Twelve. The sample is meager and it has to be closely investigated. A critical assessment of the contents of the DSS scrolls is necessary before formulating new hypotheses concerning the formation of the collection of the XII.

### 2. ANCIENT HEBREW MSS OF THE XII?

The work of Emmanuel Tov represents a minimalist approach on this matter. Since Tov calls for a high level of certainty before advancing any claims, he maintains that only three manuscripts (MurXII, 4QXII<sup>b</sup> and 4QXII<sup>s</sup>) show that the entire collection of the XII was copied on one scroll.<sup>2</sup> George Brooke thinks it is probable that 4QXII<sup>c</sup> and 4QXII<sup>e</sup> and possibly 4QXII<sup>d</sup>, with its wide opening margin, as well as 8HevXIIgr also contained the complete collection of the Twelve.<sup>3</sup> My suggestion is that even Tov’s position is a too generous interpretation of the evidence.

4QXII<sup>a</sup> transmits Jonah and Malachi, possibly on the same scroll, but the presence of Zechariah is highly hypothetical.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Ph. Guillaume, “The Unlikely Malachi–Jonah Sequence (4QXII<sup>a</sup>),” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 7 (2007) article 15, available online at <http://www/jhsonline.org>.

<sup>2</sup> E. Tov, “The Biblical Texts from the Judean Desert—An Overview and Analysis of the Published Texts,” in E. D. Herbert and E. Tov (eds.), *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judean Desert Discoveries* (London: The British Library; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press; Grand Haven, MI: The Scriptorium, Center for Christian Antiquities, 2002), p. 142.

<sup>3</sup> G. J. Brooke, “The Twelve Minor Prophets and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in A. Lemaire (ed.), *Congress Volume Leiden 2004* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 19–44 (33).

<sup>4</sup> Guillaume, “Unlikely Malachi–Jonah.”

4QXII<sup>b</sup> contains Zephaniah followed by Haggai as in both the MT and LXX sequences.

4QXII<sup>c</sup> is said to contain Hosea, Joel, Amos, Zephaniah and Malachi, but Malachi is attested by only one fragment (frg. 35) with eleven legible letters on three different lines. Hence the editor added a question mark to Malachi although he notes that frg. 35 belongs to another unknown manuscript because the lines are half the length of the 4QXII<sup>c</sup> average. It is thus illegitimate to add Malachi to the contents of 4QXII<sup>c</sup>, in spite of the question mark. This fragment should be considered as a scroll of its own, 4QMal. The Joel–Amos transition is only suggested by some traces of ink at the bottom edge of frg. 20 (invisible on Plate XLV). Russell Fuller admits that “the text is quite damaged, so it is impossible to be certain”.<sup>5</sup>

The introduction of *DJD* XV states that 4QXII<sup>d</sup> is not a complete Biblical book but excerpted texts,<sup>6</sup> while, on the basis of margins and of the fact that the extant text at the beginning of the scroll is from Hos. 1.6–2.5, Brooke believes that it is quite possible that this manuscript contained the whole of the Twelve.<sup>7</sup> This is a generous interpretation. How can two fragments of the first column provide evidence that Hosea was followed by another Minor Prophet?

4QXII<sup>e</sup> contains Haggai–Zechariah. On the hypothetical superposition of frgs 6 and 7 which are of approximately the same shape and size, Brooke indicates that there would have been enough room before the end of the manuscript for the rest of the Book of Zechariah and the book of Malachi, although there is no evidence of the height of the columns. From this, Brooke concludes that the earlier sheets of the manuscript may have contained the whole of the Twelve.<sup>8</sup> Again, this is pure conjecture.

According to the editor, 4QXII<sup>f</sup> contains Micah–Jonah, but Brooke reduces the number of fragments attributed to this scroll to four fragments all of which contain elements of the Book of Jonah. Fragment 5 containing nine letters of Mic. 5.1–2 was originally assessed as belonging to a separate manuscript. It was later integrated into 4QXII<sup>f</sup> because of the similarity of the script. Brooke adds that if this manuscript is a copy of Jonah alone, it provides evidence that the place of Jonah in the Twelve was an ongoing issue in the first century BCE.<sup>9</sup> The question of what to do with frg. 5 remains open.

The most complete scroll of the XII is 4QXII<sup>g</sup> with fragments of eight Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum and

---

<sup>5</sup> R. E. Fuller, “The Form and Formation of the Book of the Twelve,” in J. W. Watts & P. R. House (eds.), *Forming Prophetic Literature* (JSOTSup, 235; Sheffield: Academic Press, 1996), pp. 86–101 (92); *DJD* XV, p. 245.

<sup>6</sup> *DJD*, XV, p. 1. G. Nebe, “Eine neue Hosea—Handschrift aus Höhle 4 von Qumran,” *ZAW* 91 (1979), pp. 292–4; L. Sinclair, “A Qumran Biblical Fragment: Hosea 4QXII d (Hosea 1:7–2:5),” *BAIOR* 239 (1980), pp. 61–5.

<sup>7</sup> Brooke, “Twelve,” p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> Brooke, “Twelve,” p. 24.

<sup>9</sup> Brooke, “Twelve,” p. 24.

Zechariah).<sup>10</sup> The DJD edition adds Habakkuk? and Zephaniah to the list. The question mark after Habakkuk is salutary since frg. 102 bears only three legible letters. With only four legible letters (frg. 103), the presence of Zephaniah in 4QXII<sup>g</sup> is also questionable.

Brooke adds a fragment of Joel 4.1–4 to the data on the XII, supposedly coming from Cave 4<sup>11</sup> and 5QAmos which is more likely to have been a copy of Amos alone than a copy of the XII.<sup>12</sup> The conclusion is that none of the Qumran scrolls contain physical remains of all twelve Minor Prophets. The 4QXII phenomenon has been overstated. To begin with, the way the Bedouins recovered and sold what they found in what was actually 2 caves, 4a and 4b, and the fact that three generations of scholars worked on the fragments brings uncertainty to proposed reconstructions of entire 4QXII manuscripts. Fragment 38 edited with 4QXII<sup>c</sup> is a case in point. It is now recognized as belonging to 4QPs<sup>a</sup> with a dozen letters from Ps. 38.4–6.<sup>13</sup> One can suspect that the number of actual scrolls was higher than is claimed in regard to the Minor Prophets since the evidence is skewed by the editors' presupposition that each identified scroll was a scroll of the Twelve. The attribution of small fragments to a particular scroll on the basis of a similar handwriting is precarious since a scribe can produce scrolls of individual books or multiple books scrolls. In most cases, it is impossible to say more. The identification of small fragments in the future is unlikely to alter the overall picture dramatically.

Strictly speaking, we have evidence of a dozen different scrolls of the XII from the caves near Qumran (4QXII<sup>a,b,c,d,e,f,f5,g</sup>; 4QMal [ex4QXII<sup>c</sup> frg. 35], Shoyen 4612/1 and 5QAmos). Half of those transmit fragments of a single book of the Minor Prophets (4QXII<sup>d,f,f5</sup>, 4QMal, Shoyen 4612/1, 5QAmos). Only two manuscripts transmit more than two Minor Prophets (4QXII<sup>cg</sup>) and they are the only ones that could reasonably be presented as evidence of scrolls transmitting the entire collection of the Twelve. And yet, designating these two large scrolls as 4QXII is misleading<sup>14</sup> since it lends support to the notion that the Minor Prophets were copied and read as a unit at the time of the oldest of these two manuscripts, 4QXII<sup>c</sup> dated approximately *c.* 75 BCE. It should be clear that no second century BCE Hebrew scrolls deserve the 4QXII label and that the probability that scrolls transmitting more than one Minor Prophet would have been scrolls of the entire collection of the XII increases as the date of their Hebrew script gets closer to the turn of the era. This, however, is only a probability. It only becomes a certainty at the end of the first century CE with the ten Minor Prophets copied on Mur88 dated *c.* 100 CE. This is a far cry from James

<sup>10</sup> Ten according to Brooke, "Twelve," p. 25.

