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# BIBLIOTHECA ABESSINICA

STUDIES CONCERNING THE  
LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND HISTORY  
OF ABYSSINIA

EDITED BY

Dr. E. LITTMANN

## II.

THE TEXT OF THE ETHIOPIC VERSION OF THE  
OCTATEUCH, WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO THE AGE AND VALUE OF  
THE HAVERFORD MANUSCRIPT

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THE TEXT OF THE ETHIOPIC  
VERSION OF THE OCTATEUCH, WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO THE AGE  
AND VALUE OF THE HAVERFORD MANUSCRIPT.

Interest in the Ethiopic Bible has been aroused far more by those apocryphal books which form a part of its extensive and rather indefinite canon<sup>1)</sup>, than by the text of those books which are in the stricter canon of Protestantism. The Gospels — even the entire New Testament — have indeed several times been printed by occidental scholars. But the history of the publication of the Old Testament text is almost summed up in the labors of one man, August Dillmann. The first volume of his monumental work comprised the Octateuch<sup>2)</sup>. It appeared in 1853, and since that date nothing has been contributed to the study of this specific portion of the Old Testament in Ethiopic, save a brochure by S. Reckendorf on the value of the old Ethiopic version of the Pentateuch for the reconstruction of the Septuagint<sup>3)</sup>.

But in the fifty years that have elapsed since Dillmann's Octateuch appeared, there has been a great advance in the

1) Such, for example, as Kufālē (the Book of Jubilees, or Little Genesis), and Hēnok (Enoch).

2) Veteris Testamenti Aethiopici Tomus Primus, sive Octateuchus Aethiopicus, Leipzig 1853. References are to the *pars posterior*.

3) Ueber den Werth der altaethiopischen Pentateuchübersetzung für die Reconstruction der Septuaginta, Giessen 1886.



investigation of the Septuagint-text, and at least a considerable advance in the comprehension of the relation subsisting between it and the Ethiopic version derived from it. In the former task, the reconstruction of the primitive Septuagint, the labors of Lagarde, Field, Nestle, Klostermann and Swete have certainly outlined the problem more clearly than fifty years ago, and have increased the available means for solving it. In the latter task, *viz.* the correlation with this problem of the testimony of the Ethiopic version, the researches of Cornill <sup>1)</sup>, Reckendorf, Roupp <sup>2)</sup> and Heider <sup>3)</sup>, together with the kindred studies in the New Testament text by Guidi <sup>4)</sup> and Hackspill <sup>5)</sup>, have opened a series of special investigations into particular parts of the Ethiopic Scriptures which, it is to be hoped, will not fail to include the entire volume; so that some scholar in the near future may be able to gather up the results, such as those already reached by Roupp in Samuel, by Heider in Jeremiah, and by Cornill in Ezekiel, and, uniting them in a consistent hypothesis, establish finally the linguistic relationships of this version and its recensions, the type of Greek text which it represents, and its value for purposes of textual criticism.

The situation at present is therefore one of expectation, rather than of realization. Within the next two or three years the first installment of the larger Cambridge Septuagint may

1) Das Buch des Propheten Ezechiel, Leipsic 1886. See especially pp. 36—48.

2) Article, "Die älteste äthiopische Handschrift der vier Bücher der Könige", in Zeitschrift für Assyriologie, 1902, pp. 296—343.

3) Die aethiopische Bibelübersetzung. Ihre Herkunft, Art, Geschichte, und ihr Wert für die alt- und neutestamentliche Wissenschaft. Mit Jeremia Cap. 1—13 als Textprobe. (Als Prolegomena zu einer kritischen Ausgabe der aeth. Bibel). Leipsic, 1902.

4) Le traduzioni degli evangeli in arabo e in etiopico, Rome 1888.

5) Article, "Die äthiopische Evangelienübersetzung", in Zeit. für Assyriol., 1896, pp. 117—196, 367—388.

be expected <sup>1)</sup>, with its wealth of material for criticism of the Septuagint-text. Among the versions whose readings will be represented in this edition, the Ethiopic will have a place <sup>2)</sup>. Insofar as it attempts to answer the question, what type of Septuagint-text lies at the basis of the Ethiopic Octateuch, any critical work done in advance of that publication would probably prove premature. Similarly, such critical work would probably be fruitless, if it attempted to answer the question, what was the version by which the Ethiopic Octateuch was corrected in its chief recension? Prof. Guidi, who has studied the relation between the Arabic and Ethiopic Gospels with such fruitful results, is understood to be engaged on a similar line of investigation in the Old Testament, and, in his opinion, the time has not yet come for a critical edition of the Ethiopic Octateuch, and will not come "until the Arabic versions are better known and studied" <sup>3)</sup>.

That, therefore, which remains to be done on the text of the Octateuch, and which can wisely be done now without danger of early undoing, is *to enlarge the materials of criticism*.

Such has been the aim of the writer in the task whose results are herewith presented, the collation of the Haverford MS of the Octateuch, and in the larger task of collating and publishing, together with all the various readings hitherto gathered, the ancient MS of the Octateuch preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris <sup>4)</sup>. By adding to the four MSS

1) According to recent direct information from one of the two editors, Mr. A. E. Brooke, Fellow of King's College.

2) Three codices have been collated by Mr. McLean, two of which are of course Dillmann's F and the N<sup>o</sup>. 3 of Zotenberg's catalogue.

3) Quoted from a personal note from Prof. Guidi to the writer.

4) N<sup>o</sup>. 3 in Zotenberg, "Catalogue des manuscrits éthiopiens de la bibliothèque nationale", Paris 1877. It will be designated by the letter Y, with allusion to King Yekuno Amlāk, 1270—1285, from whose reign it dates.



used by Dillmann for his edition, the readings of these two other MSS, each with its own peculiar textual characteristics, it is hoped that, for the Octateuch, the materials of criticism will be sufficiently numerous and diversified to furnish an adequate basis for critical conclusions.

The codex preserved in the library of Haverford College, Haverford, Pa., has already been described in a general way by Prof. R. W. Rogers, D. D., of Drew Theological Seminary, and a few specimens of its readings given <sup>1</sup>). It is proposed in this paper to give: 1<sup>o</sup>. a thorough description of the MS; 2<sup>o</sup>. an exhibition of its peculiarities, as of paleography, orthography, etc.; 3<sup>o</sup>. the evidence determining its type of text and relationship to the other MSS; and 4<sup>o</sup>. the conclusion, drawn from all these considerations, as to its probable age, and its value for establishing the text of the old Ethiopic version and of its recensions.

### I. *Description of the Haverford Codex.*

The Haverford Octateuch came into the possession of Haverford College through Prof. J. Rendel Harris, who obtained it from an unknown source while he was a teacher in that institution. Neither through oral information, nor through written notice in the volume itself, is any light thrown upon its origin or history <sup>2</sup>).

It is written in a large, plain hand, upon well selected vellum, three columns to the page, 29 to 42 lines to the

1) In "Haverford College Studies", Ethiopic Manuscripts I. In deference to Dr. Rogers, who first described it, this codex will be designated by the letter R.

2) Except the meagre information contained in the almost entirely obliterated notices mentioned on p. II.

column, 9 to 16 letters to the line. There are 182 leaves, besides five fly-leaves. The binding is in boards, measuring  $16\frac{1}{2} \times 12$  inches, covered with heavy brown leather admirably tooled in geometrical designs <sup>1)</sup>. Both parchment and binding are not only of good material, but also in a fair state of preservation. Though the edges of the leaves are somewhat brown and worn with handling, yet on account of the wide margins the text has suffered no damage thereby. Insects have spotted the leaves to an unusual degree, and there are a few pages where the writing has been damaged by water, but in no case is the text quite illegible. Holes in some of the leaves go back to the preparation of the parchment, for the text has been accommodated to them. A few rents have been repaired with strong, coarse thread. A fragment of silk, of an oriental pattern, was found still between its pages, and many bits of thread, tied to the outer margins of the leaves, project beyond their edges. The writing is guided by lines ruled in the parchment with a sharp instrument, the horizontal lines regular as a general rule, and the six vertical lines, one at each side of each column, nearly always symmetrically placed. To these lines the scribe has usually adhered with care.

The inks of the original hand are good. The black is a strong, glossy black, as clear now as when written, neither thin nor sticky. The red ink differs: some of it is thin and faint, but almost all of it is bright and clear. The use of red ink resembles that in other MSS of the Ethiopic Bible. At the beginning of each book the scribe has used red and black ink alternately as follows: in Genesis, Exodus and Joshua, six red lines in all three columns, a pair of red alternating with a pair of black; in Leviticus and Numbers,

1) Inside of the covers it has the „squares” of (blue) cotton cloth, of which d’Abbadie speaks at length, “Catalogue raisonné”.



four red lines similarly arranged; in Deuteronomy, Judges and Ruth, three red lines, one red alternating with one black. Some of the superscriptions, and at least one of the subscriptions, of the several books (see below) are in red ink by the original hand. The subscriptions of Exodus, Leviticus and Joshua are in black by the original hand. At the end of all the books except Joshua, there are simple decorative designs in red and black inks, consisting of lines of dots and groups of dots. At the end of Joshua there are only two lines of black dots, one before and one after the subscription. The words of Deity, which nearly always begin a paragraph, are distinguished by the use of red ink for two lines. The headings of paragraphs in Genesis are similarly distinguished. There is a considerable section (in Joshua) where the scribe's red ink gave out, and the spaces left for these initial lines of paragraphs and for numerals (see below) have never been filled in. The use of red ink for numerals varies. Outside Genesis they are mostly in red. In some places there remain in the margin opposite the red numerals small black numerals, evidently put there by the scribe to remind him to fill the spaces in later with red. In Genesis the numerals are now in red, now in black, now in black with red lines or with red tips to the black lines. In the major pauses red and black ink are used together throughout most of the MS, except in the section in Joshua above mentioned. The ink used by correctors is invariably a dull, brownish black without any gloss. Except over erasures it is not difficult to distinguish the corrector from the original hand by means of this inferiority of his ink.

The margins are suitably wide, especially at top and bottom. Even the space between the columns is a good half-inch. These generous margins have been freely used by the corrector,

and there are a few leaves which have had to give up a strip of their margin for use in a time and land in which writing-materials were precious <sup>1</sup>).

This Haverford MS shares with the oldest codices the distinction of having no divisions of the text save the eight books that compose the Octateuch, and, within these, a system of paragraphing that in general is regulated by the recurrence of the divine speech, but in Genesis proceeds upon a logical division into topics <sup>2</sup>). There are 28 such divisions distributed fairly evenly through Genesis, except for one great section (between XV, 7 and XXXI, 54) in which there is no break. Each paragraph so constituted is introduced by an appropriate title in red ink. Of these 28, six <sup>3</sup>) correspond exactly with paragraphs in Dillmann's MS G, and two others <sup>4</sup>) come within one verse of so corresponding. One of the latter two agrees also with MS C in the only place in Genesis where this codex departs from the European division into chapters <sup>5</sup>).

The first three paragraphs deserve special mention, because they are numbered one, two and three. The first is at III, 9, and is introduced by the sentence, "I How God called our father Adam". (The following words, "And God called him and said to him, Where art thou?" are also in red ink). The

1) This custom of robbing codices of their blank leaves is further illustrated by the disappearance of some fly-leaves which were originally bound with the volume. In front, between the second and third fly-leaves, there are the roughly cut remnants of three others, of which at least the first and third had been ruled for writing; and at the back there is one such fragment (ruled) before, and four more (unruled) after, the first fly-leaf. Three of these last are still an inch in width, so that any rulings would certainly have shown on them.

2) On this subject *cf.* Dillmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 159—164.

3) These are: VIII, 1; XXXIV, 1; XXXVII, 5; XXXVIII, 14; XLI, 1; XLIX, 1.

4) These are: XI, 2; XXXI, 54.

