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Ethio-SPaRe:

Cultural Heritage of Christian Ethiopia: Salvation, Preservation and Research (Hamburg)

TraCES:

From Translation to Creation: Changes in Ethiopic Style and Lexicon
from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages (Hamburg)

IslHornAfr:

Islam in the Horn of Africa, A Comparative Literary Approach (Copenhagen)

International Conference

Manuscripts and texts, languages and contexts The transmission of knowledge in the Horn of Africa

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Abstracts



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Emergence and decline of manuscript collections in North Ethiopia: problems of study (Denis Nossitsin, Hamburg)

The paper focuses on the features of the Ethiopian ecclesiastic manuscript collections and on the issues and problems of their research. It is a common practice in the Ethiopian philological studies that the scholars usually start with approaching manuscripts and texts as isolated witnesses. However, normally each individual witness existed as a part of an ecclesiastic manuscript collection, or even of a network of collections. Closely linked to the history of the relevant owning institution, an ecclesiastic manuscript collection might go through similar stages of history as the entire institution. A manuscript collection could be founded; re-established and/or renovated; it could have periods of extension and growth, and periods of decline. It could cease its existence through complete or partial physical destruction or dissolving, and remaining manuscripts could be incorporated into other collections. A number of issues related to the individual manuscripts might be solved if looked in the context of the entire collection the entity of an upper level, and vice versa.

The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: unknown witnesses of the collection from East Təgray (Vitagrazia Pisani, Hamburg)

The apocryphal "Acts of the Apostles", that is the collection depicting travels, preaching, miracles and martyrdom of Jesus' Apostles, are known in Ethiopian Literature under the title of *Gädlä ḥawaryat* (ገድለ ሐዋርያት, "the [Spiritual] Contendings of the Apostles"). Circulated since the end of the thirteenth century, in a Ge'ez translation from Arabic, this work endured a lasting fortune in the Ethiopian Church, attested by a large production of manuscripts which preserve it. This paper intends to present some of the witnesses of *Gädlä ḥawaryat*, specifically those which have been digitally recorded during the field trips conducted by the project Ethio-SPaRe in East Təgray. Most of these manuscripts come from the district of Gulo Mäkäda. They can be dated to the fourteenth throughout the seventeenth century and contain a number of texts which varies between 27 and 36. It is my intention in this paper to highlight their most relevant codicological, paleographic and textual features emerged during the work of cataloging. The paper, moreover, aims at contextualizing these manuscripts in a more general and broader frame. In this perspective, it appears to be of particular importance the distribution of the texts: how many and which are the single texts composing the collection in these specific manuscripts? On the basis of their identification and distribution, can we determine to which recension these witnesses from East Təgray belong?

Towards an understanding of early Ethiopian scribal tendencies (Ted Erho, Munich)

Among the most theoretical aspects of research on early Ge'ez manuscripts and the early (and pre-) textual history of the Ethiopic Bible is that of the scribal activities that passed on the various traditions into later, better attested, eras. Much of the problem stems from the lack of serviceable evidence, as it is difficult to find exemplars from before the fifteenth century that are closely enough related to permit such an analysis. One of the rare exceptions occurs with EMML 6977 and Bibliothèque nationale de France éth. 7, both of which contain the Old Testament book of Job followed by that of Daniel and possess a genetic relationship unlikely to be more than a couple of generations removed from a common ancestor. While textual variants often form the sole basis for an investigative comparison, such myopic view overlooks much useful paratextual evidence which helps to provide a far more comprehensive picture scribal habits and tendencies. Thus, in addition to the former (textual/orthographic), the present study, which shall focus

primarily on the Book of Daniel in each manuscript, will also draw upon three paratextual aspects of scribal activity on display: 1) utilization of sense divisions; 2) inclusion of sigla, including paragraphoi; and 3) the formation of headings and use of rubrication.

By this means, it shall be demonstrated that—at least insofar as this example can be viewed as illustrative of wider contemporaneous trends—early Ethiopian scribes had little autonomy to make cognizant changes of any kind to the copied text, suggesting the fairly high probability of relatively stable, but increasingly corrupt, texts (especially biblical ones) apart from those brief times when corrections were actively pursued at scholarly centers.

Text arrangement and scribal practices in Ethiopian Psalter manuscripts (Sophia Dege, Hamburg)

Through the detailed description of the large amount of Ethio-SPARE manuscripts we notice details which become only obvious when a considerable amount of data is available as a basis. The Ethiopian Psalter manuscripts bear reference to a number of special characteristics of text arrangement and scribal practices which deserve a detailed analysis. When talking about the Psalter in the Ethiopian context we usually consider the combination of the Book of Psalms, the Canticles of the Prophets, the Song of Songs, and the (generally) accompanying texts the Praise of Mary (*Wəddase Maryam*) and the Gate of Light (*Anqəššä Bərhan*). The Ethiopian Book of Psalms is one of the very few known examples which is as a rule written in two different layouts; the first three texts written in stichometric layout and the latter two in columns (some Four Gospel manuscripts are another such example with the letter of Eusebius to Carpianus written in one column - but not in stichometric layout - and the main texts in two or more columns). Among the phenomena of scribal practice presented in this study are the marking of the midpoint of the Ethiopian Psalter; the columetric arrangement for Pss 148, 150, and the tenth Cantic of the Prophets; the mise en page of Ps 135 and Cantic 10; an analysis of line length; rubrication of nomina sacra and abbreviation practices.

These characteristics have been largely neglected by scholars so far. Previous contributions – manuscript catalogues – at the most limit themselves to the pure reference of the existence of a midpoint mark, the other phenomena are basically disregarded. However, the percentage of the distribution of these scribal practices in Psalter manuscripts is high. In about 40% of the Ethio-SPARE Psalter manuscript the midpoint of the Psalter at Ps. 77,14 has been marked. The other phenomena occur in almost all of the examined manuscripts.

This study shall therefore try to give explanations and examples of the aforementioned, compare the Ethiopian and the “Western” traditions, give a statistical overview of the percentage of the occurrences and present the artistic decorations.

Reconstructing and mapping Aksum's historical toponymy: a preliminary attempt (Luisa Sernicola, Naples - Antonella Brita, Hamburg)

Centuries of archaeological, philological and ethnographic researches in and about the area of Aksum (Təgray, northern Ethiopia), not only provided a great amount of data for a long-term analysis of its cultural and environmental history, but also an extremely rich corpus of place-names covering a time span ranging from the early 1st millennium BC up to the present. The corpus, emerging from commemorative inscriptions, manuscripts, historical sources and ethnographic enquiries may contribute to refine our knowledge of Aksum's ancient urban topography and the reconstruction of the changes occurred in the spatial organization of the territory through time, and, through them, the understanding of the way local communities physically,

socially, economically, politically and ideologically experienced the space they inhabited. This paper is intended to be a preliminary attempt to classify, analyze and display Aksum's ancient and contemporary place-names by combining philology, archaeology and geography. This will represent a first step towards the reconstruction of Aksum's historical toponymy through the integration of different approaches and disciplines and their interaction with advanced tools for the visualization and analysis of spatial phenomena.

Where was the original place of the Atronsä Maryam church? (Derese Ayenachew, Debre Berhan)

The present location of the church of Atronsä Maryam is commonly accepted as its original place, located in the district of Amḥara Sayent. It was a royal church built by King Bäe'dä Maryam (1468-1478) in 1468. He established his royal camp and celebrated near Atronsä Maryam his sacral (Serä't Qwərat) ceremony and his left queen, gerra Bä'altiḥat. He reassembled the remains of the medieval kings from different areas including King Yekuno Amlak's (1270-1285) relics. He summoned distant provinces, like Adal kingdom or Bahr Nägaš', to pay their tributes at Atronsä Maryam. According to Arab Faqih, the church was pillaged its luxurious treasures and burnt in 1531 by Emir Nur. The manuscript I have found at the actual church of Atronsä Maryam describes that the tabot was taken to Ṭana Qirqos on the Lake Ṭana by King Lebnä Dengel (1508-1540). It narrates that first King Gälawdéwos (1540-1559) attempted to rebuild this church at its original place but he was unsuccessful due to the growing pressure of the Oromo. Finally, he retreated with the tabot to the actual place. King Susənyos (1607-1632) established permanently the church at its present place. It gives also a long list of land grants donated to this church by King Susənyos himself. This historical text is found in the folios of 143 and 144 are integrated into 229 folios of the manuscript of Giyorgis Wäldä Amid. This text dates probably to 17th century. The text resumes the early establishment of the church and the efforts made by medieval kings to reconstruct Atronsä Maryam and its ultimate establishment at its actual place. This manuscript presents the original place of Atronsä Maryam church is not at its actual place and provides rare land grants of King Susənyos.

Implications of a 19th-century Təgrəñña manuscript for the study of local history and culture (Fesseha Berhe, Mekelle)

This paper focuses on Tarik 'Itiyoipiya ('History of Ethiopia'), a 19th century Təgrəñña Manuscript written by *Däbtära* Fəssəha Giyorgis ʿAbiyəzgi in 1895 and published in 1987 together with its translation into Italian by Yacob Beyene, professor at Napoli University. The Maḥbār Bahli Təgray (Cultural Association of Tigray) in Mäqälä has republished the book in its original form in 1993 E.C.

The importance of his work in Təgrəñña literature has already been discussed by scholars. But the analysis of his works in terms of their role for the reconstruction of the history and cultural landscape of Ethiopia, particularly northern Ethiopia, has hardly been studied. Thus, the aim of this paper is to analyze the role of this Təgrəñña manuscript for the understanding of population movements and interactions in northern Ethiopia with special focus on rarely discussed toponyms and ethnonyms. In this paper I focus on two important peoples of Ethiopia: the Saho and the Dobʿa. I will discuss how the manuscript contributes to the understanding of the possible origin of the Dobʿa and their early migration to the highlands of northern Ethiopia, aspects of Dobʿa history never discussed by other sources. Moreover, I will show the importance of the manuscript in understanding the early migration of Saho Muslims (from Eritrea) to Təgray and

their interaction with Təgrəñña speaking communities of Təgray. The analysis on the manuscript will be contrasted with “new sources” (mostly local secondary sources, oral traditions, and genealogies) which I have been collecting for the last two years and with other written sources such as travellers' account, chronicles, hagiographies and scholarly works. With this material it is also possible to evaluate the importance of oral traditions for the constitution of this manuscript's narratives.

Emperor Zär'a Ya'əqob of Ethiopia to Augusta Helen, “Your deed followed you.” (Getatchew Haile, Collegeville)

In his *Nägs* or Əgzi'abḥer *Nägsä* hymns, Emperor Zär'a Ya'əqob of Ethiopia (1434-1468) addresses Augusta Helen, mother of Constantine the Great (306-337), by saying “*gəbrəki tələwäki*” (Your deed followed you). What is this deed and whence did it follow her? All foreign sources consulted agree that Augusta Helen, mother of Constantine the Great (306-337), came from an obscure origin. In the Ethiopian Church tradition as well as in those of the other Apostolic Churches, Helen is revered and remembered for finding the true Cross. This is, indeed, a great deed. But there is no source that states that this deed followed her anywhere except in guiding her to sainthood. True or not, one story preserved in Amharic, which will be presented here, claims to have the answer.

Portraits of donors in Ethiopian manuscripts of late 19th and early 20th centuries (Michael Knüppel, Vellmar)

In my contribution I deal with the question of realistic portraits of donors in Ethiopian manuscripts of late 19th and early 20th centuries using the image of *Nəgus* Mikael as an example in a manuscript collection of legends of saints and their deeds. These realistic images were drawn on the basis of photographs of the donors and aroused since the invention of photography in Ethiopia. This art seems to have been in use till the mid of the 20th century – maybe even until the end of the Ethiopian Empire. The existence of nearly life-sized portrait of Emperor Yohannes IV, kept in the imperial palace in Mäqäle and copied from a well-known photograph, indicates this, too. Although there are various evidence for fabrication of numerous realistic portraits of donors but there were no detailed analyses done yet. Comparative researches are not also done at all. We can say the same regarding colophons accompanying those portraits. Finally I shall draw attention to the necessity as well as the acuteness of such comparative studies of realistic portraits of donors because of arts market's requests for those works and the manuscripts bearing illustrations. Today there is some fear of loss of numerous works of realistic portraits of donors because they have already been sold beyond the country's borders.

The Chronicle of Emperor Gälawdewos (1540-1559): a source for the research of historical geography of medieval ethiopia (Solomon Gebreyes, Hamburg)

The chronicle of Emperor Gälawdewos provides a detailed account of the Christian-Muslim confrontation in the turbulent periods of sixteenth century, the involvement of foreign allies and the first arrival of Jesuit missionary in the court of the king. Following the end of this long civil war which was ended for some time with the victory of the Christian empire, the empire faced another threat- the Oromo population expansion and the religious controversy with the Jesuit missionary and the social crisis and cultural degradation. Parallel to these threats, however, the Christian king succeeded to expand the territory that had been collapsed in the last fifteen years and could able to maintain relatively the former political map of the Empire. The campaign was

also conducted to incorporate new ethnic groups which were outside the empire.

All these historical events are narrated in the chronicle both with space and time. In this regard, the text describes the places through which the king's army passed, its mountains, rivers and towns, battle fields, the settlement areas of the mobile royal court, monasteries and royal churches, the various groups of people who were allies of Ahmed's forces, various sections of religious groups, the stronghold of the Muslim state of Adal and all these together provide a vivid picture of the political, ethnic, religious map as well as the cultural landscape of the early sixteenth century Ethiopia. Thus, this paper tries to identify, annotate, describe and locate – those place names, people as well as important personalities in the chronicle with the aim to enrich the knowledge and understanding of the historical geography of medieval Ethiopia.

Historical texts in manuscripts from East Tigray: an overview (Stéphane Ancel, Hamburg)

Between 2010 and 2014, Ethio-SPaRe team have digitized numerous manuscripts preserved in churches and monasteries collections in East Tigray. Among these manuscripts, few of them contain texts dealing with history: genealogies, chronicles, commemoration notes or short marginalia reminding events which occurred in the past. Even rare in manuscript collections in Ethiopia, historical texts are of crucial importance for our knowledge concerning Ethiopian history and Ethiopian historiography. This paper aims at presenting the characteristics of these texts. After an overview of the different kinds of historical texts found in that region, a special attention will be paid to those present in Däbrä Dammo monastery collection. That way, the form and the topic of such texts as well as the place given to them in manuscripts and in ecclesiastical collections will be highlighted.

Mapping medieval Ethiopia: the province of Wäjj, 13th to the 16th centuries (Shiferaw Bekele, Addis Ababa)

The province of Wäjj appeared in the sources since the early 14th century; and it continues to be mentioned through to the end of the 16th century. Some of the kings of the late 15th and the 16th centuries visited it and even set up their royal camps there. Gelawadewos (1540 – 1549) went one step further and built a permanent palace. Historians have broadly located it in the region between upstream Awash and the Gibe River extending southwards to Lake Zeway. But a precise identification has not been made. The recently published Stephanite hagiographies (together with other sources) help to identify its location as well as to place on the map its core districts with a greater degree of precision than heretofore. The paper argues that the high areas of Gurageland of today (the chain of mountains that includes Zebidar or Gurage peak) constituted the central parts of the province. It can also be stated with confidence that the Gurage constituted the core people of Wäjj. It also emerges from the sources that the province was home to a number of major monasteries, five of which can be placed on the map. The bishop of the middle of the 15th century maintained a residence in this same region in a settlement called Bärära, which cannot however be located with precision. Similarly, the available evidence is insufficient to delineate the northern limits of the territory. Some sources suggest that Wäjj extended up to, and included, the present day district of Čäbo. But this remains to be established definitely.

Ras Alula's Ge'ez biography – revisiting (Haggai Erlich, Tel Aviv)

The paper will readdress a Ge'ez manuscript I found in 1971 in the birthplace of Ras Alula, which was then translated by the late Roger Cowley and published in two parts: Haggai Erlich, "A Contemporary Biography of Ras Alula: A Ge'ez Manuscript from Manawe, Tamben", *Bulletin*

of the *School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XXXIX, Part I, 1976, pp. 1–46; Part II, pp. 282–322.

I shall focus on the importance of this contemporary document and the way I see it now, forty years after I used it for my book on *Ras Alula*.

A short Amharic manuscript of the 1840s found in the Vatican papers of Arnauld d'Abbadie (Eloi Ficquet, Paris)

Arnauld d'Abbadie (1815-1893), the French-Basque-Irish explorer, was more than the “field-assistant” of his brother Antoine (1810-1897), who had a prestigious academic career. His papers are kept at the Apostolic Vatican Library (19 boxes, 2 of which contain different notebooks and some miscellaneous unbound papers. The other boxes contain the various stages of the manuscript of his memoirs before its complete edition by Jeanne-Marie Allier from 1980 to 1999). After a general description of this archive by Izarn in 1969 (PICES3), with some specifications by Allier in the introduction of the second volume of the memoirs, the detailed description of the unpublished papers is a task that is still to be fulfilled, before their edition. Amidst these papers, only one Ethiopian manuscript is found, consisting in a single folio, i.e. one folded sheet of paper (size 20x30), the 4 pages being written in Amharic. This folio was apparently taken from the stock of paper (a total of ca. 160 sheets) that was gathered into a large unbound notebook, probably kept in a waterproof container, in which the traveler took notes of his observations on customary law and sayings on local history and political figures. Instead of recording by himself this piece of information in Amharic, as he did extensively in other of his notebooks, through his own transcription system, it seems that the traveler gave this piece of paper to one of his Ethiopian informants, well skilled in writing, whose identity is not mentioned. This is the only manuscript of this kind in this collection. I am waiting to get a copy of this document to be able to make more philological and historical comments about it. According to my first reading of this text, as I did not have sufficient time to take full notes, it appears to be *tärät*-like short texts, popular sayings and comments on local history of areas in Gojjam and Bägémeder. It may be completed by a translation by d'Abbadie on a separate folio. This has to be verified. I will question the status of this unpublished and unrecorded text within the corpus of early 19th c. Amharic texts. It is quite an unexpected witness of popular Amharic traditions in the 1840s, before the emergence of an official Amharic literature in the following decades.

Revisiting the 1911 unpublished diary of Heruy Walda-Sellase (Bahru Zewde, Addis Ababa)

At the 15th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies in Hamburg in 2003, I presented a paper entitled “Ethiopians Abroad: The Ethiopian Delegation to the Coronation of King George V”. In it I discussed the diary kept by a junior member of that delegation, Heruy Walda Sellase (later Blatten Geta). The paper put the mission within the context of earlier Ethiopian missions abroad, gave an outline of the document, discussed the mission's itinerary and its salient features and drew some comparative insights with similar missions abroad from Egypt and Japan. The current paper attempts to examine the manuscript more closely within the theme of the Conference, focusing both on its form and content. Aesthetically speaking, Amharic manuscripts can hardly compare with Ge'ez manuscripts. This one is no exception. But its content is of considerable historical significance as a detailed and meticulous account of yet another encounter of Ethiopians with Western civilization and manners. The diary format that Heruy has chosen for his account also gives it greater authenticity. This was the first of official missions

abroad in which Heruy participated, culminating in his famous mission to Japan in 1931, when was the head of the Ethiopian delegation that was sent to Japan. What distinguishes the 1911 mission from later ones, however, is, however, while Heruy published books on the latter, this fascinating diary has remained unpublished. It is conceivable that his subsequent travelogues were also based on diaries that Heruy must have kept during his mission, which would naturally have involved considerable editing to fit into a book format. What we get in this manuscript is the author's first impressions in all their rawness, with some interpolations from the head of the delegation, Dajjazmach (later Le'ul Ras) Kasa Haylu.

North Ethiopian epistolography - newly discovered letters of Tigrayan nobles from missionary archives (second half of the 19th century) (Wolbert Smidt, Mekelle)

The paper to be presented discussed a selection of letters in Amharic, with Geez and Tigrinya elements, written by northern Ethiopian nobles to Catholic missionaries of the Apostolic Vicariate of Abyssinia. These over a dozen stamped letters belong to a voluminous bulk of hundreds of letters from the private possession of Coulbeaux, found by the author in his private papers which he left after his death and which had remained untouched since then (unknown to Rubenson and thus not appearing in his *Acta Aethiopica*). The purpose of this paper is to analyse this historically especially interesting part of this Nachlass. The interest lies not so much in narrations of historical events, of which not many traces are found in these letters, but in its language and topics. First, the letters document the close interconnection of the mission with the local leadership. Second, the letters show a specific language of friendship and document cultural formula typical for that time, similar to other known correspondence of that period. Finally, the specific topic discussed in the letters document how the relation between these local leaders and the mission was constituted. An additional interesting source for the history of political iconography are the seals, some of which are unknown.

