

Dear reader,

this article is taken from *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets* edited by Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville. Copyright © 2012 by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA.

Original publication:

Aaron Schart

Twelve, Book of the: History of Interpretation

In: Gordon McConville/Mark J. Boda (ed.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*

Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012

Used by permission of InterVarsity Press, P.O. Box 1400, Downers Grove, IL 60515-1426. www.ivpress.com

Your IxTheo team

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN 
UNIVERSITÄTSBIBLIOTHEK

Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977); idem, *Obadiah and Jonah: A Commentary*, trans. M. Kohl (CC; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986); idem, *Haggai: A Commentary*, trans. M. Kohl (CC; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988); idem, *Micah: A Commentary*, trans. G. Stansell (CC; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1990); G. A. Yee, "Hosea," *NIB* 7:195-297; B. M. Zapff, *Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studien zum Michabuch im Kontext des Dodekapropheton* (BZAW 256; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997).

M. A. Sweeney

TWELVE, BOOK OF THE: HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

For centuries it was known that the twelve so-called Minor Prophets together formed a single book. This was simply seen as a scribal convention without any implications for the interpretation of the individual writings. However, beginning in the 1990s, the number of studies that treat the Book of the Twelve as a redactional and meaningful entity expanded substantially. Several articles that present a research history to the Book of the Twelve have been published (Nogalski 1993a, 3-12; Schart 1998a; 1998b, 6-21; 2008; Wöhrle 2008, 2-14; also, A. Schart maintains a website that provides a regularly updated bibliography on questions related to the Book of the Twelve: <<http://www.uni-due.de/EvangelischeTheologie/twelve-00start.shtml>>). In this article only the most important studies will be mentioned.

1. Terminology
2. Hebrew Text Transmission
3. Greek Text Transmission
4. The Sequence of the Writings
5. The Jewish Septuagintal Interpretation of the Book of the Twelve
6. The Christian Greek Old Testament
7. Ancient Interpretations
8. Ancient Christian Commentaries on the Twelve
9. Martin Luther
10. Modern Historical-Critical Approaches
11. Conclusion

1. Terminology.

When dealing with the Book of the Twelve, it is helpful to define some central concepts in a concise way. The "Book of the Twelve Prophets" (or, in short, "Book of the Twelve") shall denote the final edition of the Hebrew original. This is in accordance with the Hebrew text tradition:

In the Codex Leningradensis, the final note after the last verse of Malachi contains the term "the Twelve." In the Babylonian Talmud, the book is called "The Twelve Prophets" (*baba bathra* 14b). In contrast, the expression "the minor prophets," referring to their length, stems from Latin sources ("*prophetiae minores*," Augustine, *City of God* 18.29).

The Greek term *Dodekapropheton* is reserved, contrary to general usage, to refer only to the Greek translation of the Book of the Twelve. It is imperative to note that within the Greek tradition an important shift in understanding the *Dodekapropheton* occurred when the Christian communities appropriated the *Dodekapropheton* as part of their own canon. In cases where it is relevant to do so, this article distinguishes between the Jewish and the Christian *Dodekapropheton*.

In what follows, the term "writing" refers to a text attributed to a single author by the scribal tradition. The Book of the Twelve comprises twelve such writings, which are presented as individual compositions, each from a single author, whose name is given. An exception is the writing of Jonah, where the author of the narrative remains anonymous and the prophetic sayings remain seamlessly embedded in the narrative. For our present purpose, the difference between a "writing" and a "book" is that a book was published and disseminated as a self-contained literary unity. In the case of the precursors to the Twelve, it is assumed that different writings were combined in order to be published as one book.

The concept of "author" also has to be defined precisely. A writing has an implied author, to whom the sayings that are presented in the writing are attributed. For example, all sayings in the book of Amos are ascribed to the prophetic figure Amos, who is named in the superscription. However, critical scholarship regards this authorship as fictitious, since many sayings in the book of Amos actually come from later redactors who published their own work under Amos's name. If it is relevant to differentiate between the implied author and the historical person who in most cases stands behind the oldest layer of tradition included in the writing, this article speaks of that historical person as "the historical prophet," leaving aside the question of whether the historical person qualifies as a "prophet" in the sense of the sociology of religion (*see* Prophecy, History of).

2. Hebrew Text Transmission.

The Book of the Twelve as a whole lacks a separate heading. This distinguishes it from the other three Prophetic Books of the Hebrew canon, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Instead, the Book of the Twelve contains four writings that possess headings that resemble (in the case of Is 1:1 remarkably closely) the headings of the other three Prophetic Books of the Hebrew canon: Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zephaniah 1:1. In this way scribes clearly marked that the Book of the Twelve comes from different authors and different times. Nevertheless, this does not rule out the fact that the Twelve is conceived as one book, just as the Psalter is conceived as one book comprising different collections of psalms and likewise lacks a heading for the book as a whole.

The oldest external evidence for the existence of a Book of the Twelve is found in Sirach 49:10 (ca. 175 BC), where it is stated that "the twelve prophets brought healing to Jacob and helped him with confidence." Since one cannot imagine what kind of motive an author would have to speak of "twelve prophets" unless they had been combined on one scroll, the Book of the Twelve must have existed by the time Sirach wrote his short evaluation.

The oldest extant manuscripts of the Book of the Twelve were discovered in Cave 4, located very close to the Qumran settlement (see Dead Sea Scrolls). They clearly demonstrate that the twelve Prophets—Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi—were written on a single scroll. The very fragmentary scrolls consistently display a special scribal technique. The separate writings did not always begin at the top of a new column. Instead, between the writings only three empty lines were left in the same column in order to distinguish the individual writings (for the edited manuscripts, including photographs and transcriptions, see Fuller). This writing technique demonstrates that the twelve individual titles were understood neither as separate books nor as a homogenous book like that of Isaiah. The scribes wanted to highlight some new form of unity.

Although the manuscripts were found in the same cave, they come from different times and represent different text types. The oldest manuscript, 4Q76, probably dates to the mid-second century BC, the latest one to the first cen-

tury AD. As with other textual witnesses, some manuscripts should be identified as forerunners of the medieval Masoretic standard text. G. Brooke calls these texts "proto-Masoretic" (4Q77; 4Q81) (Brooke, 32). But there are other textual traditions. One manuscript, 4Q78, is very close to the LXX, but the majority of texts stand on their own ("nonaligned") (4Q76; 4Q80; 4Q82). In another location in the Judean Desert, the Wadi Muraba'at, a scroll was found that is very close to the Masoretic text type (see Text and Textual Criticism).

Within the later Masoretic text tradition, as represented by, for example, Codex Leningradensis, the Masorah at the end of each writing counts the words and verses of this writing (e.g., Malachi: "fifty five verses [*pēsūqim*]"), but at the end of the last writing, Malachi, the Masoretes count in addition the total verses of the book and state that the middle verse of the book is the verse "Zion will be overthrown" (Mic 3:12) (At least this is the case in Codex Leningradensis according to BHS. The text edition of BHQ [Gelston], however, has only final notes to the individual writings. Nevertheless, in the margin to Mic 3:12 it is noted that this is the middle of the book.) Another Masoretic manuscript, the Aleppo Codex, presents only the total number of verses for the whole of the Book of the Twelve at the end of Malachi (the scanned folio is available for viewing at <<http://www.alepocodex.org>>).

3. Greek Text Transmission.

The Book of the Twelve was translated into Greek when significant numbers of communities outside of the land of Israel no longer spoke Hebrew as their native language and demanded a comprehensible but also reliable and standardized text of this important canonical document. The task probably was carried out by a single translator located in Egypt in the second half of the third century BC. The translator strived very hard to yield a literal, word-for-word translation, and uses the principle that every Hebrew word has a single Greek equivalent throughout the whole book (principle of concordance).

The translation of the Hebrew Book of the Twelve into the Greek language was part of the largest translation project of ancient times, the so-called Septuagint. After the Torah was translated, the Prophetic Books followed,

among them, presumably at an early stage, the Book of the Twelve. For the sake of clarity of names, one should designate the Greek version of the Twelve by its Greek name, *Dodekapropheton*. As in other cases the translator used a Hebrew *Vorlage* for this translation that was very close to, but certainly not identical with, the Masoretic text type. In addition, his copy contained some misspellings (e.g., the interchange of some letters) and very few additions. This *Vorlage* was translated as literally as possible. The *Vorlage* certainly was different from the original Jewish LXX, but the *Vorlage* is lost completely and can only be reconstructed. An interesting find was a Greek scroll from Nahal Hever (for the edited scroll, see Barthélemy; Tov). This certainly is not a Christian manuscript, as the name of the God of Israel is written in paleo-Hebrew letters. But how exactly its relation to the original LXX version can be described is still open to discussion. Most influential was the hypothesis by D. Barthélemy: the scroll represents a text type that was secondarily adjusted to the proto-Masoretic Hebrew text of its time. Finally, the Christian communities appropriated the LXX and adopted it in their Greek OT. This stage of the textual development is well attested by comparably well-preserved copies of the text (for an exhaustive description of the manuscript situation, see Ziegler, 7-119). All efforts to reconstruct the original LXX version must start from there. As one can easily imagine, it is notoriously difficult to decide in each individual case whether variants within the Greek text tradition are of Christian origin or were created within the process of translation from the Hebrew.

4. The Sequence of the Writings.

Among the Hebrew manuscripts from the Judean desert there are eight manuscripts from the caves in the vicinity of Qumran and one scroll from the Wadi Muraba'at. The Masoretic order is well attested in Qumran and in Wadi Muraba'at. All manuscripts in which the sequence of the writings can be seen on text-external grounds confirm the Masoretic order. There is only one possible exception. In the oldest manuscript, 4Q76 Malachi, the last writing seems to be followed by another one. According to R. Fuller, the very few traces of letters after Malachi belong to Jonah (see Text and Textual Criticism). P. Guillaume has ques-

tioned his hypothesis, but his arguments are unconvincing. If there were a different sequence, this not only may be evidence for a late inclusion of the book of Jonah into the collection of the Twelve, but also may have some implications for how the narrative of Jonah was understood, at least by one copyist. First, one can say that the preserved sequence was stable; copyists did not accept the variant of 4Q76 but rather followed the later, so-called Masoretic order. According to O. Steck, the narrative of Jonah would serve primary didactic needs in the final position (Steck 1996). Nineveh probably no longer was understood as the historical capital of Assyria but rather as an example for any hearer (or reader) of the prophetic message (Gerhards, 7.2). Jonah could serve as an example to illustrate the proposition in Malachi 3:7 that Yahweh will relent from his punishment as soon as the people heed the prophetic message and repent, exactly as Jonah experienced.

Between the sequence of the writings in the *Dodekapropheton* and that of the MT there is a difference in the sequence of the first six writings. The easiest explanation for this reorganization is that the translator of the original LXX placed Amos and Micah adjacent to Hosea and left the sequence of the remaining writings intact. The reason for this was that he noticed that the superscriptions of these books cohere markedly and evoke the impression that they prophesied at roughly the same time. In addition, only these three prophets directly address Samaria, the capital of northern Israel, whereas the other writings address Judah and Jerusalem.

5. The Jewish Septuagintal Interpretation of the Book of the Twelve.

Since a translation of a text into a different language always implies some form of interpretation, the Jewish LXX version of the Twelve contains the first complete, consistent interpretation of the whole book. The translator had to decide which Greek equivalent represents the sense of the Hebrew expression most accurately for every single word. Besides that, he had to decipher unusual words that he did not have in his lexicon, correct misspellings, and make sense of incomprehensible clauses as much as possible. Although it certainly was the intention of the translator to represent the original meaning of the Hebrew as accurately as possi-

ble and to avoid any deliberate change, in fact it was unavoidable that his own interpretation crept into the translation through his attempt to provide the original meaning (for a very good presentation of the LXX of Amos, see Glenn). A few examples may suffice to illustrate the way in which this translational interpretation was achieved.

The translator found the expression *yhwh šēbā'ôt* many times in his Hebrew text. Concerning the Tetragrammaton, he did not keep the name "YHWH," but instead translated the word as *'ādōnāy*, which was read in the synagogue instead of the name of God, with the Greek word *kyrios* ("Lord"). The Jewish community in Egypt had adopted this Greek title for gods for the designation of YHWH, and the translator followed this usage. In contrast, he dealt differently with the Hebrew word *šēbā'ôt*. One cannot be sure, of course, but there is a good chance that it was the translator who coined the neologism *pantokratōr* as an equivalent to *šēbā'ôt*. Whether the translator had this intention or not, the title *pantokratōr* came to mean "the almighty," which became an important attribute of God's essence.

Hosea 5:2 provides another example of an innovative translation. Here the translator chose the word *paideutēs* ("educator") as a self-designation of God. This title seems to be important for him, because he uses the verb *paideuō* ("to educate") four more times (Hos 7:12, 14, 16; 10:10) (Bons).

A last example comes from Amos 9:11-12. The Hebrew text envisions the rebuilding of the fallen booth of David and his city. In addition, Edom and all the *nations, which are called by God's name, will be brought under Israelite rule. The LXX translator brings in a new tone: "that the remnant of humankind and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called may earnestly seek me, says the Lord." This new interpretation is based on two different readings of the Hebrew: "humankind" (Heb *'ādām*) instead of "Edom" (Heb *'ēdōm*), and "seek" (Heb *dāraš*) instead of "possess" (Heb *yāraš*). The result is that the picture of the eschatological restitution of Israel differs markedly from that presumed by the Hebrew text. According to the Hebrew text, Israel will possess the foreign nations, whereas in the LXX Israel and the rest of humanity peacefully and jointly seek the Lord.

6. The Christian Greek Old Testament.

The NT authors, although at least some of them presumably were capable of reading and understanding Hebrew, relied on the Jewish Scriptures in their Greek versions. The early Christian communities produced no copies of these Scriptures of their own, but rather used those exemplars common in the synagogues. In some cases it is possible that the Christian authors translated a passage on their own, but this would have happened while bearing the official Greek text in mind. The text of the Greek version would not differ from that of their Jewish home communities. However, the way that the Scriptures were conceived was completely dominated by the conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was the *Messiah of Israel, whom the prophets had proclaimed as coming to save the whole world.

When the Christian communities decided to have a collection of authoritative Scriptures for themselves, apart from that of the Jewish communities, they did so by appropriating the Jewish Scriptures that were part of their own heritage and expanding them by a collection of decidedly Christian writings. The concepts of an "Old Testament" and a "New Testament" came not from the NT authors themselves but rather from later Christian scribes, who combined the Jewish Scriptures and the authoritative Christian writings into one book, comprising two parts.

As D. Trobisch has convincingly argued, it was in this stage that new scribal practices were introduced that made sure that the reader read the OT books according to a Christian hermeneutic. The most important one is the use of the so-called *nomina sacra* ("holy names"). The name of God, *kyrios* in Greek, and the concepts "God" (*theos*), "Christ" (*christos*), and "Jesus" (*lēsous*) were written only with the first and the last letter of the word with a line above the letters in order to signal the abbreviated writing style. Later, even more *nomina sacra* were written in this style. It is only from this stage of the transmission of the Greek text that extant copies have survived. The reconstruction of the Jewish LXX version must start from and heavily rely on this text. All of the ancient Christian interpreters, from whom commentaries of the Twelve survived, relied on such a text form.

Although it is clear that Christian readers conceived the Book of the Twelve as reflecting

a stage of salvation history that culminated in the coming of Jesus Christ, it is remarkable that they only rarely adjusted the text of the prophets to the supposed fulfillment in Christ. Even in passages where the NT authors quote the prophetic texts verbatim, but in a different wording than the LXX version, they very much hesitated to correct the prophetic text on the basis of the NT quotation. An example is the quotation of Amos 9:11-12 in Acts 15:16-17. There, Amos 9:11 obviously differs from the LXX version, whereas Amos 9:12 exactly follows the LXX. The scribes, however, did not eliminate this tension. The Christian scribes obviously did not care so much about the exact match of the wording as long as the sense of the passage referred to Jesus Christ clearly enough.

7. Ancient Interpretations.

7.1. Sirach. In Sirach 49:10 the Twelve are mentioned for the first time. In a long review of the honored men and fathers of Israel that begins in Sirach 44:1, the author summarizes what they contributed to the history of Israel. The author follows the historical sequence, grouping together Hezekiah with Isaiah, and Josiah with Jeremiah, who is followed by Ezekiel. In Sirach 49:10 the Twelve are taken together and a single message is attributed to them, a message of comfort and hope. (The concepts stem from the Greek version. Fortunately, among the Hebrew fragments of Sirach this passage is also attested [Smend; Vattioni; Beentjes]. Although fragmentary, the Hebrew text proves that the Greek version translated this passage very literally.) Since the Twelve consist of prophets who are dated before and after the Babylonian *exile, it is interesting that Sirach places the Twelve before the exile. Their message, however, is presented not as predicting the destruction of Jerusalem as Jeremiah (Sir 49:6), but rather as a message of consolation and hope. This prediction was only partly realized by the rebuilding of the *temple in the period of Zerubbabel and Joshua and the walls of Jerusalem under the leadership of Nehemiah (Sir 49:11-13). Since Micah was famous for having predicted the destruction of the temple on *Zion (Mic 3:12; cf. Jer 26:18), it is noteworthy that Sirach emphasizes the hopeful passages within the Book of the Twelve. This may be explained by a reading strategy that leaves the fulfilled prophecies aside—that is, the doom oracles that were ful-

filled by the Babylonian exile—and concentrates on the unfulfilled prophecies that still are relevant for readers after the exile.

7.2. New Testament. Within the NT the Book of the Twelve is cited thirty-three times. This is less than half of the citations of Isaiah (72x), but clearly more than Jeremiah (10x) and Ezekiel (5x). Apparently, the Book of the Twelve contains some ideas that could be related to Jesus Christ and could not be found elsewhere. Most importantly, the prophecy of Amos 9:11-12 was used as a proof-text by James at the apostolic convention in Jerusalem to resolve the conflict between Peter, Barnabas and Paul, on the one hand, who promoted the idea that non-Israelite Christians need not to be circumcised, and their Pharisaic opponents, on the other, who maintained the opposite. It is not totally clear what kind of interpretation James presupposed in his speech (Acts 15:13-21), but it is clear that he thought that the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ included the foreign nations into Israel in such a way that they did not become Israelites but instead kept their own ethnic identity (*see* Prophets in the New Testament; Schart 2006).

8. Ancient Christian Commentaries on the Twelve.

8.1. Theodore of Mopsuestia. Only a few commentaries on the Book of the Twelve from the ancient church have survived more or less completely. Especially noteworthy is the commentary by Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca. 350-428), who represents the Antiochian school of exegesis. Because Theodore later was banned by the official church, his many commentaries on biblical books were mostly destroyed. Luckily, however, his commentary on the Twelve survived in its entirety in the original Greek (Hill 2004, 2). The commentary presumably stems from around 375. Theodore is rightly praised by modern scholars as a precursor to the historical-critical understanding of the Book of the Twelve, insofar as his preeminent goal is “to bring clarity” or perspicuity (*saphêneia*) to the scriptural text (Hill 2004, 307). He flatly rejects the allegorical approach and tries to understand the prophetic message completely within its original historical situation as intended for the audience at that time. He is very clear that the authors of the OT had no understanding of a trinitarian God; whenever God is

referred to as “father” or “spirit,” this is not meant in a trinitarian way, as if “father” (i.e., God) is understood as comprising three persons (Hill 2004, 28; Merx, 120). Likewise, Theodore insists that the Israelite prophets foresaw the coming of a worldly king who would restore the nation. This hope was fulfilled by the coming of Zerubbabel. Jesus Christ came in at a later stage of the divine world order, or *oikonomia* (Hill 2004, 25-26).

Only in one case is this distinct: the passage that envisions the pouring out of the *Spirit on all flesh in Joel 2:28-32. Under the influence of Peter’s quotation in Acts 2, Theodore insists that “the reality of the account was found to be realized in the time of Christ the Lord” (Hill 2004, 23). In no other case did he find an announcement of Jesus Christ, but rather a completely human and Jewish king, Zerubbabel. A good example is Amos 9:11-12, regarding which Theodore states that the vision of Amos was fulfilled in Zerubbabel, who restored *Israel after the Babylonian destruction (Hill 2004, 172). Only after he had clarified the original meaning does Theodore mention James’s application of Amos 9:11-12 in Acts 15, but he does not think that this represents the original meaning but only the apostle’s secondary usage of this text. Nevertheless, it is clear to Theodore that James disclosed the true outcome (*ekbasis*), which was not available to the ancient Israelites (Merx, 128).

The copy of the Twelve that Theodore had before him belonged to the text type of the so-called Antiochian text, which differed from the widely accepted Alexandrian text. He does not comment on this different text type. Obviously, he knew that his Greek text was the translation of a Hebrew *Vorlage*, because in rare cases he refers to the Hebrew, whereby in these cases it is clear that he is relying on the expertise of others (Merx, 121-22). Unfortunately, he does not mention their names. As a result, it remains unclear whether he used Jewish sources. Theodore decidedly defends the divine inspiration of the Greek version by referencing the legend about the seventy translators of the LXX that was first attested in the *Letter of Aristeas* and was adopted by Christians, whereby it was inferred that the seventy translated not just the Torah but the entire collection that Christians hold as their Greek OT (Merx, 125).

Interestingly, the sequence of the writings

of the Twelve attested by Theodore followed the Hebrew order and not that of the mainstream Christian codices. The sequence must have been revised by someone in order to match the Hebrew one. Theodore does not comment on this difference in sequence, even if he was aware of it. Apparently, he sees no important difference in meaning between the order of his Greek text and that of the other Greek manuscripts of his time. In any case, we have no comments by him on those differences. Theodore is, however, seriously interested in establishing the historical sequence of the prophets. He tries to identify the historical background of each prophet as best the scarce information of the writings allows. In his introduction to Haggai he establishes the following sequence: Hosea, Joel, Amos and Micah dealt with the ten tribes of northern Israel; Obadiah prophesied against the Edomites at the time of the return; Jonah and Nahum confronted Nineveh; Habakkuk and Zephaniah addressed Judah and Jerusalem and spoke of the Babylonian threat; Haggai is the first to speak after the return from captivity (Hill 2004, 306-7).

The historical background allows him to resolve the famous tension between the portrayals of the Assyrian capital, Nineveh, in the writing of Jonah, on the one hand, and in that of Nahum, on the other. In Jonah the Ninevites respond in a very positive way—they believe in God and turn away from their evil deeds—to the unbelievably brief message, which Theodore conceives only as a short version of what Jonah had really said. In Nahum, however, the prophet confronts Nineveh again in a very harsh way and announces Nineveh’s immediate downfall, as if none of the things that the book of Jonah narrates had taken place. Theodore concludes that Nineveh must have returned to its evil behavior. And he sees a pattern of God’s behavior in those cases. As in the case of the Egyptian Pharaoh or the Assyrian king Sennacherib, God allows Israel’s enemies to attack Israel, but when they overstate their case and try not only to do harm to Israel but also begin “warring against God,” God unleashes severe retribution against them (Hill 2004, 246).

8.2. Cyril of Alexandria. Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) may be chosen as an example of allegorical interpretation. He wrote a commentary on the Twelve in the early years of his

episcopate. Cyril certainly was interested in the historical meaning; however, he thinks that a deeper meaning is hidden in many passages, and that the commentator must bring these out. A famous example is the journey of Jonah in the fish. Cyril has no doubt that this event really happened to the historical prophet. However, since Jesus already adopted Jonah as a sign for himself, it is imperative that Jonah's journey is developed at a "spiritual level" (*theoria pneumatikē*) (Hill 2008, 148). That means that it is understood as a shadow of Christ's death and resurrection. What happened to Jonah "describes in shadows, as it were [*hōs en skiais*], the mystery of the incarnation [*oikonomia*] of our Savior as well" (Hill 2008, 148).

A second example is found in the interpretation of Amos 9:11-12. Again Cyril admits that the historical reference (*historia*) to the rebuilding of the "tent of David" is the restoration of the Jews, "when Cyrus released them from captivity" (Hill 2008, 128). However, "the deeper meaning closer to reality [*esōterō kai alēthesteros*] would be in Christ" (Hill 2008, 128). In this sense, the fallen tent refers to the fallen human race suffering from death. The restitution happened when Jesus Christ was resurrected and with him those who believe in him (Hill 2008, 128).

8.3. Jerome. Jerome (ca. 347/348-419) wrote commentaries on all of the writings of the Book of the Twelve between the years 393 and 406 (Höhmann, 41). He was very influential for several reasons. First, he knew Hebrew and was capable of correcting the LXX translation toward the Hebrew version known at his time. Second, he was familiar with Jewish exegesis and consulted it regularly. In so doing, he offered an accurate portrayal of the Jewish interpretation of the shared Scripture and fostered the understanding of the Jewish religion. Third, he compared the different Greek versions (Septuagint, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, the Quinta of Origen's Hexapla). Fourth, writing in Latin, he conveyed the Greek exegetical tradition to the Latin-speaking western half of the Roman Empire. Similar to Cyril, Jerome tried, as best he was able, to establish the historical sense of the text—for example, by using his knowledge of Hebrew and the land of Israel. On the other hand, from Origen he learned to find an allegorical meaning.

Throughout his commentary on Amos, for example, he interprets all statements about Judah and Jerusalem as referring to the church (*ecclesia*), whereas all statements about Samaria or Amaziah or Jeroboam are conceived as referring to the heretics. When commenting on Amos 9:11-12, for example, he states that a Christian reader of this passage must follow the example of the apostles and apply a spiritual reading: the image of the rebuilding of the fallen tent of David refers to the central Jewish cultic place, the synagogue, which was rebuilt through the resurrection of Christ (*resurrectio domini*) as the Christian community (Höhmann, 313 // 481). The phrase "the rest of humankind" (*reliqui hominum*), which is, as Jerome rightly observes, found in the LXX version and not in the Hebrew, refers to those among the Jewish people, who came to believe in Jesus Christ (*qui iudaico populo crediderunt*) (Höhmann, 313 // 481).

9. Martin Luther.

Martin Luther represents an important step in the history of interpretation of the Twelve because he produced very influential translations of the Prophetic Books from the Hebrew into German. In 1532 he published a translation of all of the Prophetic Books (As G. Krause has shown, Luther made use of the translation of the Prophetic Books by L. Hetzer and H. Denck [1527], who translated from the Hebrew. But on the other hand, these two authors had already been influenced by Luther's translation of Hosea for his course work [Krause, 19-61]).

Luther relied neither on the Latin Vulgate, which was the normative Bible version of the medieval period, nor on the Greek version, which had been the normative version of the ancient church. Instead, he relied on the Hebrew text alone. This usage of the Hebrew became a normative principle for all Protestant communities and even influenced scholarly exegesis in the Roman Catholic Church.

Luther did not write a commentary on the Twelve as a whole, but published interpretations of Jonah (1526), Habakkuk (1526) and Zechariah (1527) (for a convenient overview of all sources on Luther's exegesis of the Minor Prophets, see Krause, 1-6). However, while serving as a professor for biblical studies, he did give lectures on all of the Twelve during the years 1524-1526. These lectures were written

down by his students, and some of them later were published (the lectures on the Twelve Prophets are collected in WA 13).

In the forewords (*Vorreden*) to his translations Luther gave a rough sketch of his understanding of the Twelve, targeting lay readers of the Bible. He clearly set the prophets within their historical setting and established their historical sequence on the basis of the superscriptions of the books, thereby considering Hosea as the oldest, albeit contemporary with Joel, Amos and Micah. He conceived of the prophetic office (*Amt*) as twofold: on the one hand, the prophets have to preach the law, which results in harsh judgment speeches against their disobedient Jewish fellows; on the other hand, they had to proclaim the gospel, which culminates in the announcement of the coming of Jesus Christ and his kingdom (foreword to Hosea [1545]). In addition, Luther states that at least some of the prophets had to suffer severe persecution from their addressees, who sometimes even went so far as killing the prophets. In this way, they prefigure the fate of Jesus Christ (foreword to Hosea). Luther does not think that the christological interpretation needs an allegorical method. For him, the announcement of Christ is obviously the literal meaning of the prophetic texts (Hermle, 4.1). In fact, Luther does not apply an allegorical methodology at all. When he comes to an interpretation that modern scholars would consider allegorical, he would argue that the historical sense of the text itself is meant in an allegorical way. A good example is the marriage of Hosea in Hosea 1. Since for Luther it is completely unimaginable that God ordered the prophet to take a harlot and have children with her, this action must be understood as a sign enacted (*see* Sign Act) to demonstrate the sin of the people (foreword to Hosea). However, as Krause has noted, Luther significantly reduced the number of passages that he considered as unambiguously speaking about Jesus Christ—for example, Hosea 6:1-3 speaking about the resurrection of Christ, in comparison with his exegetical forebears in the ancient and medieval church (Krause, 365, 369). At the same time, he found some additional texts where the prophets spoke of God's grace and human faith in a way completely in line with the NT (Krause, 364, 380, 383-84).

10. Modern Historical-Critical Approaches.

On the basis of a modern historical-critical approach, F. Delitzsch (1813-1890) discovered the catchword phenomenon that stitches the writings of the Twelve together. Each of the writings, mostly in its first chapter, repeats at least one significant phrase or even verse from the writing immediately before it, in most cases from its last chapter (cf. Hos 14:1 // Joel 2:12; Joel 3:21 // Amos 1:2; Amos 9:12 // Obad 19; Jonah 4:2 // Mic 7:18-19 // Nah 1:2-3; Hab 2:20 // Zeph 1:7). Especially significant is the overlap between Amos 1:2 (Yahweh roaring from Zion) and Joel 3:21 (Delitzsch, 91-93) (the catchword phenomenon later was intensively studied by J. Nogalski [see below]). H. Ewald (1803-1875) used the superscriptions as data for the reconstruction of the redaction history of the collection and proposed the thesis that the six writings Joel, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, in this sequence, formed a precursor to the Book of the Twelve (Ewald, 1:74-75). K. Budde (1850-1935) was the first to postulate a *redaction that worked across the different writings. According to him, the redactor eliminated biographical narrative material from the writings in order to give more weight to the *word of God. However, the major breakthrough for understanding the Book of the Twelve as a whole was the Harvard dissertation by R. Wolfe, submitted in 1933 (Wolfe 1933; for a summary of the dissertation, see Wolfe 1935). He elaborated the complicated hypothesis that the different writings were put together by redactors who simultaneously edited several different writings in order to combine them into a single book. Wolfe coined the term "strata hypothesis" and differentiated between thirteen layers that successively worked on four collections: first Amos and Hosea were combined; second, a redactor formed the Book of the Six, comprising the preexilic prophecies (Amos, Hosea, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah); third, this book was expanded with the inclusion of Joel, Jonah and Obadiah, thereby forming a Book of the Nine; finally, the Book of the Twelve was formed. Probably because he set out his thesis without serious source-critical arguments, his important contribution was left unheeded for decades.

Research on the Twelve attained new heights after World War II with the outstanding com-

mentaries of H. Wolff (1911-1993) and W. Rudolph (1891-1987), but these commentators concentrated their work on the historical prophets. In his commentary on Hosea, for example, Wolff explained the brevity of many texts by the thesis that they were written hastily by eyewitnesses of the oral communication. He completely ignored the work of Wolfe and analyzed the growth of the writings of the Twelve completely within their individual literary boundaries. B. Childs (1923-2007), in his *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (1979), shifted the interest away from the historical prophet to the final redaction of the books. (Childs did not address the question of what it might mean for a canonical understanding to take the Book of the Twelve as a whole, but he did supervise D. Schneider's 1979 dissertation on the unity of the Book of the Twelve.) For some reason, the dynamic of the research on the Twelve gained renewed impetus after the breakup of the Soviet Union. In 1990 P. House brought a wind of change to the debate when he examined the literary devices that let the Book of the Twelve appear as a deliberately styled unity. His analysis dealt with the Book of the Twelve as if it were a unified narrative, exploring its genre, structure, plot, characterization and point of view. According to him, the writings were arranged in such a way that the reader faces a thematic development: the first six writings (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah) concentrate on the sin of Israel; the next three (Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah) depict its punishment; and the last three (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi) envision its restoration. This study clearly developed the idea of the Twelve as a unified book, but at the same time it completely ignored the redaction-historical dimension of this unity.

The reaction from the redaction-historical side came quickly. In 1991 O. Steck published a study of the interrelation of redactional processes within the book of Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve (Steck 1991). He was aware that his very complicated model of different *Fortschreibungen* ("relectures") was preliminary in several respects, especially because it lacked sound and detailed source-critical examinations of the key passages, as well as well-balanced criteria for determining whether similar passages, even passages that share significant lexemes, belong to the same redactional layer or cite or

allude to each other, and if so, in what direction the dependence goes. However, J. Nogalski, who wrote his dissertation under Steck's supervision, brought a widely acknowledged breakthrough. His two volumes on the subject in 1993 began with an extensive study of the catchword phenomenon, already noted by Delitzsch, and on this basis developed an impressive picture of the successive growth of the Book of the Twelve (Nogalski 1993a; 1993b) (see *Intertextuality and Innerbiblical Interpretation*).

Nogalski attributed the most extensive redactional activity to the "Joel-related layer," which made the immediate coming of the *Day of Yahweh the dominant theme of eleven writings. This redaction combined a preexisting "Deuteronomistic corpus" (Hosea, Amos, Micah, Zephaniah) with Nahum, Habakkuk, Haggai, Zechariah 1–8, Joel, Obadiah and Malachi. Subsequently, Jonah and Zechariah 9–14 entered the collection.

Contemporary with Nogalski or inspired by him, a couple of studies appeared in quick succession. The first to follow with a book-length study was A. Schar. In his 1998 book *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs* he began with an analysis of the openings of the writings. After having differentiated between the different types of beginnings—the different types of superscriptions and the different forms of narrative expositions—he judged that these differences must come from different redactors who successively added more writings to the collection but at the same time reworked the older collection that they had inherited. For the first time since Wolfe, Schar tried to assign every single verse of the Twelve to his six postulated redactional layers. According to him, the collection started with the combination of older versions of Hosea and Amos onto a single scroll in order to present the prophetic message that had foreseen and announced the downfall of northern Israel together with its capital, Samaria. At the next stage he more or less confirmed Nogalski's "Deuteronomistic corpus," for which he preferred the label "D-corpus." He then divided Nogalski's "Joel-related layer" into three layers: a redaction that inserted Nahum and Habakkuk; a second redaction that added Haggai, Zechariah and other passages that envisioned a hopeful restoration after the judgment had been executed; and a third redaction that brought in Joel and Obadiah and formed a

book comprising ten writings. The final redaction added the satirical narrative about the fate of Jonah and a collection of disputation speeches under the name of Malachi.

J. Wöhrle has offered the most recent study. His two volumes contain an independent source-critical analysis of every writing of the Twelve except for Hosea (Wöhrle 2006; 2008). Wöhrle added a lot of additional evidence to some hypotheses as postulated by Nogalski and followed by others. His study of what he calls the *Vierprophetenbuch* ("Book of the Four Prophets" [Wöhrle picked up the name *Vierprophetenbuch* from Albertz, 164-85]), which is more or less identical with Nogalski's "Deuteronomistic corpus," brilliantly confirms this hypothesis by demonstrating how the redactor of this Book of the Four deliberately alluded to the book of Kings. In addition, there are several new interesting hypotheses—for example, the *Gnadenkorpus*, which is dominated and unified by allusions to the famous definition of God's gracious and compassionate essence in Exodus 34:6-7. Likewise, Wöhrle's proposal to differentiate between three layers that deal with the nations (*Fremdvölker-Korpus I*, *Fremdvölker-Korpus II*, *Heil-für-die-Völker-Korpus*) is stimulating. However, these need further evaluation.

11. Conclusion.

Over the past few decades it has been successfully demonstrated that the Book of the Twelve must be conceived as a redaction-historical unity comparable to the other Latter Prophets, but with the marked difference that in the case of the Twelve it is openly stated that the book was composed by different authors. Even the names of the prophets that stand behind the book are explicitly given. The Book of the Twelve presents "the prophets" as a continuous chain of persons throughout history following one another, occasionally overlapping chronologically, and sharing basically the same task and message (see Formation of the Prophetic Books). It is of great importance that this chain was not construed as a homogenous growth of knowledge, but rather as one with conflicting positions that can claim equally to have immanent experiences of God's presence and to refer back to the community's normative tradition (see Prophecy and Tradition).

Concerning the method in regard to what kinds of evidence can be gathered in order to

correlate redactional activities in one writing to those in another, Schart remains fundamental with his reflections on how one can gather evidence for the thesis that Hosea and Amos once were parts of a single book (Schart 1998b, 133-50).

Among the many theses about the redaction history of the Twelve, it is difficult to find some models that are more stable than others, but it seems wise to separate four major stages, no matter how many other layers one is inclined to accept.

The most convincing and broadly accepted thesis is that older versions of Hosea, Amos, Micah and Zephaniah formed a single corpus. The best evidence for this is the system of superscriptions that synchronize every prophet with the contemporary kings of Israel and Judah (see Israelite History). It seems as if this system wants to convey the impression that the kings Hezekiah and Josiah responded with their reforms to the message of these prophets. This corpus certainly contains substantial affinities with Deuteronomistic ideas and concepts, but it should not be identified with the editors of the book of Kings. It probably had at least one precursor. The thesis of a scroll that comprised Hosea and Amos is still worth further consideration.

It is self-evident that someone must have combined individual writings into the Book of the Twelve Prophets. This final stage may be called the "final redaction." There is some evidence that Jonah was among the last writings that came into the Twelve.

Between the D-corpus and the final redaction there must have been at least one stage, but probably there were more. One of them implemented the hope of the coming of the eschatological "day of the Lord," which even in the final form characterizes the Book of the Twelve. This eschatological concept permeates the writing of Joel through and through. As a result, it still commends itself that at least one layer of Joel was part of this stage.

Research on the Book of the Twelve must continue in order to find firmer ground. Nevertheless, it seems promising to parallel this research with that in the other Prophetic Books. O. Steck rightly has stressed the fact that the book of Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve are the most similar of the Prophetic Books. E. Bosshard-Nepustil has elaborated

this idea in his massive 1997 study *Rezeptionen von Jesaja 1-39 im Zwölfprophetenbuch*. The idea of a parallel and mutual development of the book of Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve needs to be evaluated anew. The results of such undertakings should be expounded for the canonical books and compilations outside the prophets in order to appreciate whether one might be able to find similar redactional processes in their textual backgrounds. The Torah and the process of its development should be considered in light of the studies undertaken regarding the compositional history of the Book of the Twelve.

See also CANONICAL CRITICISM; FORMATION OF THE PROPHETIC BOOKS; INTERTEXTUALITY AND INNERBIBLICAL ALLUSION; REDACTION/EDITORIAL CRITICISM; RHETORICAL CRITICISM; TWELVE, BOOK OF THE (ALSO ARTICLES ON INDIVIDUAL BOOKS IN THE TWELVE).

BIBLIOGRAPHY. **R. Albertz**, *Die Exilszeit: 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr* (BE 7; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2001); **D. Barthélemy**, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du Dodécaphéton trouvés dans le désert de Juda, précédée d'une étude sur les traductions et recensions grecques de la Bible réalisées au premier siècle de notre ère sous l'influence du rabinat palestinien* (VTSup 10; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963); **P. C. Beentjes**, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew: A Text Edition of All Extant Hebrew Manuscripts and a Synopsis of All Parallel Hebrew Ben Sira Texts* (VTSup 68; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006); **E. Bons**, "Osee, Hosea: Einleitung," in *Septuaginta Deutsch: Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament*, 2: *Psalmen bis Daniel*, ed. M. Karrer and W. Kraus (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011) 2287-290; **E. Bosshard-Nepustil**, *Rezeptionen von Jesaja 1-39 im Zwölfprophetenbuch: Untersuchungen zur literarischen Verbindung von Prophetenbüchern in babylonischer und persischer Zeit* (OBO 154; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997); **G. J. Brooke**, "The Twelve Minor Prophets and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Congress Volume: Leiden 2004*, ed. A. Lemaire (VTSup 109; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006) 19-43; **K. Budde**, "Eine folgenschwere Redaktion des Zwölfprophetenbuchs," *ZAW* 39 (1921) 218-29; **B. S. Childs**, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979); **F. Delitzsch**, "Wann weissagte Obadja?" *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Lutherische*

Theologie und Kirche 12 (1851) 91-102; **H. Ewald**, *Die Propheten des Alten Bundes* (2nd ed.; 3 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1867-1868); **R. E. Fuller**, "The Twelve," in *Qumran Cave 4.X: The Prophets*, ed. E. Ulrich et al. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997) 221-318; **A. Gelston**, *The Twelve Minor Prophets* (BHQ 13; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2010); **M. Gerhards**, "Jona/Jonabuch," *WiBiLex* (2008) <<http://www.academic-bible.com/en/nc/wibilex/the-bible-encyclopedia/details/quelle/WIBI/referenz/22740/cache/e212e5897b8b2d42b4eeba4740dd5fab>>; **W. E. Glenny**, *Finding Meaning in the Text: Translation Technique and Theology in the Septuagint of Amos* (VTSup 126; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2009); **P. Guillaume**, "The Unlikely Malachi-Jonah Sequence (4QXIIa)," *JHS* 7.15 (2007) <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/JHS/Articles/article_76.pdf>; **S. Hermle**, "Luther, Martin, und das Alte Testament," *WiBiLex* (2008) <<http://www.academic-bible.com/en/nc/wibilex/the-bible-encyclopedia/details/quelle/WIBI/zeichen/1/referenz/25188/cache/549783abdb8e7d50ea33d8124db2e926>>; **R. C. Hill**, trans. and ed., *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets: Theodore of Mopsuestia* (FC 108; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2004); idem, trans. and ed., *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets: Cyril of Alexandria*, vol. 2 (FC 116; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2008); **B. Höhmann**, trans. and ed., *Der Amos-Kommentar des Eusebius Hieronymus: Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar* (Münster: Schöling, 2002); **P. R. House**, *The Unity of the Twelve* (BLS 27; JSOTSup 97; Sheffield: Almond, 1990); **G. Krause**, *Studien zu Luthers Auslegung der Kleinen Propheten* (BHT 33; Tübingen: Mohr, 1962); **A. Merx**, *Die Prophetie des Joel und ihre Ausleger, von den ältesten Zeiten bis zu den Reformatoren: Eine exegetisch-kritische und hermeneutisch-dogmengeschichtliche Studie; Beigegen ist der äthiopische Text des Joel* (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1879); **J. Nogalski**, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve* (BZAW 217; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993a); idem, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve* (BZAW 218; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993b); **A. Schart**, "The Jewish and the Christian Greek Versions of Amos," in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures*, vol. 53, ed. R. Glenn Wooden and Wolfgang Kraus, *Septuagint and Cognate Studies* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature,

2006), pp. 157-77; idem, "Zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Zwölfprophetenbuchs," *VF* 43.2 (1998a) 13-33; idem, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs: Neubearbeitungen von Amos im Rahmen schriftenübergreifender Redaktionsprozesse* (BZAW 260; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998b); idem, "Das Zwölfprophetenbuch als redaktionelle Grobheit," *TLZ* 133 (2008) 227-46; **D. A. Schneider**, "The Unity of the Book of the Twelve" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University Press, 1979); **R. Smend**, *Die Weisheit des Jesus Sirach: Hebräisch und deutsch, mit einem hebräischen Glossar* (Berlin: Reimer, 1906); **O. H. Steck**, *Der Abschluß der Prophetie im Alten Testament: Ein Versuch zur Frage der Vorgeschichte des Kanons* (BTSt 17; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991); idem, "Zur Abfolge Maleachi-Jona in 4Q76 (4QXIIa)," *ZAW* 108 (1996) 249-53; **E. Tov**, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8HevXIIgr)* (DJD 8; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); **D. J. Trobisch**, *Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments: Eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der christlichen Bibel* (NTOA 31; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996); **F. Vattioni**, *Ecclesiastico: Testo ebraico con apparato critico e versioni greca, latina e siriana* (Pubblicazioni del Seminario di semitistica 1; Naples: Istituto orientale di Napoli,

1968); **J. Wöhrle**, *Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuchs: Entstehung und Komposition* (BZAW 360; Berlin: de Gruyter 2006); idem, *Der Abschluß des Zwölfprophetenbuchs: Buchübergreifende Redaktionsprozesse in den späten Sammlungen* (BZAW 389; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008); **R. E. Wolfe**, "The Editing of the Book of the Twelve: A Study of Secondary Material in the Minor Prophets" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1933); idem, "The Editing of the Book of the Twelve," *ZAW* 53 (1935) 90-130; **H. W. Wolff**, *Dodekapropheten, 1: Hosea* (BKAT 14/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1961); **J. Ziegler**, *Duodecim prophetae* (3rd ed.; Septuaginta 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984). A. Schart

UNDERWORLD. See DEATH.

UNFAITHFUL WIFE, GOD'S. See FEMINIST INTERPRETATION; HOSEA, BOOK OF; WOMEN AND FEMALE IMAGERY.

UNIFYING STRUCTURE. See LITERARY APPROACHES.

UNIVERSALISM. See NATIONS.