5) *Vis.* XI, 2.



second is at III, 14, and begins thus, “2 How God cursed Adam and his wife and the serpent”. The third begins at III, 23 with the words, “3 How He put Adam out of the garden”. The next paragraph is also noteworthy, but for a different reason. It begins at IV, 1, and is headed with a liturgical notice, “On the second [day] at the ninth hour”. (The first three words of the verse are also in red). This note corresponds exactly with one present in Dillmann’s MS F at II, 15. Similar liturgical notes are to be found at the beginning of two other paragraphs. In X, 18 the word “And after” begins a new paragraph, while the remainder of the preceding line is filled in with the word *bamehlela* in red ink. This phrase, literally “in the prayer”, occurs likewise in MS F and in the Codex Borgianus of Samuel-Kings (13<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>1)</sup>, and indicates that the accompanying paragraph was to be read at some specific office or feast; the name of the feast should follow, but does not follow in Codex Hav. At XV, 7 a paragraph begins with red ink, and is prefaced, not by a descriptive title, but by the words, “On the fifth [day] the lection”. This indicates that what follows was by ecclesiastical appointment to be read as the pericope for the fifth day of some festival.

Besides those already given the paragraphs of Genesis are as follows:

- VI, 3     How God the Lord repented that He had made man.
- VIII, 1   Where the Lord God remembered Noah.
- VIII, 20  How Noah offered a sacrifice.
- IX, 1     Where the Lord God blessed Noah.
- IX, 20    How Noah planted a vineyard.
- XI, 2     How the sons of Noah built a tower.
- XII, 1    Where the Lord God first addressed Abraham.

1) See Roupp, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

- XXXI, 54 How Jacob offered a sacrifice to God.  
 XXXII, 14 How Jacob offered a gift to Esau.  
 XXXII, 25 Where Jacob struggled with the Lord.  
 XXXIV, 1 How the men of Shechem defiled Dinah the daughter of Jacob.  
 XXXIV, 7 How Shechem lay with the daughter of Jacob. (In upper margin, with caret in text; hand of emender, but not the usual one).  
 XXXVII, 5 How Joseph dreamed a dream.  
 XXXVII, 25 How his brethren sold Joseph to one Ishmaelite (*sic*).  
 XXXVIII, 14 Where Judah lay with Tamar his daughter-in-law.  
 XXXIX, 7 How his master's wife wanted to lie with Joseph.  
 XL, 5 How Joseph interpreted to the chief butler and the chief baker their dreams.  
 XLI, 1 How Pharaoh dreamed a dream.  
 XLI, 16 And again Joseph a second time interpreted Pharaoh's dream.  
 XLV, 1 Where Joseph is known to his brethren.  
 XLVII, 7 How Jacob stood before Pharaoh the king.  
 XLIX, 1 Where Jacob Israel blessed his sons.

In the use of titles for the several books, Cod. Hav. offers the usual variety of expressions <sup>1)</sup>. Above the first column of Genesis there is a single red letter, **ה**, in the original hand, and at the bottom of the preceding (fly-) leaf stands **הוהי : הוהי :**, probably in the original hand. Straight across the first page, above the first lines, runs the sentence, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, the God of all spirit and of all flesh!" This common introductory formula is

1) Cf. Dillmann, *op. cit.* p. 159.



scrawled in red ink, in a poor and late hand <sup>1)</sup>. Exodus, and all the other books except Judges and Ruth, begin on a new leaf. The title of Exodus is on the first line, in red, in the original hand, **ኦሪት : ዘዐአት :**. The title of Numbers, **ኦሪት : ዘኅልቀኑ :**, is similar in every respect. Leviticus has none. Deuteronomy and Joshua are alike in their titles, **ዘዳግም :** and **ዘሆሴዕ :**, in that these are placed above the first column, are in red, and are probably not by the original hand. The subscriptions of Exodus and Leviticus are in black, by the original hand. They read: **ኦሪት : ዘዐአት : (ዘሌዋውያን) ተፈጸመ :** Numbers and Deuteronomy present still simpler subscriptions: **ተፈጸመ : ዘኅልቀኑ : (ዘዳግም) :**. These are in red ink, and probably by the original hand. The subscription of Joshua is more lengthy and of a different character: "Of him who wrote it, and of him who caused it to be written, and of him who read it, and of him who interpreted it, may the names be written on a pillar of gold, where they will not perish forever and ever! Amen" <sup>2)</sup>. Judges follows immediately after these words, in the middle of the third column of a left-hand page. Above the first line of the new book stands the word **ዘመሳፍንት :** in red, by the original hand, while opposite in the left margin, there is an **አ** in black, in the original hand (*cf.* Genesis). The subscription, **ተፈጸመ : ዘመሳፍንት :**, in red, in the original hand, completes the last line of the book, near the bottom of the second column of a right-hand page. Ruth begins a new column (3<sup>d</sup>) on the same page, and above the column is **ዘሩት :** in red,

1) It resembles in the forms of its letters and the carelessness of its orthography, the note at the end of Leviticus, which is also in red, see p. 11.

2) **ለዘጸሐፎ : ወለዘአጽሐፎ : ወለዘአንበቦ : ወለዘተርጉሞ : ይጽሐፍ : ስሞሙ : ኅበ : ዓመደ : ወርቅ : ኅበ : ዘኢይማስን : ለዓለመ : ዓለም : አሜን ።**

in the original hand. The book has no subscription, and ends near the top of a right-hand page.

As already stated, five fly-leaves are bound with the volume, of which three precede Genesis and two follow Ruth. At the beginning, the second and third leaves are almost filled with a poorly executed writing in three columns of 29 lines each. The lines were irregularly ruled, the pen and ink were inferior, and the hand is late and exceedingly poor <sup>1)</sup>. On the first page is a passage on the observance of the Sabbath, as commanded by God to Moses. It runs ten lines into the third column, where beneath a line of black dots is a six-line note of former possessors, apparently in the same hand as the rest of the leaf. The following is all that remains of it: "Abba Yona[s?]. . . . doctors (?) Abba Dawit . . . . Abba . . . . Abba . . . . together may God have mercy upon us [bring us?] in the kingdom of heaven!" On the next page the former subject is resumed, and occupies all the rest of the front fly-leaves. After Ruth, the remainder of the last leaf, and half a column on the first of the two fly-leaves, are covered with writing in fairly good characters. The first two lines of the first and third columns are in red. The subject-matter is Nehemiah IX. After Leviticus and after Deuteronomy there are brief notes by former possessors, badly written, the former in red ink, the latter in black. The former reads: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel! I have bought (it) with my money, I, Thy servant Abba Yu . . . [Yonas? *cf.* above]". The latter is almost entirely obliterated: "In the name of the Father!

1) It is certain that this hand is later even than that which added the theological notes, see below, p. 13. For one such note, in the same hand, is written in an oblique direction across the last of these front fly-leaves, and the letters that made up its brief concluding line have been erased because they trespassed on the space devoted later to the first line of the new writing.



I, my father, and (my) mother . . . . Abba . . . . tu, who purchased it with his [mo]ney . . . .”

It yet remains to characterize the various correctors who have altered the text of this MS. In general, there are more corrections towards the beginning, and less towards the end. Indeed, they become very rare in the later books of the Octateuch. There are none in Ruth. The last is in Judges XX, 31, where a single letter, perhaps not by a later hand, stands in the margin. In Judges IX, 28 faint lines appear to have been placed above and below **ወልደ :** before **ሴኬም :** (LXX has, Heb. omits, *son*). So in Judges VII, 22, the numerals for 1,000 are inclosed in a circle (MSS C and G omit). **እገሪሁ :** has been altered to **ኅበሪሁ :** in Judges V, 30 and quite frequently in Deborah's song. In Joshua there are no corrections. All these later ones may be in the original hand, so far as may be judged by their appearance. The last true and certain correction is Deuteronomy X, 20, where the later hand has added between the lines **ወመሀር : በስሙ :** omitted by Cod. Hav. with FH (but *cf.* CG). From this point forward corrections are frequent in Deuteronomy. In Numbers XXXI, 3 **አስተርእዮ :** (for **አስተረስዮ :**) has been corrected in the margin in a very poor hand to **አስተገብኡ :** (with C). In the latter half of Numbers the corrections are very few and poor, generally only a horizontal line or two, here and there, to indicate dissatisfaction with the text. In the first half of Numbers there are but two corrections. In Leviticus the latest is at XXIV, 16, where the corrector has written between the lines the **ሰመዩ :** omitted by the original scribe. This is by the chief corrector, perhaps the last of his work, but from this point forward it is common — a small but not very neat hand. A very few corrections apparently in the same hand as those in Numbers are to be found in

Leviticus also. Thus in this chap. XXIV there are many changes at verses 10, 11, in the small hand, all in the spirit of C or CG; but at verse 3 the larger hand has enclosed **ሰርክ** : (a mistake) within horizontal lines, and placed the true reading **ነግሠ** : in the margin. At Leviticus XXII, 24 two Amharic words in a large hand, written with poor ink, appear in the margin as glosses: **ሸፋፋ** : *pierced*, and **ጠጣጣ** : *twisted*. (Similarly at Lev. XI, 13). Throughout Leviticus corrections are infrequent; there are hardly any in the middle of the book. But in Exodus they are exceedingly numerous. Between chaps. XXV and XXVIII they are almost continuous. After these chapters there are not many until just at the close of the book. Up to chap. XXV there are scarcely any. There are few that are not evidently by the chief corrector, in the sense of C (G). Corrections are frequent and quite evenly distributed through Genesis. There are a number of theological notes on the first pages of Genesis, in the side margins and between the columns; these are not by the original hand <sup>1)</sup>).

## II. *Peculiarities of the Haverford Codex.*

1). Paleographical. On this difficult subject little can be said. Prof. Rogers distinguished more than one hand, and perhaps rightly <sup>2)</sup>. Yet, dissimilar as is the style of writing

1) Specimens of these notes: **ብሂል** : **አዳም** : (*sic*) **ገብረ** : **ዲያብ** (*scil. ዲያብሎስ* :). **ከመ** : **አይበልዎ** : (*sic*) **አይክል** **ገብረ** **በነብ** : **አምሳለ** : **ወን** (*scil. ወንጌል* :). **አምሳለ** : **ክርስ** (*scil. ክርስቶስ* :).  
On the formation of Eve: **ማዕከለ** : **ነቁህ** : **ወነዊም** :

2) He says: "Several hands may be traced in the writing. From fol. 1—127 the writing is large and handsome, . . . a few pages only being apparently written in another hand . . . From fol. 128—fol. 134 the writing is somewhat smaller and not so neat . . . . After these the large hand begins again and continues to 163. Fols. 164—169 are written in yet another hand, fine and neat . . . And from that to the end of the book the large hand is found again".



in Judges, for example, when compared with that in Genesis, it would be very hard to say where one hand left off and the other began. Indeed, the one shades into the other so imperceptibly, that one is tempted to charge the diversity of style to some other cause than a change of scribe. A greater crowding, due perhaps to increasing economy of material; a change of pen; the lapse of many months in the execution of the scribe's great task: all these considerations, and perhaps others of which we know nothing, may have contributed to produce this effect of a different hand <sup>1</sup>). Certainly this may be said, that whether two or three or more hands, or only one hand, wrought upon this codex, it is sufficiently homogeneous in its style to be regarded as a unit, so far as paleographical evidence can go. All the writing in the text belongs to one age, for it exhibits the same characteristics.

To what age, then, must it be assigned? In the first place, the writing is not archaic. The vocalic determinations in **Ⲡ** and **ⲡ** are not triangular, but approach more nearly to the later circle, although by their flattened form they still suggest the earlier manner. In **ⲛ** the stem-attachment is regularly used. In general, the forms are more rounded and less angular than in the earliest group of Ethiopic MSS. Thus the absence of criteria that point to a date earlier than the 16<sup>th</sup> century <sup>2</sup>) indicates that the Cod. Hav. cannot with any degree of

1) Comparison of the hand at Genesis XLI, 16ff is instructive in this regard. After the red ink of the new paragraph, the column contains writing in a more contracted, but ornamental, clear hand; the uniform size is maintained until three lines above the bottom (end of a leaf); thence the remainder of the column, eight lines, is crowded together in the closest possible compass, yet all well written. It is all probably the same hand as elsewhere.

2) Cf. Wright, "Catalogue of the Ethiopic Manuscripts in the British Museum", 1877, p. X; also d'Abbadie, "Catalogue raisonné", *passim*.

probability be assigned to any earlier reign than that of Nā'od (1494—1508). On the other hand, the writing is not recent. The letters belong to the best period of Ethiopic calligraphy, which includes the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries with some extension at either limit <sup>1</sup>).

2). Grammatical. With respect to grammatical forms Cod. Hav. exhibits a mixture of early and late qualities <sup>2</sup>). It is not uncommon to find the prefixes of the imperfect (ዪ, ቸ and ኘ) preserved in the normal (6<sup>th</sup>) form even before gutturals of the first form; *e. g.*, Gen. IV, 13, 23 (*bis*). More frequently than not, the long vowel I is retained before ዪ, instead of slurring to the colorless vowel of the 6<sup>th</sup> form; *e. g.*, Gen. II, 10; VI, 2; VIII, 16. Verbs *mediae* ወ, like ሐረ: , regularly write their subjunctive and imperative in this MS with the vowel of the 7<sup>th</sup> form; *e. g.*, Gen. VIII, 3. The longer form of the preposition እም: is often retained where Dillmann's

1) There are places in this MS, as in many others, where there is a noticeable lapse in the care and steadiness of the copyist. Thus in Genesis XXIII the writing is careless. In Genesis XLIII, 14 a new column begins with the word ለውእቱ: , written in a different style, yet in the same ink and with the same corrector. The next column begins with መጽኑ: of the 19<sup>th</sup> verse, and the former style is resumed. With the last word of ver. 24 another column begins, written in the same careless style as that commencing at ver. 14, and this style continues as far as ባሕተቶሙ: (1st) in ver. 32. These sudden variations in consecutive columns certainly suggest a change of hand; yet against this is the fact that in chap. XXIII the same careless style seems only a gradual lapse of the same hand from its usual symmetry into a meaner and more rapid execution. This at least is evident, that the question of a plurality of scribes is of no practical importance, inasmuch as the changes are of such a character that the two scribes — if such there were — worked at the same time and place, and therefore from the same exemplar. Did the changes always come at the beginning of a new leaf, or the parchment, ink, corrections or textual readings point to a different provenience for different portions of the codex, then this question would require careful investigation. Under existing conditions, no more need be said of these lapses.

2) *Cf.* Dillmann, p. 5; Hackspill, pp. 128 f; Roupp, pp. 305—307.



text offers አም; *e. g.*, Gen. V, 29 (*bis*); VIII, 8, ይኩን : for ይኩን : occurs; *e. g.*, Gen. XXX, 32. ገኩ : is found for ገኩት : *e. g.*, Gen. XL, 17. All these are archaisms, and are among the accepted criteria for determining the antiquity of Ethiopic codices. On the other hand, equally established criteria are absent, or occur exceptionally. Such are: the use of አ for ኣ in አግዚአብሔር : , በእንተአሁ : and other words, and in the affix that marks extended quotation; the retention of prepositions (ሶበ : , ኅበ : , etc.) in the 5<sup>th</sup> form, even when without affixes; ሀየተ : for ሀየንተ : , ተፍሥሕት : for ትፍሥሕት : , and other isolated archaisms; the custom of writing the numerals out in full; the retention of the 1<sup>st</sup> form before gutturals in the 6<sup>th</sup> form, instead of drawing out the short A to the long A of the 4<sup>th</sup> form. A noticeable preference for the 4<sup>th</sup> form over the 1<sup>st</sup> form for the gutturals themselves is consistently maintained throughout the codex, (ዓዘቅት : for ዐዘቅት : and the like), and is not an indication of great age — rather the reverse.

3). Miscellaneous. In Genesis, but especially in the first half of the book, the divine name አግዚአብሔር : is habitually preceded or followed by አግዚአ : <sup>1)</sup>. There is a marked carelessness in the use of the cases of nouns <sup>2)</sup>. Such irregularities, which in our Ethiopic monuments are to be regarded either as marks of the *naiiveté* of an early stage, or as signs of a very late degeneracy, are in Cod. Hav. repeatedly corrected by later hands, by the erasure or addition of a vocalic determination. The use of three columns instead of two is noteworthy. While there are to be found other Ethiopic MSS written in three columns, Biblical texts were habitually

1) Examples in the second half of Genesis are: XXX, 23; XXXIX, 21. On Genesis XXXI, 3 *cf.* Reckendorf, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

2) The same is true, though to a less extent, of their genders.

written in two columns, as may be seen by a glance at the descriptions of the various Biblical codices in the catalogues. Such a MS as this Cod. Hav. would scarcely have been undertaken in this form, however, unless the means of the person „who caused it to be written” (*cf.* colophon at end of Joshua) had been so ample as to warrant an unusual outlay in the acquisition of materials. This huge MS can hardly have been originally prepared for any individual less wealthy and august than an emperor, a metropolitan, or an Etchage <sup>1)</sup>. The entire impression made by the plan of the volume is one of regal munificence. And the condition in which it has been preserved favors rather the theory of private ownership through most of its existence, than its constant use in a church or monastery. The absence from its blank pages and fly-leaves of any great number of entries by successive owners suggests that it did not often change hands by purchase, while the absence of miscellaneous notices, such as are found in the Bibles of ecclesiastical foundations <sup>2)</sup>, makes long ownership by a religious house still more improbable.

### III. *Type of text, and relationship to other codices.*

The text of the Octateuch published by Dillmann in 1853 is based upon the four MSS used by him, which he designates by the letters F, H, G and C. Both from the relative antiquity of these MSS, and from a comparison of the types of text which they contain with the LXX, it was a simple task to divide the four into two groups, with F and H forming the older, G and C the younger group. Codex F is ancient, written not later than 1429 and probably considerably earlier

1) Head of the monks of Abyssinia.

2) *Cf.*, for example, Codex 32 in Zotenberg, pp. 24—29.



than that date. Codex H is a European copy made, so Dillmann believed, not directly from F, but from a copy of F. It represents therefore the same text, and almost everywhere sides with F against the other MSS. Codex G is a carelessly written MS, made in Abyssinia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century for the renowned traveller Bruce. Its type of text represents an imperfectly adopted and ill transmitted recension of the ancient version. Codex C is a carefully executed MS of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, bought by the traveller Ruppell in Abyssinia, and representing in its best form the emended text of the Ethiopic Scriptures, a consistently adopted and well transmitted recension of the ancient version.

Having these as his materials to work upon, it was the aim of Dr. Dillmann to publish a text of the Octateuch which should: 1<sup>o</sup>. reproduce as nearly as possible the text of FH, representing the old Ethiopic version; and 2<sup>o</sup>. serve the Abyssinian Church as a worthy edition of their Scriptures. It needs little reflection to comprehend how divergent are these two aims. When one considers the fact that a thousand years elapsed between the origin of the ancient Ethiopic version and the writing of Dillmann's oldest codex; observes the levity and carelessness with which Ethiopic scribes pervert the text of the MSS they copy, even the most sacred; and finally, notes the loose, often paraphrastic style of the version itself: he cannot fail to see that reproducing the text of FH is very far from furnishing the Abyssinian Church with a satisfactory version of the Scriptures; and conversely, that the production of such a satisfactory version would require so drastic a reconstruction of the text of FH, that it would in fact be no longer the ancient version but a modern recension. Dr. Dillmann attempted to harmonize these antagonistic aims by the use of parentheses and brackets, retaining in

his edition, enclosed within the former, those redundant elements of the ancient version which had no right in the text, and introducing into his edition, enclosed within brackets, elements derived from the younger recension which were indispensable substitutes for the corrupted ancient text. He even went so far as to supplement by his own skill passages defective in both the earlier and the later types of text <sup>1)</sup>. By the use of these signs, and by giving a conspectus of the more significant various readings of his codices, Dillmann did indeed furnish students of the text with the data of criticism. But Dillmann's text, as it stands, is just "Dillmann's text", and nothing more. He has become thereby the latest emender of the Ethiopic Bible. The effort to make a readable, and tolerably adequate version of the Octateuch out of the materials at his command, or at anyone's command, was necessarily inconsistent with the desire to trace back as far as possible, and as free from extraneous elements as possible, the old Ethiopic version. For this is the critical desideratum. If the Ethiopic version is of any value in the work of classifying the various types of LXX-text, it is to the primitive Ethiopic version, prior to its earliest recension, that this value attaches. The effort of present studies in the text is to arrive as nearly as possible at this unemended (critically speaking) pure text, without regard to its readability or suitability for ecclesiastical uses.

There is need, therefore, for more material than is furnished by Dillmann's one really ancient MS, if this reconstruction of the primitive text is to be the sole aim. Such additional data are furnished, primarily, by the great Paris Octateuch, whose date, 1270—1285, carries us back of the 14<sup>th</sup> century recension, and which therefore, more than any other codex,

1) These supplements he distinguished by the use of asterisks.



may be trusted to give us the ancient version, — perverted, of course, indeed a miserable text from the point of view of scribal transmission, yet pure, in the sense that, so far as we now know, it is uninjured by mixture, recensions or editings. But additional data for regaining this ancient text are furnished, secondarily, by younger MSS, in which, though mixture with emended texts has occurred, there nevertheless remain multitudes of ancient readings, retained by design or by accident. There is always the possibility, furthermore, too frequently observed in textual transmission to be ignored, that a comparatively young MS, may, on account of the high antiquity of its parent exemplar, conserve a much more ancient type of text than another MS centuries older.

Such ancillary codices are thus to be used discreetly, side by side with the primary witnesses, and are especially valuable in case of a clash between the older MSS. A glance at the various readings in Dillmann's *apparatus criticus* will reveal the frequency with which G agrees with F (H) against C. Where this combination occurs, we are reasonably certain that we have the ancient version. Where G sides with C, we presume that F (H) represents the older, CG the younger reading; but we are by no means sure of this. For the reading of F (H) may be a peculiarity of this one MS or of its "family"; while the reading of CG may be in the true line of transmission from the original translation. If now we have the situation complicated by the addition of the most valuable witness, the Cod. Par. (Y), the value of readings drawn from codices like G is greatly enhanced. When Y differs from F (H) and is supported by G or CG, we may conclude that it contains the true (i. e., ancient) reading; conversely, when G supports F (H) against Y, then we justly condemn the reading of Y as peculiar, however far back this ancient codex

serves to carry it. But as there are innumerable places where G sides with C in a reading manifestly due to the later recensions, it is possible that among these many places not a few will be found where F (H) and Y differ. What then is to decide? Not the greater antiquity of Y, for F (H), though somewhat younger, is indisputably a MS that embodies the ancient text. Only the readings of another MS, manifestly independent of both F and Y, yet rarely infected with the later readings of C and CG, can supply this need. Such a MS is Cod. Hav. (R).

In one word, this is its type of text: *an independent branch of the ancient F (H) Y type, somewhat modified by the earliest (CG) recension, and corrected by a later hand (through Genesis and much of Exodus) in conformity with C (G).*

The following facts, summarized from a thorough collation of the text of Genesis, and of 15 selected chapters Exodus-Ruth, with Dillmann's text, will serve to exhibit accurately the general relationship described above.

1). Comparison of R with F, H, C and G in Genesis.  
Agrees with:

F alone,	19	times.
H "	7	"
G "	38	"
C "	101	"
FH,	153	" 1)
CG,	236	" 2)
FHG,	460	"
FG,	19	"
HG,	5	"

1) Of these, 5 occur in IV, 15—VI, 11.

2) Of these, 35 occur in IV, 15—VI, 11.



