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Dissertation abstract

*The Chronicle of King Gälawdewos (1540–1559): A Critical Edition with
Annotated Translation*

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Editorial

The present issue of AETHIOPICA, like the preceding one, is partly monographic, with a section containing the proceedings of the Panel on Islamic Literature in Ethiopia: New Perspectives of Research, from the '19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies', held in Warsaw, Poland, on 24–28 August 2015.

Starting from this issue, the annual bibliography on Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics held from its inception in 1998 for eighteen years by Rainer Voigt is handed over, on Voigt's own will, to a pool of younger scholars, with the substantial support of the AETHIOPICA editorial team. I would like on this occasion to express the deep gratitude of the editorial board of AETHIOPICA and of all scholars in Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics to Rainer Voigt for his fundamental and valuable contribution.

Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.
ÄthFor Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995).
AethFor Aethiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011); 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG (*ibid.*, 2011f.); 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI (*ibid.*, 2012ff.).
AION *Annali dell'Università degli studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'*, Napoli: Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.
CSCO Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1903ff.
EAE S. UHLIG, ed., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C; II: D–Ha; III: He–N; in cooperation with A. BAUSI, eds, IV: O–X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); A. BAUSI in cooperation with S. UHLIG, eds, V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014).
EI² *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I–XII (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960–2005).
EMML Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
JES *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
JSS *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Manchester 1956ff.
NEASt *Northeast African Studies*, East Lansing, MI 1979ff.
OrChr *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig–Roma–Wiesbaden 1901ff.
PICES 9 A.A. GROMYKO, ed., 1988, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Moscow, 26–29 August 1986*, I–VI (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1988).
RSE *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli 1983ff.
ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig–Wiesbaden–Stuttgart 1847ff.

Dissertation abstract

SOLOMON GEBREYES BEYENE, *The Chronicle of King Gälawdewos (1540–1559): A Critical Edition with Annotated Translation*, PhD Dissertation in Ethiopian Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Hamburg, defended on 30 June 2016.

From the fourteenth to the early twentieth century all Ethiopic chronicles composed for the many Ethiopian kings were edited and published by European scholars, a task which began in the last quarter of the nineteenth century when these chronicles were translated into several European languages (especially French, Italian, and Latin). In this regard, the works of the European scholars have greatly contributed to the reconstruction of the history and culture of the country.

However, these works do not meet the demands of today's scientific text-critical editions. Thus various scholars who have studied the chronicles in detail are proposing a re-edition using modern editing methods and techniques. In addition, the translation of these valuable historical documents into English, together with an updated commentary, is important in order to make the chronicles widely available to the readers. Against this background, this dissertation provides a new edition of the chronicle of King Gälawdewos (r. 1540–1559), which was edited and published by Conzelman in 1895, based on three textual witnesses, and translated into French.

The dissertation fulfills two main objectives. Firstly, to prepare a critical edition of the Chronicle applying the so called neo-lachmannian method based on six manuscripts. Secondly, translating the Gə'əz text of the Chronicle into English and annotating it. Such an edition involves a thorough study of the content and history of the transmission, collating and grouping manuscripts into a family on the basis of their common errors and finally establishing the *stemma codicum*.

The chronicle represents a peculiar text in Gə'əz historiography both because of its narrative structure and because of the sources used by the chronicler. Another special feature of the text are the many Arabisms which eventually led to the conclusion that the Chronicle was written by a person with an outstanding knowledge of Arabic. Therefore, it is assumed that the most likely author of the Chronicle was the medieval church scholar, ʾIččäge ʾEnbaqom. Although the Chronicle lacks detailed historical data, approximately two thirds of the text can be regarded as valuable for historical reconstruction while the other third is of purely literary value. The reason for this

might be, as alluded in the text, that the author composed it mainly to commemorate his beloved king who died a martyr's death and to praise the royalty of the Solomonic kingship.

The chronicle is transmitted both as part of a compilation and independently as an individual text. In the compilation form, together with other medieval chronicles, it appears in both the Bruce and the Ḥaylu compilations. The manuscript in the Bruce compilation (named after the Scottish traveller James Bruce), was written in 1592 and is one of the oldest witnesses of the text. A further four manuscripts are found in the Ḥaylu compilation. One more manuscript exists, in which the *Chronicle* is the only text: it is housed in the royal church of Tādbabā Maryam, founded by the king, where the chronicle is used mainly to commemorate the saintly king. It was used to be read each month in the church in front of the faithful; this tradition continues until today.

In addition to this, indirect textual tradition is attested by other Gəʿəz texts and in the works of European Jesuit missionaries and travellers. The *Sənkəssar* of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church contains a short passage concerning the saintly king. Other chronicles from the sixteenth and early seventeenth century refer to the chronicle of King Gälawdewos. In his book *História da Etiópia* ('History of Ethiopia') completed in 1622, Pedro Páez, the Jesuit priest and scholar, who travelled as a missionary to Ethiopia in 1603, quoted directly from the chronicle. This manuscript, which Páez consulted for his work, is perhaps the oldest manuscript of the chronicle, but is no longer preserved.

The reconstruction of the text offers important philological findings concerning the Chronicle of King Gälawdewos in particular, as well as new input that calls for a general revision of the Ethiopic chronicles. First of all, the re-edition of the Chronicle of King Gälawdewos has yielded several corrections to Conzelman's edition, including some readings wrongly selected by the editor. Apart from this, the edition reveals that the medieval Ethiopic chronicles from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century share a similar, in some cases even the same textual transmission, which evolved mainly from two collections—the Bruce compilation and the Ḥaylu compilation. The collation and evaluation of the variants have shown that the Ḥaylu compilation suffers from numerous innovations and corruptions, so that, it is necessary to re-edit those chronicles which were edited exclusively based on the witnesses from the Ḥaylu compilation, taking into account all available witnesses. The new edition provides valuable, as yet, unrecorded items on Gəʿəz lexicography and corrects historical errors resulting from the previous edition. Above all, the PhD dissertation has provided a more authentic historical text of the chronicle of King Gälawdewos accompanied by an annotated English translation which offers new insights into the medieval historiography of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa.