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## Review

MARIA BULAKH and LEONID KOGAN, *The Arabic–Ethiopic Glossary by  
al-Malik al-Afdal: An Annotated Edition with a Linguistic Introduction  
and a Lexical Index*

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time to time'; *əm-əgrä-mängädäyä* (Amh. *əgrä-mängäden*), 'alongside'; *aḥatti ḥamus yə'ati zä-tärfätta* (Amh. *and ḥamus näw yäqärrat*), 'she has only a few days' (pp. 34, 55, 60). Again, the expressions *zämädä-zämäd*, *wäyn bä-wäyn*, *ṣəbur bä-ṣəbur*, and so on (pp. 2, 75, 101, 108, 116, 133, 164) all show the influence of Amharic. This kind of word construction does not work in Gə'əz. