4.2.1.2.11 External Dependencies

There are instances in which later prophets show dependence on Isaiah. It is not unusual in the Bible for two prophetic passages in different books to be so similar that we can conclusively say one was dependent on the other, or both were dependent on the same previous source. However, it is usually difficult to determine which passage is original and which passage is the borrower. In the case of Isaiah, we can find two examples where we can say the second part of Isaiah was original and a later, but still pre-exilic prophet was the borrower.

Consider first Zeph 2:15 and Isa 47:8.

Isaiah 47:8a	Zephaniah 2:15a
Now, then, hear this, you sensual one, Who dwells securely, Who says in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me	This is the exultant city Which dwells securely, Who says in her heart, "I am, and there is no one besides me"

Isaiah is original and Zephaniah is the borrower. We can know this because the language and imagery is typical to Isaiah throughout his book (Isa 45:5, 45:6, 45:18 and especially 47:10 for "I am," then 32:9 and 32:11 for criticism of women who think they are secure), but not typical for Zephaniah. Zephaniah wrote during Josiah's reign (Zeph 1:1), before the exile. His quote from the second part of Isaiah gives evidence that all of Isaiah was written before Zephaniah, and not during the exile.

A second strong connection appears between Nahum 1:15 and Isa 52:7.

Isaiah 52:7	Nahum 1:15
How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"	Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace! Celebrate your feasts, O Judah; Pay your vows For never again will the wicked one pass through you; He is cut off completely.

Again, the language is typical to Isaiah and not Nahum. Isaiah has "good news" in 40:9, 41:27, 60:6 and 61:1, and "peace" 21 times, while the LORD reigns in Zion also in 24:23. Nahum has none of these ideas in other verses. On the contrary, Nahum 1:15 is disconnected from the rest of the context of the book of Nahum, which is otherwise a prophecy dealing with Nineveh. Therefore, Nahum is the borrower. Nahum was written before the fall of Nineveh in 609 B.C., and his quote from the second part of Isaiah gives evidence that all of Isaiah was written before Nahum, and not during the exile.

In Jeremiah's prophecy against Babylon in Jeremiah 50-51, Jeremiah begins to sound like Isaiah. These chapters retain the marks and historical setting of Jeremiah, but it is clear that he has been reading an Isaiah scroll and is freely using Isaiah's thoughts and phrases, particularly those of Isaiah's prophecy against Babylon in Isaiah 13-14. Isaiah 13-14, by contrast, does not sound like Jeremiah, so we can conclude that Isaiah 13-14 came first and Jeremiah is the borrower. Isaiah's influence in Jeremiah 50-51 can be seen as follows:

1. Jer 50:29 and 51:5 use the divine title "Holy One of Israel." This is the only usage of this title in the prophets outside of Isaiah, who uses it 25 times in his book and once (Isaiah speaking) in 2 Kgs 19:22.

2. Jeremiah begins to use repetition in a manner reminiscent of Isaiah (Jer 50:35-37 and 51:20-23).
3. "Stir up the Medes" (Isa 13:17) corresponds to "arouse the spirit of the kings of the Medes" (Jer 51:11).
4. "Instruments of indignation" (כלי זעמו) are in Isa 13:5 and Jer 50:25.
5. "Desert creatures" and "ostriches" will live there, and it will never be inhabited (Isa 13:20-21, Jer 50:39).
6. The cruelty of Babylon's enemies is described in Isa 13:18 and Jer 50:42.
7. "Lift up a signal" (שאו נס) is in Isa 13:2 and Jer 51:12 and 51:27.
8. Babylon aspired to "ascend to heaven" in Isa 14:13 and Jer 51:53.
9. לאמים is used for "peoples" in Jer 51:58, a wording common in Isaiah and otherwise only in the identical verse in Hab 2:13.
10. "Stretches out the heavens" is in Jer 51:15, a wording that is common in Isaiah.
11. "They will each turn to his own people, and each one flee to his own land" is in Isa 13:14 and Jer 50:16.

Given our understanding that all of Isaiah preceded any of Jeremiah, we would also suggest that Jer 31:35, "…Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The LORD of hosts is His name," is borrowed from Isa 51:15.

Isaiah 13:6 closely parallels Joel 1:15.

Isaiah 13:6	Joel 1:15
Wail, for the day of the LORD is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.	Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, and it will come as destruction from the Almighty.

Taken in isolation, it is not clear which verse comes first. Isaiah's verse fits into the context better, but "The Day of the LORD" is a phrase appearing elsewhere in Joel, but not in Isaiah. In both books, this is the only use of Almighty ("Shaddai") as a designation for God. Most likely, the idea of the "Day of the LORD" was a commonly spoken formula, as it is used in many prophets, often with the idea that it is "near." Based on our other criteria for dating Isaiah and Joel, we believe the Isaiah verse came first. A second dependency appears between Isaiah 2:4 (Isa 2:4 = Mic 4:3) and Joel 3:10.

Isaiah 2:4	Joel 3:10
And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks	Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears;

Because Joel reverses the idea of Isaiah and Micah, creating weapons instead of destroying them, Joel is likely the borrower. It is unlikely that both Isaiah and Micah would take Joel's phrase and reverse it the same way.