FHC,	34	times.
FC,	8	"
HC,	9	"
FCG,	15	"
HCG,	27	"

Disregarding the minor divergences of F and H, which are of no practical bearing for the discussion, we observe that by this showing, R adheres to the presumably older text against CG, which normally represents the earliest recension of which we have any knowledge, 179 times, but to CG against the older text 236 times. From these figures we must in justice subtract the agreements drawn from the section IV, 15—VI, 11, in which the text of FH is not the old text, but apparently a very late and poor substitute <sup>1)</sup>. This reduces the former figure by 5, the latter by 35. Hence we have 174 to 201, or about the proportion of 7 to 8, as the proportion obtaining in R with respect to its adherence to F(H) and to CG respectively. Again, still treating F and H as one witness, we find that R agrees with the indubitably ancient text F(H)G 484 times, and with the emended text C 101 times; that it agrees with the presumably ancient text F(H)C 51 times, and with the presumably emended text G 38 times. These figures are doubly significant. They show that R's adoption of the emended text occurs only about once for every five times that it is avoided; and this high ratio serves to suggest two possibilities: first, that where R agrees with G against FC, F *may* have felt the influence of the recension, while G, here as so often elsewhere, escaped it; and second, that many of the places where R agrees with GC *may* be instances, not of R's adoption of the recen-

1) Cf. Dillmann, pp. 28—30.

sion, but of GC's preservation of the old reading, that is, in other words, of the individual peculiarity of F(H).

2). Comparison of R with F, H, C and G in Exodus-Ruth. In order to ascertain whether the type of text thus revealed in Genesis is maintained evenly throughout, 15 chapters were collated in the remaining books of the Octateuch: four in Exodus, one in Ruth, and two in each of the other books. Following are the results. R agrees with:

F alone,	47	times.
H	3	"
G	26	"
C	20	"
FH,	112	" <sup>1)</sup>
CG,	93	"
FHG,	129	"
FG,	4	"
HG,	1	"
FHC,	8	"
FC,	1	"
HC,	1	"
FCG,	1	"
HCG,	2	"

It will be seen from this summary that even more than in Genesis R presents in Exodus-Ruth the ancient, unemended text. It agrees with F(H) against CG no less than 162 times, with CG against F(H) but 93 times. It preserves the indisputably ancient text of F(H)G against C in 134 places, and abandons it for the emended text of C in 20 places. Thus

1) In Ruth a European text, which Dillmann designates by N, takes the place occupied by H in the other books. (Dillmann, pp. 215 f).

the ratio of 7 to 8 in favor of CG in Genesis becomes almost 2 to 1 in favor of F in Exodus-Ruth, and the ratio of about 5 to 1 for F(H)G in Genesis becomes nearly 7 to 1 here. Again the warning may fairly be uttered, that the agreements with CG against F, and even the agreements with G against FC, need not all represent just so many adoptions of the emended text, but *may* in many cases mark individual peculiarities of F, or instances where F has been affected by the recension.

For the purpose of determining, even more accurately than was possible with the materials furnished by Dillmann's various readings, the type of text contained in R, the writer has collated R throughout Genesis and the 15 selected chapters Exodus-Ruth, with the text of Y (Cod. Par. 3). This unpublished text, of supreme value for the study of the Ethiopic Octateuch, is in the writer's possession in manuscript-form, and could thus be used for this comparative purpose in advance of its intended publication. Appended is the result of this.

3). Comparison of R with Y.

i. R agrees with Y alone:

In Genesis, chaps. I—IX,	83	times.
In " " X—L,	344	"
Total for Genesis,	427	"
In Exodus, 4 chaps.,	93	"
In Leviticus, 2 chaps.,	25	"
In Numbers, 2 "	28	"
In Deuteronomy, 2 "	24	"
In Joshua, 2 "	11	"
In Judges, 2 "	10	"
In Ruth, 1 chapter,	5	"
Total, Exodus-Ruth.	196	"



If these numbers are compared with R's agreements with any other single MS (still counting F and H as essentially one), it will at once be seen how far they surpass even the agreements with F (H). In Genesis, the proportion (YR to FR) is about 5 to 2, and in the selected chapters, in spite of the enormous increase in the agreements with F over those in Genesis, it still surpasses them, in the ratio of nearly 5 to 4. We say at the outset, therefore, that R is *very much nearer related to Y than to any other single codex*.

But another series of facts, equally noteworthy and instructive, should be placed beside these actual agreements of R with Y. Comparison reveals the fact that there are also a large number of places in which R differs from all Dillmann's codices, where Y likewise differs from them and from R as well. These are the places where the true text may be regarded as most uncertain; from the study of them, even more than from correspondences in readings, is it possible to trace the relationships existing between R, Y, and Dillmann's MSS.

ii. R and Y differ from Dillmann's codices, and from each other also:

In Genesis, chaps. I—IX,	29	times.
In Genesis, chaps. X—L,	224	”
Total for Genesis,	253	”
In Exodus-Ruth, (15 chaps.),	113	”

Now the original collation of R with F, H, G and C resulted in the tabulation of 1485 places in Genesis, and of 495 places in Exodus-Ruth, where R showed independent readings. These figures of course include even the most minute variations. It now appears, however, that very many of these independent readings of R, which made so unfavorable



a showing before Y had been compared, find countenance either in agreement with Y, or in the common divergence of Y and R from F, H, G and C. For 680 out of 1485 in Genesis, and 309 out of 495 in Exodus-Ruth, are thus "vindicated". If suitable deductions are made for the large number of trivial variations included in the remainder not so vindicated; if Dillmann's caution is remembered, that his various readings are not to be regarded as exhaustive; and especially if it is borne in mind that this surprising result was reached by comparison with a single codex (Y), the only strictly ancient text that we possess, then surely there will be few who will not share with the writer his *complete reversal of his previous estimate of R, after having collated it with Y*. Before that, R appeared a codex with a preponderatingly good (*i. e.*, ancient) text, but with far too many individual peculiarities, that in their portentous total suggested a most negligent copyist. In brief, R seemed scarcely to deserve a more lenient judgment than that which Dillmann accorded to Bruce's codex G<sup>1</sup>). Now the responsibility is shifted. What appeared as errors of the particular scribe or scribes who wrote R, now appear plainly as old errors of transmission, remnants of the *naïveté* of the earlier Ethiopic documents, or evidences of a long confused text.

In order to exhibit yet more clearly these mutual relationships of the six MSS, the first nine chapters of Genesis have been made the object of a comparison in which R has been not simply collated, first with F, H, C and G, and second with Y; but also compared with the *groups* into which all these five codices fall, when put together.

4). Conspectus of MS-groups in Genesis I—IX.

R. agrees with:

- 1) *Cf.* Dillmann, p. 7.

[(i) including Y:]

[(ii) leaving out Y:]

Y alone, 83 times.

YF,	7	"	.....	F alone,	9	times.
YFH,	16	"	.....	FH,	50	" <sup>1)</sup>
YFG,	1	"	.....	FG,	5	"
YFHG,	7	"	.....	FHG,	50	"
YFC,	1	"	.....	FC,	1	"
YFHC,	1	"	.....	FHC,	14	"
YFCG,	2	"	.....	FCG,	4	"
YG,	2	"	.....	G alone,	10	"
YCG,	36	"	<sup>2)</sup> .....	CG,	57	" <sup>3)</sup>
YC	6	"	.....	C alone,	11	"

It will be evident at a glance that this is a most instructive showing. The most striking fact is the frequency of the groups YR (83), and F(H)R or YF(H)R (82, minus a few counted twice). In these groups we have undoubtedly the ancient text, from which in the former case F(H) departs, and in the latter case (in most instances) Y departs<sup>4)</sup>.

This table also exhibits the fact, already so well known, that there is little unanimity in MSS representing the most ancient text. Ethiopic scribes were too careless, the centuries of copying were too many, for readings obscure enough to evoke the emendations we find in CG to propagate themselves

1) Of these, 5 occur in IV, 15—VI, 11.

2) Of these, 28 fall in IV, 15—VI, 11.

3) Of these, 35 fall in IV, 15—VI, 11.

4) Within the same chapters, R has peculiar readings in 92 places, of which 29 are places where Y also is unlike the other codices. We may therefore arrange Y, F and R in a table exhibiting the tendency of each to depart from the text of the other two.

F(H) differs from YR, 83 times (39 in IV, 15—VI, 11).

R " " YF, 63 "

Y " " FR, 59 " (less some counted twice).



by sheer force of accurate reproduction. Thus we find only 23 places in these nine chapters, where Y, F and R all agree, against the emendation of CG; and only 8 places where Y, F, R and G maintained themselves in perfect agreement, against the demand for improvement represented by C's divergence.

Finally, by these figures we have demonstrated the appropriateness of that warning, already twice uttered, that G, CG, and even C alone *may*, when combined with R, preserve the ancient text over against FC, F (H), and FG respectively. For here we find actual instances where their reading is supported by Y, which precedes the recension, and it needs no argument to prove that the groups YG, YCG, and YC deserve at least as much respect as FC, F (H), and FG. When now the additional weight of R is thrown into the scale with the former series (YG, *etc.*), there need be little hesitation in pronouncing F (H) as exhibiting in these few places the emended text.

#### IV. *Conclusion as to age of R, and its value for a critical edition of the Octateuch.*

From the three separate lines of evidence pursued in sections I, II and III, we may conclude as follows as to the age of MS R. It seems to be a MS of the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century. The period between the reigns of Nā'od (died 1508) and Susenyos (died 1632) would doubtless include the correct date. But the scribe or scribes who copied this codex had for exemplar a MS of great worth, which was the reading book of some ecclesiastical foundation; it was highly respected for its text, doubtless because of its age or the reputation



for learning enjoyed by its custodians, and hence was chosen to be the exemplar for this new codex.

But the parent codex had already been the object of its owners' attention with a view to emending its ancient, corrupted text. Many readings had been introduced into it, particularly in Genesis, which had taken their rise in the general official recension supposed to have been effected by the Metropolitan Salāmā and his colleagues at the close of the 13<sup>th</sup> and the opening of the 14<sup>th</sup> century <sup>1</sup>). It is impossible to say whether these corrections were introduced into the parent MS by erasure and substitution, or by the commoner and easier method of *lining* <sup>2</sup>) the old text, and writing in the new text above or in the margin. Indeed, it is of course possible that one or more copyings intervened between R and the parent MS of the same generation as Y, but this supposition is unlikely, in view of the small proportion of emended readings introduced, and especially in view of the archaic orthography so largely preserved. Each copying subsequent to the 14<sup>th</sup> century would tend to obliterate these marks of antiquity. R has itself received the same treatment as if it represented the ancient, unemended text, and a single scribe has gone through it as far as Leviticus, altering it to conform to the emended text current in his own day (18<sup>th</sup> century?). How a Genesis and Exodus would read, in a copy made from R, we may judge from R's text thus emended; just such was R to its parent MS, into which had been similarly introduced the corrections popular in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Little need be added to what has already been said (section III) of the value of R for a future critical edition of the

1) See the article by C. Conti Rossini, "Sulla versione e sulla revisione delle sacre scritture in etiopico", in *ZfAss.* 1895, pp. 236—241.

2) *I. e.*, enclosing between horizontal lines.

text. It will prove to be: 1<sup>o</sup>. a third witness, with C and G, to the text of the first recension; but 2<sup>o</sup>. and far more important, the best means of determining whether F (H), when it differs from Y and agrees with CG, transmits the ancient text, or is affected by the first recension: in other words, a check upon Y, distinguishing its individual peculiarities from those readings in which it alone (apart from R) preserves the ancient version. The readings of R are therefore precisely what ought to be published with the proposed edition of the text of Y. With R, as well as F, H, C and G, displayed in the notes of that edition, the MSS will form themselves into groups, which, except in rare instances, will enable some future editor of the Octateuch to distinguish the original Ethiopic version from its later recensions.