<sup>11</sup> P. 20 n. 9 [www.nb.no/baser/schoyen/MS 4612/1](http://www.nb.no/baser/schoyen/MS_4612/1). The top margin is clearly preserved.

<sup>12</sup> Brooke, "Twelve," pp. 25, 34.

<sup>13</sup> DJD XV, p. 251.

<sup>14</sup> "The twelve Minor Prophets evidently were considered to comprise one book": E. Ulrich, "The Bible in the Making: the Scriptures found at Qumran," in P.W. Flint (ed.), *The Bible at Qumran* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), p. 55 note 8.

Nogalski's claim that the "ancient traditions irrefutably establish that the writings of the twelve prophets were copied onto a single scroll and counted as a single book from at least 200 BCE"<sup>15</sup> unless one takes into consideration the Greek evidence.

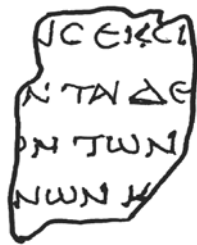
### 3. 8HevXIIgr

8HevXIIgr is a late Ptolemaic to early Roman scroll. Emanuel Tov, the editor of the *DJD* VIII volume, claims that it transmits the MT sequence although it is written in Greek.

For the sake of simplicity the editor assumes that he is dealing with a single scroll of the XII written by two different hands. To sustain the assumption, Tov adduces that there is no textual overlap between materials copied by the two hands.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, there is no presumption for the presence of two different scrolls because the first lot contained many hand A fragments and one small fragment written by hand B<sup>17</sup> while the second lot brought a year later by the Bedouins to the Ecole Biblique contained one large fragment of Zechariah and four fragments by hand B plus parts of three lines of Mi. 1.2–3 by hand A.<sup>18</sup>

Robert Kraft considers that a "damaged mass of material abandoned in antiquity seems somewhat more probable than the model of a neatly rolled consecutive text".<sup>19</sup> This claim reduces the probability of attributing the two hands to a single scroll. That hand B is attested only for Zechariah by 2 fragments brought at a year's interval further reduces the probability of a single scroll. The second fragment (b) bears 4 lines with a total of 22 letters (Figure 1).

Figure 1: *DJD* VIII, Plate XIX col. B1 frg. b



<sup>15</sup> J. A. Nogalski, "Intertextuality and the Twelve," in J. W. Watts & P. R. House (eds.), *Forming Prophetic Literature* (JSOTSup, 235; Sheffield: Academic Press, 1996), p. 102.

<sup>16</sup> E. Tov (ed.), *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever* (HevXIIgr) (*DJD* VIII; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> D. Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila* (VTS, 10; Leiden: Brill, 1963), p. 167: une bande contenant les extrémités de quatre lignes » PAM 40.559 = *DJD* VIII, Plate XX frg. 6.

<sup>18</sup> Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, Planche II; *DJD* VIII, Plate IV frg. b.

<sup>19</sup> R.A. Kraft, "Description of the Materials and their State of Preservation," in *DJD* VIII, p. 19.

The writing is indeed similar, but the reconstruction postulates a 10 lines interval between frgs a and b plate XIX. Moreover, line 28: ΑΙΣΕΚΕΙ reconstructed as ἡμέρ]αις ἐκεί[ναις on lines 31 and 32 in spite of the fact that hand B marks word divisions with a blank.<sup>20</sup> The same problem crops up with ΝΤΑΙΔΕ at Line 29 as the reconstruction postulates a word division between ἐπιλάβω]νται and δέ[κα that is not visible. The last lines transmit common letter combinations: ΩΝ ΤΩΝ and ΝΩΝ Κ which were identified as part of Zechariah because frg. a is a part of Zechariah. If frgs Ba and Bb both transmit Zechariah, the probability that Hand B copied an independent scroll of Zechariah increases. The small amount of hand B text preserved (Zec. 8.19–21,23–9.5) renders the argument based on the lack of overlap inoperative. Since there is a significant amount of preserved Zechariah material (Zec. 1.1–4,12–14; 2.1–12,17; 3.1–2,4–7) written by hand A, the likelihood that we are dealing with two different copies of Zechariah is as great as that of a change of hand somewhere between chapters 3 and 8.

#### 4. 8HEVXIIGR'S SEQUENCE: MT'S OR LXX'S?

The editor in DJD VIII claims that 8HēvXIIgr follows the sequence attested by the MT.<sup>21</sup> This is a crucial point for anyone trying to understand the formation of the collection of the XII and it needs to be checked.

It is certain that col. IV (beginning of Micah) is not the beginning of the scroll since the last letter of a previous column is visible on frg. J (Plates III–IV). However, there is no physical evidence that Jonah came before Micah. Plate IV shows a large margin at the top of frg. a onto which seven lines of the following lines would fit (Figure 2).

Figure 2: DJD VIII, Plate IV col. 4 frg. a



The editor only allowed six such blank lines in order to fit the remaining verses of Jonah on col. 4 above Micah. The reconstruction is thus problematic and it must be carefully reviewed since upon it hangs

<sup>20</sup> DJD VIII, p. 13.

<sup>21</sup> DJD, VIII, p. 8.

whether or not the scroll follows the MT sequence. The editor claims that the reconstruction of the Jon–Mic sequence is sound since “the fragments containing col 3 (end of Jo) and 4 (beginning of Mi) make a convincing joint (see plates I, III, IV).<sup>22</sup> However, the fragments do not make a joint at all. They are merely juxtaposed (Figure 3).

Figure 3: DJD VIII Plate III col. 3 frgs f–j (detail)



The editor shores up the Jonah–Micah sequence by pointing out that the fragment containing col 4 (on the right-hand side of Figure 3) also contains two letters of the ends of lines of col 3 (E on l. 25 and H on l. 33).<sup>23</sup> However, letter E at line 25 is not visible on the photograph and letter H merely proves that something came before the Book of Micah. It is unlikely that Jonah came before Micah and it is impossible to be certain that Amos did not precede Micah as it does in the LXX sequence since one of the small fragments, frg. 2 was identified by Lifshitz as belonging to Am. 1.5. Barthélemy left these two and a half letters unidentified but Tov attributes them to Jon. 3.4–5 because it fits his working hypothesis of a single scroll.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, the fragment is too small to be decisive.

The only certainty is that fragments classified as 8HevXIIgr contain two different hands which may or may not belong to the same scroll. Hand A copied Habakkuk and Zephaniah on the same scroll since the reconstruction of col. 17–23 is secure thanks to the presence of large fragments with the transition between the two books on col. 20 (plate XIV).<sup>25</sup> This Hab–Zeph transition is the only transition attested, and is the

<sup>22</sup> *DJD*, VIII, p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> *DJD* VIII, p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> *DJD* VIII, pp. 1–2.

<sup>25</sup> Kraft, “Description,” in *DJD* VIII, p. 17 and 19: “When all is said and done, the reconstruction does not seem to work for all of the preserved fragments, although it may be satisfactory for the middle portion (col 13–23 = Nahum 1–Zep. 3.7) as a subunit of the original scroll” and “the model of a damaged mass of

same in MT and LXX. From this, it is natural to infer that the fragments of Micah, Jonah, Nahum and Zechariah which were copied by the same hand belong to the same scroll. This is, however, only an educated guess for which there is no clear-cut evidence. Were Micah, Jonah, Nahum and Zechariah copied on the same scroll as Habakkuk and Zephaniah, their sequence is impossible to ascertain. Micah was definitely preceded by something, but it is impossible to know whether it was Jonah or Amos since frg. 2 could belong to either. The position of Nahum and Zechariah is equally unknown. Claiming that 8HevXIIgr followed the MT sequence is thus beyond the evidence. Hand B copied a patch at the end of Zechariah or a different Zechariah scroll. Tov admits that the reconstructed complete scroll of the XII would have been longer by two meters (a good 10 m in total) than any Qumran scroll published at the time of the publication of the manuscript.<sup>26</sup> Against the notion of a single scroll is the fact that fragments bearing Hand A were glued while those bearing Hand B were stitched.<sup>27</sup> This, of course, is not decisive.

Despite these caveats concerning its contents, 8HevXIIgr remains with 4QXIIg the most complete manuscript of the Minor Prophets dated around the turn of the era. The Greek scroll may be earlier than 4QXIIg, but the dating methods are too imprecise to be sure.

Table 1 below lists in chronological order (oldest at the bottom) the Minor Prophets attested on different scrolls of the Twelve and the various sequences of the XII known elsewhere. “Jon–Mic” signals a physical transition. Books whose position in the scroll cannot be ascertained, if they appeared in the scroll at all, are placed in brackets. A question mark indicates that the presence of the book is doubtful because the fragments are too small. “Hag” indicates a book that should not be attributed to the scroll.

---

material abandoned in antiquity seems somewhat more probable than the model of a neatly rolled consecutive text.”

<sup>26</sup> *DJD*, VIII, p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> *DJD* VIII, p. 15.



Table 1: Sequence of the Minor Prophets

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8...
LXX & 4 Ezra 1.39–40	Ho	Am	Mi	Joel	Ob	Jon	Na	Hab...
MT	Ho	Joel	Am	Ob	Jon	Mic	Nah	Hab...
Ascension Isa. 4.22	Am	Hos	Mic	Joel	Nah	Jon	Ob	Hab, Hag, Mal
Mur 88 100 CE		(Joel)	(Am)	(Ob)	Jon-	-Mic	(Nah)	(Hab) Zeph- Hag-Zec
Shoyen 4612/1		(Joel)						
Lives of the Prophets	Ho	Mi	Am	Joel	Ob	Jon	Nah	Hab...
4QXII <sup>g</sup> c.25 BCE	(Hos)	(Joel)	(Am- - Ob)	(Jon)	(Mic)	(Nah)	(Hab?) (Zeph?) (Zec)	
5QAmos			(Am)					
4QXII <sup>f</sup> c.50 BCE					(Jon)			
4QXII <sup>h</sup> c.50 BCE			(Mic)					
4QXII <sup>d</sup> c.50 BCE	(Hos)							
4QXII <sup>e</sup> c.75– 50 BCE								(Hag) (Zec)
8HevXIIgr hand B								(Zec)
8HeevXIIgr c.50–50 BCE					(Jon)	(Mic)	(Na)	(Hab- Zeph) <del>Hag</del> (Zec?)
4QMal = 4QXII <sup>c</sup> frg. 35								(Mal)
4QXII <sup>c</sup> c.75 BCE	(Hos)	(Joel- ?)	?- Am)					(Zeph) <del>Mal</del>
4QXII <sup>b</sup> c.150–125 BCE								Zeph- Hag
4QXII <sup>a</sup> c.150–125 BCE						(Jon)		(Zec?) (Mal)

Note to Ascension Isa. 4.22: Last verse of the so-called Testament of Hezekiah: “(Namely) in those which have not the name written, and in the words of my father Amos, and of Hosea the prophet, and of Micah and Joel and Nahum and Jonah and Obadiah and Habakkuk and Haggai and Malachi, and in the words of Joseph

the Just and in the words of Daniel.” But E (versione etiopica) has the Twelve plus Joseph and Daniel.”<sup>28</sup>

Note to Lives of the Prophets: The order mentioned above is transmitted by the anonymous recension 1 (the oldest textual witness of the Lives)<sup>29</sup>

One can note that a good century after Ben Sira’s mention of the XII, we still have no physical evidence of a scroll upon which all the Minor Prophets were copied together. Despite the narrowness of the sample, a trend can be observed whereby the scrolls become more complete with the passing of time. Whether 8HevXIIgr is a single scroll or two separate scrolls, the Greek evidence is ahead of the Hebrew evidence in terms of number of books per scroll in Palestine. From this point on, we leave the realm of evidence to enter the interpretative process.

## 5. THE FORMATION OF THE TWELVE AT ALEXANDRIA?

Two recent factors should be taken into account when discussing the formation of the XII. First, Diana Edelman notes that there are more compelling catchword links between Jonah and Nahum than between Jonah and Micah which suggests that the LXX sequence Jon–Nah maybe more original than MT’s Jon–Mic sequence.<sup>30</sup> Second, Paul McKechnie has presented arguments in favour of the possibility that Ben Sira composed his wisdom in Egypt.<sup>31</sup>

The notion of a widely accepted literary unit already in the second century BCE is not supported by the evidence. That Sira 49.10 refers to Twelve Prophets at around the time of the production of 4QXIIa<sup>b</sup> (וגם שנים עשר הנביאים תהי עצמתם פֶּרֶךְ [תם]) is insufficient to claim that Ben Sira and other scholars considered the Twelve as a unit copied together onto single scrolls in Palestine.

The clearest evidence for the existence of the Twelve is provided by the LXX since the Minor Prophets were probably translated by a single

<sup>28</sup> P. Bettiolo, A. Giambelluca Kossova, C. Leonardi, E. Norelli, L. Perrone (eds.), *Ascensio Isaiae* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), p. 72.

<sup>29</sup> Isidore of Seville, *De ortu et obitu prophetarum et apostolorum* (ed. Dolbeau 1986), Arabic and WaR 10,2. But anonymous II, Epiphanius and Dorotheus recensions follow the LXX order while Syriac has Hos-Am-Joel-Mic: A. M. Schwemer, *Studien zu den frühjüdischen Prophetenlegenden: Vitae Prophetarum* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1996), p. 28–9. In spite of the different numbers (between 18 and 23 “prophets”) and the different sequences, the order Jonah–Nahum was never reversed in spite of the Christian interpolations inserted, even in the abbreviated recension of Theophylact which has Hosea, Habakkuk, Jonah, Nahum and Micah: A.-M. Denis, *Introduction à la littérature religieuse judéo-hellénistique* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 2.577–605. In fact, Nahum is said to have given an oracle *after* Jonah (Lives, 11,2). I consider the Lives of the Prophets to be a 1<sup>st</sup> century CE work.

<sup>30</sup> D. Edelman, “Jonah among the Twelve,” paper presented at the 2007 meeting of the European Association of Biblical Studies. A revised version is forthcoming in a collective essays volume.

<sup>31</sup> P. McKechnie, “The Career of Joshua Ben Sira,” *JTS* 51 (2000), pp. 3–26.

person.<sup>32</sup> Hence, the LXX represents the shape of the collection of the Twelve at the time of its translation.<sup>33</sup> If Ben Sira wrote his wisdom in Alexandria as McKechnie suggests, it becomes possible to argue that Sira 49.10 reflects the current opinion at Alexandria which was not necessarily shared by Jerusalem. The Minor Prophets could have been organized as a canon of twelve prophetic books in Alexandria at the time of their translation. Jerusalem could have sent one-prophet scrolls similar to the earliest “4QXII” scrolls to Alexandria. Writing in Alexandria, Ben Sira is the first to mention the Twelve due to his geographic proximity or professional affinity to the scholars who created the XII. This accounts to the fact that 8HevXIIgr is the earliest manuscript which can reasonably be considered as a scroll of the XII since it transmits at least half the collection. The difference with 4QXIIc, dated 25 years earlier than 8HevXIIgr and bearing only four Minor Prophets, is insignificant and it is safe to claim that scrolls bearing more than two Minor Prophets appear in Palestine simultaneously in Hebrew and in Greek. In light of the role played by Alexandria in textual criticism and canonization, the hypothesis that the anthology<sup>34</sup> of the XII was created there in the wake of the translation is as plausible as the opposite notion, that the Hebrew Twelve pre-existed the translation and that Alexandria merely translated the collection supplied ready-made by Jerusalem. 8HevXIIgr could be a copy of the scroll that was forwarded to Jerusalem upon the completion of the work. Since it is impossible to know whether 8HevXIIgr followed the LXX or the MT’s sequence, there is no way to decide whether Jerusalem altered Alexandria’s sequence when the Greek text was aligned on the proto-MT text or whether the MT’s sequence is original. The number of days before Nineveh’s destruction in Jon. 3.4 is certainly significant here. The three days of the LXX make sense within the LXX sequence which places Nahum immediately after Jonah and the MT’s forty days reflect the MT’s insertion of Micah between Jonah and Nahum.

Going a step further, Jonah could have been composed in the wake of the formation of the XII and their translation and for the position it holds in the LXX. It is a lot easier to visualize the universalism and positive assessment of the foreigners in Jonah if it reflects the situation of Alexandrian scholars. Moreover, the assertion in Jon. 4.11 that Yhwh will *not* spare Nineveh<sup>35</sup> followed by Nahum’s gloating over its destruction

---

<sup>32</sup> E. Tov, “Approaches towards Scripture Embraced by the Ancient Greek Translators,” in U. Mittmann-Richert, F. Avemarie & G. S. Oegema (eds.), *Der Mensch vor Gott* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2003), p. 216 n. 11.

<sup>33</sup> G. J. Brooke, “The Twelve Minor Prophets and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in A. Lemaire (ed.), *Congress Volume Leiden 2004* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 19–44 (33).

<sup>34</sup> M. Beck, “Das Dodekapropheton als Anthologie,” *ZAW* 118 (2006), pp. 558–583.

<sup>35</sup> See A. Cooper, “In Praise of Divine Caprice: the Significance of the Book of Jonah,” in P. R. Davies & D. J. A. Clines (eds.), *Among the Prophets* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 144–163; T. M. Bolin, “Should I not Also Pity Nineveh?” Divine Freedom in the Book of Jonah,” *JSOT* 67 (1995), p. 120; T. M. Bolin, *Freedom Beyond Forgiveness: The Book of Jonah Re-Examined* (JSOTS, 236; Sheffield: Sheffield

made sense in Alexandria in regard to the ongoing rivalry with the Seleucids. This is hypothetical, but it fits a critical assessment of the evidence supplied by the earliest scrolls of the XII.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Dead Sea scrolls reveal that the number of Minor Prophets copied on individual scrolls increases as time goes by and scrolls holding multiple books appear in Palestine in Greek as early as their Hebrew counterparts. The poor state of conservation of the scrolls and the narrowness of the sample undoubtedly skew the interpretation. It is likely that there were more scrolls and more books on each scroll than what has been recovered. But how much more? So much so that the juxtaposition of two fragments is sufficient to call it a physical transition between two books on the same scroll? If it was legitimate for the editors of the DSS manuscripts to try to reconstruct as much as possible from the remains, it should be acknowledged that the editors' presupposition that they were dealing with scrolls of the XII has skewed the interpretation of the evidence in the opposite direction. The number of manuscripts transmitting the complete collection of the XII is lower than the DJD edition suggests and none are earlier than the first century BCE. Nothing supports claims that the XII formed a collection before their translation in Greek. Nothing prevents suggesting that the composition of Jonah and the formation of the XII are contemporary to the translation of Jerusalem's prophetic literature at Alexandria.

---

Academic Press, 1997), pp. 159–64; Ph. Guillaume, "The End of Jonah is the Beginning of Wisdom," *Biblica* 87 (2006), pp. 243–50. However, students who will use W. D. Tucker jr., *Jonah. A Handbook on the Hebrew Text* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), p. 103 will continue repeating that the end of Jonah is best understood as a rhetorical question.