The historical writings of Aläqä Täkläyesus Waqjira in documenting the literary, cultural and regional landscape of Gojjam (Getie Gelaye, Hamburg)

This paper examines a systematic survey and analysis of cultural, literary and regional landscape of Gojjam as documented in the historical writings of *Yä-Ityopya Tarik 'A History of Ethiopia'* (2009) and *Yä-Goğğam Təwlləd bāmulu kă-Abbay əskä Abbay 'The Complete Genealogy of Gojjam from Abby to Abbay'* (2010) by Aläqä Täkläyesus Waqjira and edited and published by Sirgew Gelaw and Girma Getahun, respectively. The manuscripts were written between the last quarter of 19th and first decades of the 20th century. Aläqä Tăkle's manuscripts have various versions, which were/are kept in the churches of Dăbră Marqos and Entoto Maryam, at the Library of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, at the Ethiopian National Libraries and Archives Agency, British Library as well as in the possession of individuals (Girma Getahun 1991, 1999, 2010; Molvaer 1998; Sirgew Gelaw 2009).

Aläqä Tăkle's historical writings contain important and rich historical, literary, folkloric, cultural and linguistic sources of the 19th and 20th century of Ethiopian history in general and the regional history of Gojjam in particular. Aläqä Tăkle is the only scholar, who used and preserved over two hundred Amharic poems and songs, which are part of the rich oral tradition of the people of Gojjam. The paper also examines a comparison of the different versions of the texts as well as the edition and preparation of the two books for publication. Further, attention will be given to the preparation of the genealogy of lords and founders of the districts of Gojjam by tracing them to the local communities and the use of a moderate map for the first time in the compilation of a

historical writing. In addition to a thematic analysis of sample poems, a detailed explanation is provided for unfamiliar words and expressions which are common dialects of Gojjam as well as on personal and place names prepared in detailed in the genealogy.

Writing the ancient history of Goġġām: the screen of the 19th century regional historiography (Margaux Herman, Dabra Marqos)

The production of regional histories, like that of Goġġām at the end of the 19th century, raises essential questions for the understanding of the writing of Ethiopian history. This phenomenon was promoted by *neguś* Menelik II (1865-1913). Firstly, *neguś* of Šawā (1865-1889), he asked the gathering of numbers of traditions and legends relative to this region as to legitimize his rights and the place of Šawā in the kingdom. He continues this project, being *neguśa nagašt* of Ethiopia (1889-1913), by sponsoring his royal chronicle written in Amharic and destined to become the “national” history. It is in parallel and/or in reaction of this phenomenon, that *ālaqā* Takla Iyāsus, attached to Takla Hāymānot, *neguś* of Goġġām and Kāffā, decided to produce a Genealogy and a History of Goġġām between 1892 and the first decades of the 20th century. Of Oromo origin, he grew up in Goġġām, acquires its culture and decided to write its history since the Ancient Times till the beginning of the 20th century. This presentation is focused in the writing of the royal presence in Goġġām, starting from its founding myths up to the 16th century. The history starts with a myth inspired from the *Kebra Nagašt*, but the author proposed a Goġġāmite version. It continues with the story of Jesus and Mary followed by the coming of the aksumites Kings Abrehā et Ašbeħa (5th c.) who achieved the saga of Goġġām’s Christianization. These three mythical events are the vectors of actual Goġġām’s identity. However, the analysis of the sources and traditions collected here revealed that the history of the 16th century is fundamental in order to validate the global nature of the project. Moreover, it is the role of the 16th century’s queens, and by extension of the princesses, that is tacitly revealed in it being the historic markers of the royal presence in medieval Christian Goġġām, an area geographically limited to the very Eastern part of the contemporary region.

An ancient description of the inhabited world, with some anecdotes concerning different cities and sages: The case of a new manuscript (Rafal Zarzeczny, Rome)

A great part of ancient Ethiopian literature, both translations and original works, is religious or directly ecclesiastical in nature. This fact, obviously, is closely connected with the strong presence of the Christian factor in the Ethiopian history and civilisation. However, we still can find different texts of a neutral or secular character as well. This could be the case with a document recently identified in a manuscript written presumably in the 18th century. The text is divided into two parts. The first describes the ancient world, its geographical and natural aspects, and its division among peoples. In the second part there are 29 anecdotes regarding different cities of the Hellenistic and Oriental world, with short narrations about the ancient sages. The description of the world as well the geographical stories are mostly of a legendary or simply mythological nature. In my paper I intend to treat the manuscript as a book, and to analyse the text, searching its possible roots and ancient inspirations.

The composition of historical documents in Təgray: the *Kəbrā Nəgəšt*, *Məšħəfā Aksum*, *Wängel zəwərq* and *Tarikā Nəgəšt* (Yohannes G/Selassie)

Some historical documents composed in Təgray during the medieval time share some elements. But each document differs in title one from the other. In this article, I will present and analyse

the relation between *Kəbrä Nəgəst* (KN), *Wängel zəwāraq* (WW) and *Tarikä Nəgəst* (TN) found in the churches of Aksum Şəyon, Mädhane 'Aläm (Mäqällä), the Monastery of Yoḥannəs Kämä respectively and Mäşhäfä Aksum (MN) edited and translated by Conti Rossini.

The KN, a composite work of a 14th century is believed to inspire later compositions which bear the same name although contain brief summaries of the KN proper.

Another composite work which shares some elements with the KN and the TN is MN. MN seem completely unknown to church officials at Aksum Şəyon. When asked to show this manuscript, they often come up with the KN. Even one of the most knowledgeable of the church officials, *Nəburä 'əd* Bälay Māräsa does not know about the existence of any document under this title.

The Mädhane 'Aläm (Mäqällä) WW, documented (by the author) does contain neither the Four Gospel nor any religious text. The document contains agreements, grants, sells and inheritances of plots of land from the town of Mäqällä, during the years 1923-1975 without interruption. It appears that this manuscript was prepared for the particular purpose of registering agreements. The WW comprises more than 3,500 registers. Although, none of the Four Gospel is inscribed in it, this document bears the title WW, usually given to a proper Gospel. The priests also kiss it before opening.

The fourth document, the TN is found at the Monastery of Yoḥannəs Kämä (by the author). It comprises most of the elements of part two of MN (concerning *gult*, *rim* and *rəst*) and the KN concerning the protocol.

An old witness for the Ge'ez version of Ben Sira (Daniel Assefa, Addis Ababa)

Gunda Gunde 202, one of the oldest witnesses (13th / 14th cent) for the Ge'ez version of Ben Sira, has not been used by Dillmann's critical edition. In what respect can Gunda Gunde 202 be significant? Does the manuscript have noteworthy variants useful for the study of the textual history of Ben Sira in Ethiopia? Which features of the manuscript might be relevant to learn better about the translation of Ben Sira into Ge'ez? Which phenomena are of text-critical value?

This paper will try to answer to the above mentioned questions, by comparing Gunda Gunda 202 with Dillmann's edition.

The conundrum of the Ethiopic personal names in the Ethiopic Bible (Martin Heide, Marburg)

While most of the personal names known from the Ethiopic Bible are directly transcribed from the Greek, some personal names are evidently transcribed according to a Semitic pattern. In this lecture, I will present evidence that the latter have very probably been formed prior to the translation of the Bible into Ethiopic.

The textual criticism of Ethiopic Obadiah: a characterization of the shared variants constituting the five families of manuscripts (Garry Jost, Marylhurst University)

My research has included a study of the Ethiopic book of Obadiah, as part of the Textual History of the Ethiopic Old Testament Project (THEOT). An electronic base text was produced from Bachmann's edition of Obadiah, and then transcriptions were made of 33 manuscripts. This is substantially more than previous studies on the Ethiopic book of Obadiah, and most of these manuscripts have never been transcribed or studied before. Two databases were produced to characterize the textual variations in the manuscripts (one based on verse divisions; the other on smaller textual units), which formed the basis for identification of manuscript families and analysis of those families.

This presentation highlights the distinguishing characteristics of the shared variants that determine family affiliations. First, a summary of methodology is presented: rigorous procedures to ensure accurate transcriptions of manuscripts; analysis of textual variants and corresponding database entries; computer scripts written by me to 1) calculate percentages of agreement between each manuscript and each other manuscript, 2) generate a dendrogram (a statistical tool based on hierarchical clustering) to identify the families, 3) further analyze the family relationships.

The manuscript families identified by this methodology are then described according to the linguistic features of the shared variants that determine to which family each of the 33 manuscripts belongs. These features are variously orthographic, morphological, syntactic, and lexical/semantic. The shared variants are then presented in the form of lists of shared variants associated with families and sub-families.

A brief discussion on future directions for my research will conclude the presentation.

Challenges in the text-critical study of the Ethiopic Book of Enoch (Loren Stuckenbruck, Munich)

In modern scholarly circles in the most broadly conceived sense, there can be little doubt that the best-known and studied text of Aksumite provenance is the Ethiopic Book of Enoch. Although ancient versions of this text, usually referred to as 1 Enoch, exist in several other languages—most notably Aramaic in the form of the fragments discovered at Qumran—none preserves even half of the entire book, thereby rendering invaluable to scholarship the completeness of the Ge'ez translation. While scholars more or less unanimously agree that the Ethiopic was translated directly from a Greek text, likely around the fifth century, a millennium of unknown transmissional vicissitudes exists before any extant manuscript evidence arises. At the same time, published critical editions of this book, the most recent appearing thirty-five years ago, are limited to no more than eight manuscripts of its earlier recension, whereas recent investigations have increased this number to more than two dozen full and partial copies. This paper will discuss some of the challenges in editing a text with a complex and wide-ranging Ge'ez textual tradition as well as sporadic non-Ethiopic evidence which may or may not be helpful in identifying or reconstructing its physically lost Aksumite “original” version, taking as its points of inquiry chs. 106 (also existing in Aramaic, Greek and Latin) and 72 (only Ethiopic).

Cycles of Zion in the early Ethiopic texts (Amsalu Teferra, Addis Ababa)

The cycles of Zion pertain to the transportation of the Ark of the Covenant to Aksum and its wanderings in Ethiopia. Native records claim that the Ark traveled to and from Aksum on several occasions, with such accounts being narrated in four prominent texts: 1) the *Kəbrä Nägäšt*, 2) the *Liber Axumae*, 3) *Dərsanä Şəyon*, and 4) *Tä'ammərə Maryam*. The primary account of the transportation of the Ark of the Covenant is found in the *Kəbrä Nägäšt*, while multiple Miracles of Mary (ገገ in EMIP ገገ alone) are also devoted to the cycles of Zion. *Dərsanä Şəyon* mentions Aksum and other Ethiopian traditions related to the cycles of Zion, including in its colophon, *Zena Şəyon* and *Tä'ammərə Şəyon*. Lastly, the Book of Aksum relates that the Ark was moved from Aksum to *Tabər* during the reign of *Lebna Dengle*, and later to *Dəgsa* in *Bur* for 12 years during the time of *Susenyos*. According to the popular history, another cycle of Zion recounts that it went to *Zeway* and stayed for 72 years in order to escape *Gudit's* persecution. This paper discusses the different and similar ways that the cycles of Zion are treated in these four Ethiopic texts.

A 1609 Ge'ez letter by ras Se'elä Krestos: Insights into the language's status in early seventeenth century Ethiopia (Leonardo Cohen, Haifa - Andreu Martinez, Hamburg)

Manuscript nr. 12 from the Legajo 779 in the Arquivo Distrital de Braga in Portugal includes an important document. Embedded in an annual letter written in Portuguese by the Jesuit Luis de Azevedo, there is a one page-long Ge'ez–Portuguese bilingual letter dated 1609 and authored by ras Seela Krestos. The document is divided in three columns and it includes in its middle column a transcription in Latin script of the Ge'ez text. The political document is the earliest of the some twelve known recorded documents issued by the chancellery of Susenyos, which officially only rose to power in 1607. It is also a unique document since it contains a transcription of the Ge'ez text in Latin characters. The paper will study the letter from both the historical as well as philological points of view. On the one hand, the document is the earliest attestation of the pro-Jesuit leaning of the powerful half-brother of Susenyos, whose conversion is dated only in 1613. In it the Ethiopian lord informed the Jesuits of a recent victory in Tegray over the rebel Yaeqob. On the other hand, from a linguistic and philological standpoint it is an important attempt by the Jesuit missionaries to come to terms with the “Chaldaic” language. Luis de Azevedo was one of the Jesuit fathers who achieved greatest proficiency in Ge'ez, language into which he was to translate many Latin exegetical works. All these works went lost, but the analysis of this short letter might allow us to know the transcription system used by the foreign priests, which eventually will shed some light on the status of this language during this historical period.

A new grammar of Gə'əz: challenges and surprises (Stefan Weninger, Marburg)

In preparing a new scholarly grammar of Gə'əz, as the author of this presentation currently does, he meets problems on different levels: How can he cope with the diachronic perspective of the documented language history of Gə'əz and with the different linguistic background of the various text genres (Greek, Arabic, Amharic)? Is it possible to establish a standard? Does it make sense to establish a standard? During the 1½ centuries a sizable literature on grammatical topics has evolved. Is it after all possible to digest this in the new grammar? On the other hand, the necessity of a systematic treatment within a single framework reveals surprising lacunae in our knowledge and necessitates some ad-hoc research from time to time to fill these gaps. This presentation is thus a preliminary report on the evolving new Gə'əz grammar.

The earlier textual Ethiopic heritage (Alessandro Bausi, Hamburg)

As is well known, the Ethiopian and Eritrean highlands have seen the development of a complex literary tradition that has no parallel in sub-Saharan Africa and the emergence of which was deeply marked against the African background by the Late Antique cultural context within the largely understood Mediterranean and Byzantine area—including Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and the Red Sea with South Arabia. From these premises, the Ethiopic language played a major role of medium for the transmission of written knowledge to the Horn of Africa since the first millennium CE. It is commonly agreed that the earliest Ethiopic texts known so far are translations from Greek, while later works are much indebted to the Christian Arabic literary tradition, particularly to the Copto-Arabic one. There is evidence for the emergence of a rich local written production only later in the course of time. One would expect that the complexity of this literary history is fully reflected in the changes in grammar, lexicon and stylistic means of the Ethiopic language, even though in-depth analyses have been attempted only rarely and no systematic correlation has been established between lexical, morphological, and stylistic features. On the one hand, the first step in approaching this delicate question—which is one among the envisaged tasks of

the TraCES project—is a systematic mapping of texts and works attributed on some grounds to a precise period. Crucial in this regard is a tentative mapping of all texts that can be attributed to the earlier period of the Ethiopian literary production. On the other hand, a more pronounced awareness of the role played by the material text carriers in the transmission of knowledge has introduced new factors, that also can and must be taken into account.

Beyond tribal names and denominations in the texts of *Māftəḥe Səray* manuscripts (Gidena Mesfin, Hamburg)

The *Māftəḥe Səray* is a name given to a collection of texts mainly with ‘magical prayer’ type formats though ‘pseudo’–recipes are not uncommon to exist mingled here and there. The ‘magical prayers’ contain tribal names and denominations that are believed to possess magical power of many sorts. Though brief mentions of the meaning behind these names has been forwarded so far, a detailed account of these forms still awaits a thorough examination. This paper will try to expound the use of these names and denominations. To start with it will be tried: to list out the names and denominations within the texts referred, to question whether these names and denominations can be used in an attempt to study the provenance of the manuscripts they are contained within, the derogatory stereotypes they carry, and the identity of the practitioners they mention. This paper will try how philological inquiries into naming and names can play a vital role in the study of texts in general and ‘magical’ texts in particular.

Ge’ez grammar and vocabulary in the ancient manuscripts and in contemporary usage (Dawit Tessega, Nuernberg)

Ge’ez, now the only language of Ethiopia which preserves written religious as well as historical documents, is considered to be the old and dead Ethiopian language. In the Ethiopian Church, Ge’ez is however yet very active with which one can hear every day newly composed poetries. These newly composed poetries compared with the ancient ones, mainly with those written in the old manuscripts seem to be very much updated in their rhythmic structure and their grammatical arrangement. Consequently there has been developed a kind of metrical rules in the structure of verses of poetries, and grammatical rules in conjugation of verbs and declination of words as well.

***Waqf* certificates from Harar: a first assessment (Alessandro Gori, Copenhagen)**

A rapid glance at the available bibliography shows that research on *waqf* (charitable trust) has been overwhelmingly conducted by social historians and sociologists of the Islamic world. The system of *waqf* has been considered as the most effective legal tool that traditional Islamic policies (in particularly Mamlūk Egypt and the Ottoman Empire) used to foster a certain level of welfare and a more or less equal distribution of wealth among the different layers of the society. Scholarly interest has been thus devoted to the investigation of the birth, development and spread of the charitable endowments in the Muslim world, especially those created by the state, and the academic attention has focused on the role played by *awqāf* in the preservation of the social cohesion of the Muslim territories.

Waqf of economically relevant assets (buildings, plots of land) or of social institutions (hospitals, schools, hospices) have been analysed in detail. *Waqf* of copies of the Qur’ān and of books in general has been considered less important because of the reduced social impact it could have. Moreover, little attention has been paid to the text of the *waqf* certificates (*waqfiyya*), to their style and language.

In my presentation I focus on a first selection of 6 *waqf* certificates of Qur'anic codices from Harar kept in the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in Addis Ababa and so far unpublished. I shall analyze the main features of the textual structure of the documents and their vocabulary, trying to compare them with similar items from other areas of the Islamic world. I shall also comment upon some of the historical and sociological data which the texts yield, contributing to the further investigation of the history and culture of Harar.

Saho Islamic poetry and other literary genres in *ajami* script (Giorgio Banti, Naples - Moreno Vergari, Bolzano - Axmadsacad Maxammad Cumar)

Saho is an East Cushitic language spoken in Eritrea and in northern Ethiopia. Its closest sister language is 'Afar. Most of the Eritrean Saho are Muslims, and Islamic hymns, called *nazme*, are sung in Saho by sheikhs and their followers during the *mawlid* and other religious ceremonies. They alternate with Arabic hymns read, e.g., from the booklet *Mawlidu 'l-Nabī* by Muḥammad 'Uṭmān al-Mīrḡanī. They are generally associated with popular Sufi Islam and the Ḥatmīyya order.

It is unknown when Saho *nazme* composing and singing began, because they are mostly remembered anonymously. As far as the present authors know, there are no printed collections of Saho *nazme*, but only occasional instances of sheikhs recording them in *ajami* Arabic script. One example of *nazme* will be discussed in the presentation. It was elicited by the authors in Irhaafalo (Eritrea) in 2010 from its author, Sheekh Soliiman Ismaacil Maxammad, who also provided a manuscript copy of it in *ajami*. Other examples of Saho literary texts written in *ajami* script and read by the Saho diaspora in the UK will also be discussed.

Two Argobba *ajām* manuscripts from Wällo (Andreas Wetter, Berlin)

In my talk I would like to present two manuscripts from Wällo written in Argobba. The manuscripts are very short, one is only a fragment of two pages from an presumably much bigger manuscripts, and the second one comprise less than four pages.

The provenance of the two manuscripts is not entirely clear. The owners of the manuscripts claim that they both were written by the famous Argobba "waly" Abba Assiyya (d. 1835/6) from the Argobba village Doddota in Däwwe.

The fact that the inhabitants of Dodota speak Oromo today illustrates the massive language shift from Argobba to Oromo that must have taken in that area place since the early 19th century. But the Argobba language had once been spoken in a much wider area in eastern Wällo than today, e.g. the most northern Argobba settlements can found in the region of Wärrä Babbo.

In this context the manuscripts presented in my talk play a crucial role in the reconstruction of language history of Argobba since the variety used in the manuscripts differs considerably from the Argobba variety spoken today.

In my presentation I will mainly concentrate on the description of the linguistic and orthographic features of the manuscripts, similarities and differences, the relation of the language used in the manuscripts to modern Argobba, problems of interpretation, and the methodology used in the research on *ajām* manuscripts in present day Wällo.

Introducing an Arabic manuscript of Šayḥ Muḥammad Šāfi (d. 1806) (Endris Mohammed, Addis Ababa)

Šayḥ Muḥammad Šāfi b. Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Asqārī popularly known as Muḡahidu (the Ġihadist) is one of the outstanding Muslim scholars of Ethiopia. He is mostly known for his

Ġihadist and political resistance and movements in the annals of Ethiopian history. His intellectual contribution, however, is less documented. According to local sources, he has produced about thirty manuscripts of which only eight are in the list of the researcher. *Ma'ūnat al-faqīr minḥat al-laṭīf al-ḥabīr* 'Aid to the Poor, a gift from the Kind and the Proficient' is one, perhaps the masterpiece, of the Arabic manuscripts of Šayḥ Muḥammad Šāfi which mainly deals on *fiqh* 'jurisprudence', but not strictly following the formalistic style of jurisprudence both in its raw data and content. It brings the skeleton of Islamic teachings combined with the soul. The work begins by giving a sketch of Islamic theology then proceeds to some of the common topics of Islamic jurisprudence: *Ṭuharā, Šalāt, Šiyām, Ḥağğ* and *Ġihād*. Very unusually it includes a topic on *al-Kasb* 'work'. It ends with a chapter about *Taşşawuf*, a kind of spiritual code and instruction manual. It is a legible and well written text, with Arabic cursive styles, extending to 126 folia (252 pages). It is hand copied (in 1332 A.H.) by Šayḥ Manalkerim bin Haği Nurye bin Kabīr Omar bin Kabīr Osman bin Kabīr Ibrāhīm, whose tomb is found in Dāse (Wāllō) at Dawdo mosque cemetery. Now, the manuscript is at the custody of a retired *qāḍī*, Šayḥ Ahmad Ibrāhīm Hasan, who is living in Addis Ababa. This paper is an attempt to introduce the general philological information about the manuscript. In so doing both the physical and essence of the manuscript will be dealt thoroughly in a way that could be an important step for textual critical study of the manuscript.

Šayḥ Abdalla Walenso (d.1369 A.H /1949 A.D) and his legacy in transmission of ḥadīth in southeastern Ethiopia: preliminary remarks on two written *ijāza* of ḥadīth found in Arsi (Hasen Mohammed Kawo, Addis Ababa)

Šayḥ Abdalla b. Adem better known by his place name as Šayḥ Abdalla Walenso is a famous scholar of *Ḥadīth* in Eastern Hararge. He received his education in his country from Šayḥ Ahmed ibn Sulaymān (d.1886) and subsequently studied in Egypt, Hijāz and Yemen. He is credited with expanding the study of *'ilm al-Ḥadīth* in South-eastern Ethiopia, while his teacher Šayḥ Ahmed ibn Sulayman is less known. Many famous scholars of *Ḥadīth* graduated from Šayḥ Abdalla and established their own school of *Ḥadīth* in Bale, Arsi, and different parts of Hararge. As it is known in Islamic tradition, the transmission of *Ḥadīth* is based on the chain of authoritative narrations. *Imām* Muslim, a well-known narrator of *Ḥadīth* reported from *Imām* Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn (through his own chain), states, "The science of chain of authority and narration of *Ḥadīth* is *dīn* (religion) itself. You should check whom you are receiving your *dīn* from". In the preface (*Muqadimma*) of his *aş-Şahīh Muslim*, *Imām* Muslim entitled a chapter, "Narration from a Reliable Authority is Mandatory in Sharia and Science of *Ḥadīth* in Order to Eliminate Any Doubt of Perjury in Narrating Knowledge from the Holy Prophet".

The teaching certificate, *ijāza*, is a practice diffused in Ethiopia like in the rest of the Islamic world. The *ijāza* of disciplines like *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and language studies, when it compared with *Ḥadīth ijāza*, are much fewer, except in Sufi order. In this paper, I will introduce two *ijāza*, of Šayḥ Muhammad Aliyyii Taa'oo and Šayḥ Muhammad Salih b. kabīr Ali better known as Muhammad Salih Hwaatee, both respected scholars from Eastern Arsi. Their *ijāza* maintain that their chain connected through Šayḥ Abdalla Walenso to Šayḥ Ahmed ibn Sulayman of Baallakasa. The paper aims to analyse the two *ijāzas* comparing with the established way of its writings in the Islamic world and annotates some of important information with brief biography of Šayḥ Abdalla Walenso and other local scholars mentioned in the document. Both written *ijazas* are significant to learn how *'ilm al Ḥadīth* has been authorized, diffused and studied in Ethiopia.

Ajami manuscripts from southern Somalia: sheekh Awees from Brava (Giorgio Banti, Naples)

Sheekh Awees from Brava was a holy man that preached in southern Somalia until 1907, when he was killed by supporters of Maxamed Cabdille Xasan, whom he opposed. Sheekh Awees composed several religious hymns both in Arabic and in southern Somali, with features of the local dialects of the communities for whom he had composed his poems.

Two of these qasidas have been published by Cerulli, on the basis of mss. he obtained when he was in Somalia between the first and the Second World War. Part of another one has been published by Moreno in the section on “Dighil” of his polylectal Somali grammar. During the 80s this author has the opportunity of visiting in Buulomareerto the religious community led by sheekh Abuukar Maxamed Yare, who had copied several of the Ajami qasidas by Sheekh Awees.

The paper will discuss some of these hymns, on the basis of the pictures that this author took at that time. It is not known whether those mss. still exist. Buulomareerto has been for some years in the area controlled by the Shabaab militias, who strongly and at times violently oppose all the manifestations of Sufi Islam.

Word-breaking in Ethiopian Arabic: Evidence for intimate Christian-Muslim contact (with an appendix on semantic change in Harari) (Orin Gensler, Addis Ababa)

Although nowadays Ethiopian Christians and Muslims tend to emphasize their separateness, it is well-known that there has been much intimate contact over the centuries. This paper presents philological evidence (and, secondarily, also linguistic evidence) for this. In both cases, an explanation is proposed which in turn demands its own meta-explanation: intimate contact.

1) Arabic as written in Ethiopia has a notable peculiarity: words can be freely divided across line-ends, something which never happens in “canonical” Arabic scribal practice. Various approaches to the question “Why?” exist (I will consider several), but an extremely simple explanation is that this usage is modeled on the analogous scribal practice of Ge’ez fidel. But why should Muslims be following (or even know about) a Christian-based model at all, thereby clashing with and rejecting the norm all across the Muslim world? The only plausible meta-explanation is that the Arabic writing tradition in Ethiopia goes back to Muslim speech communities that were intimately woven into the fabric of Christian Ethiopia – *jabarti*, and/or Christian converts to Islam.

2) Many words in Harari (a Muslim language) have undergone semantic change compared to their older meaning in Ge’ez, and the same is true for Amharic (a largely Christian language) vis-a-vis Ge’ez. In a good many cases the same word has changed its meaning in both of the modern languages, and remarkably, very often this meaning change is identical in both Harari and Amharic. Why should this be? Coincidence is vanishingly unlikely; rather, the identity of meaning change points to influence of Amharic (the dominant language) on Harari. Significantly, this phenomenon of identical meaning change also affected numerous words of basic everyday vocabulary, which is usually relatively immune to contact influence – except in the presence of intimate contact.

Magic, traditional medicine and theurgy in arabo-islamic manuscripts of the Horn of Africa (Sara Fani, Florence/Copenhagen)

This short presentation is intended to illustrate different typologies of documentary notes and paratextual inscriptions quite common in Arab-Islamic manuscripts of the Horn of Africa. In the frame of IslHornAfr project and describing the first group of manuscripts for its literary and prosopographic database, it was firstly necessary to outline the different genres of these texts

which are often strictly related to local history and traditions. In addition to historiographic and documental notes, sometimes attesting *waqf* or local Islamic *qaḍī* court records, many notes and inscriptions related to magical and theurgical practices or to traditional medicine have come to light. Examples of the mentioned categories will be illustrated and a proper classification will be proposed with the aim of including also this kind of material in the literary database of the project.

Some notes about the lists of saints in Harari Arabic manuscripts (Michele Petrone, Florence/Copenhagen)

In this presentation I will briefly give account of an ongoing research on the devotional practices of Muslims in Ethiopia as emerging from the manuscripts cataloged for the ISI/HornAfr Project. There are two phenomena I would like to highlight.

The first is the list of the saints of Harar, already studied by Ewald Wagner and Emile Foucher. Other versions of the list of the saints and of the pilgrim's guide to the "Madīnat al-Awliyā'" emerged and will be compared to the edited versions. The second phenomenon is a *du'ā'* of *tawassul* including saints from different times, *ṭuruq* and geographical contexts.

These texts will be analyzed both as manuscripts and as written witnesses of a peculiar way of devotion to the Saints that characterizes the city of Harar, proposing a first typological analysis.

Describing a Tigrigna 'Ajami Manuscript (Amira Ibrahim, Addis Ababa)

Research on '*ajamī*' literature in Ethiopia is a recent phenomenon. This doesn't mean, however, that '*ajamī*' manuscript is new to Ethiopia. '*Ajamī*' was in use in several medieval Islamic sultanates (states) of Ethiopia. This paper, which can contribute a great deal to the knowledge about the various languages of Ethiopia, has long been neglected. Yet, the need for researching the literature is now growing. The present study is one such attempt to reveal the existence and content of Tigrigna '*ajamī*' manuscript of a renowned Muslim cleric of the Tigray region, Ṣayḥ Umar Abrar.

The '*ajamī*' manuscript on which the study is concerned is written in poetic language called *manzuma*. This *manzuma* which is one authentic work of the Ṣayḥ is popular among the Muslims of Tigray. The theme of the *manzuma* revolves around the impression prophet Mohammed on his first wife, Khadija which was unique since women were rarely addressed in early times.

Bun Fatah, A Harari Supplication Related to Coffee Ceremony (Ahmed Zekaria, Addis Ababa)

Ethiopia is a land of many origins, and coffee is one of its major gifts to the world civilization. Coffee all over Ethiopia and Arabia is known as *bun*, *buna*, *buno*, *bunna* and related ones. *Kahwa* or *Kawa* is the name associated with the liquid form of coffee by the Yemeni, Harari and Gurage communities. It is assumed that this term transformed to *Kaffee* and *coffee* when it reached Europe.

Harar, being the main centre for coffee domestication and trade, has a lot to tell towards our understanding of coffee tradition. The Harari, Oromo and Somali communities have different ways of consuming coffee. It is prepared for special prayer sessions made of coffee husk boiled in milk or butter.

In my short communication, I will discuss of a written supplication copied by Ustad Ibrahim Wezir in 1409 AH, 1989 C.E. from a notebook of the late *Haji* Ahmed Ali Melak. The text de-

scribes the procedure of the special coffee ceremony in Arabic interspersed with Harari supplication. Considering the syntax and word formation, it is an old supplication.

Kašf Al-Ġuma: an inspirational and polemical text by šayḥ Ṭalḥa Ja'far (c. 1853-1936): thematic and linguistic analyses (Kemal Abdulwahab, Addis Ababa)

Despite their widespread circulations in the Muslim society of Ethiopia, generally poetic verses have long been neglected as a subject of study for either historical or anthropological researchers. Ishihara (1996:207). Since the time Cerulli inaugurated this field by collecting twelve Islamic Amharic poems in 1926; and after Cerulli and Cohen investigated the Harari *ajām* works in 1930s it was only recently that studies began to focus on this genre. The main objective of this paper is to introduce an Amharic- *ajām* poetic text written by a renowned Muslim scholar and rebellion leader of the 19th century, Šayḥ Ṭalḥa Ja'far, which in many regards can be paralleled with Christian polemical writings embodying a call for “a Christian Jihad”. This will be done by examining and categorizing the contents of the text. This work will enable us to appreciate how a late 19th - century Muslims cleric and rebellion leader, decades before the introduction of modern education, used creative writing in propagating and persuading his mission. As the accounts are direct reflections of an individual who was leading and directly involved in the matters, it will also highlight on the following still-vague political and religious questions of the time: the relationship that had existed between the Mahdi al-Muntazar ‘the expected Mahdi’ of the Sudan and Ethiopian Muslim rebellion leaders; and the motives that forced Muslims of Wallo to revolt against the Amhara – to use his terminology referring to the Christian emperors.

The “unique manuscript collection” of Seddeqa: Jimma Zone (southwestern Ethiopia) (Kemal Ibrahim, Addis Ababa)

The philological study of the Islamic literary heritage of Ethiopia has been a shallowly approached field of research. The former Gibe kingdoms of southwestern Ethiopia, especially the kingdom of Jimma, despite their rich Islamic history, remain almost completely unstudied in respect to philology. In this paper I will present a typology and description of a manuscript collection found in the Seddeqiyyimosque in Jimma zone. I studied and cataloged 52 of these manuscripts for my master’s thesis. The manuscripts have many fascinating contents, so much so that I call it “the unique collection”.

There are “normal” manuscripts, which are codices and folios with unsurprising content like Qur’an, Fiqh, personal letters etc. on the other hand the collection also contains many “strange” texts involving invented spellings and non-existent words, as well as writings that are in no known script— invented by Šayḥ Mus’id al-Dīn Seddeqi. I identified 6 kinds of “strange” texts. Among these invented texts the type I have termed the type III (quasi-Chinese text) is truly astonishing. These unreadable texts are written in strange symbols which superficially resemble Chinese characters. There would seem to be a similarity in some aspects with the famous Voynich manuscript. The pictures found in the manuscripts (of 17 kinds) are also different from what we know in the normal Arabic manuscript tradition, and there is no connection between the pictures and the surrounding text.

Finally, most of the manuscripts are in bad shape. Only a handful of them have binding. It is possible to call the collection “collection of detached quires”. It is important to note that the condition these manuscripts are kept in does not bode well for their future survival.

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