4.2.1.2.12 Parallels with Kings and Chronicles

Isaiah 36-39 closely parallels 2 Kings 18:13-20:21. For the most part, these passages are duplicated verbatim, so closely that we can be certain that one was essentially copied from the other. In such cases, one rule of thumb says that the shorter version is original, later copiers being more likely to expand on a subject than to delete material. By this rule, Isaiah is original. The 2 Kings passage adds the events in 2 Kgs 18:14-16, and expands slightly on Isaiah's passage in 2 Kgs 18:17, 18:26, 18:32, 18:34, 19:20, 19:35 and 20:4-6. The author of 2 Kings makes one major deletion, leaving out the entire prayer of Hezekiah from Isa 38:9-20. Other than

that, the Isaiah passage is never fuller than the Kings account by more than one word per verse.

Linguistic evidence also points to the Isaiah passage being original. The phrase "Holy One of Israel" in Isa 37:23 and 2 Kgs 19:22, is, as we have seen, common to Isaiah, but this is its only appearance in Genesis through Kings. Other passages which sound like Isaiah are "Have you not heard?" (Isa 37:26/2 Kgs 19:25 - see Isa 40:21), "The zeal of the LORD will perform this" (Isa 37:32/2 Kgs 19:31 – see Isa 9:7), "bruised reed" (Isa 36:6/2 Kgs 18:21 – see Isa 42:3) and "children have come to birth and there is no strength to deliver" (Isa 37:3/2 Kgs 19:3 – see Isa 26:17-18 and 66:9). Furthermore, "pen" (פֶּן), meaning "lest," is a word used mostly in early texts. Note that while Isa 36:18 has it, the duplicate 2 Kgs 18:32 substitutes "ki" (כִּי). The passage in 2 Kgs 18:14-16, which is not present in Isaiah, spells the name of king Hezekiah "חזקיהו" as opposed to the longer form "יחזקיהו" used throughout Isaiah and in most of the rest of the Kings passage. This indicates that 2 Kgs 18:14-16 is most likely an addition from a separate source (perhaps the court records of the Kings of Judah mentioned so many times in Kings).

Finally, the history in Joshua through Kings tends to follow a pattern: disobedience leads to trouble, obedience leads to deliverance. To follow this pattern, the chapters in Isaiah should follow the sequence 38-39-36-37, rather than their existing sequence. The existing sequence for the story is appropriate for the book of Isaiah, because it ends up pointing to Babylon, but it is not in keeping with the "Deuteronomic" pattern of Kings.

Therefore, the textual criticism rule of thumb, the linguistic evidence and the sequence of the story all point to the Isaiah passage being original, with the author of 2 Kings copying from Isaiah to construct his narrative. This is consistent with our dating of Isaiah at about 680 B.C., with most of 2 Kings coming about 60 years later.

The parallel passage in 2 Chronicles 32 is much abbreviated compared to Isaiah and Kings, such that it is not possible to determine which text the Chronicles author was using. Chronicles is a post-exilic book, and in all probability the author of Chronicles had both Isaiah and Kings before him as he did his work.

4.2.1.2.13 Parallels with Micah

The prophet Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, and parallels between Isaiah and Micah are clear, especially with the essentially duplicated Isa 2:2-4 and Mic 4:1-3. However, parallels between Isaiah and Micah continue into the second part of Isaiah also. These include Isa 41:15-16 with Mic 4:13, Isa 48:2 with Mic 3:11, Isa 49:23 with Mic 7:17, Isa 52:12 with Mic 2:13, and Isa 58:1 with Mic 3:8.

4.2.1.2.14 Predictive Elements

The book of Isaiah contains numerous predictions, from the birth of children (7:14) to the fall of Israel and Syria (8:4, etc.), the coming of the Messiah (9:1-7, etc.), the failure of the Assyrian invasion (37:33-35) and more. Furthermore, the predictions are not mere sideshows to Isaiah, but rather a central part of his message. He brags about them (42:9 and 45:21), reminds his hearers of them (43:9, 43:12 and 48:3-7), keeps a record of them (8:16 and 30:8) and challenges other gods to do the same (41:21-23 and 44:7-8), mocking their failure to do so (44:25). It is in this context that the prophecy about Cyrus is given. The LORD in His address to Cyrus says twice: "I have called you by name…though you have not known me" (45:3-5). The critics are right in thinking that the naming of Cyrus is important evidence. Isaiah apparently thought so too.

4.2.1.2.15 Final Compilation of Isaiah

The first narrative section of Isaiah (chapters 6-8) is written in first person, while the second narrative section (chapters 36-39) is

written in third person. In addition, several passages are introduced as coming from Isaiah, but with the wording in third person (1:1, 2:1 and 13:1). Isaiah began his career in 740 B.C., so he would have been rather old to record the death of Sennacherib in 680 (37:38), though this is by no means impossible. These facts raise the possibility that the book of Isaiah was placed in its final form by some of Isaiah's follower's, based on a lifetime's collection of his writings. This should not detract from the essential understanding of Isaiah as the author of the entire book. Even the second narrative passage of 36-39 shows the trademark literary style of Isaiah. Compare, for example: "The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this" (9:7 and 37:32).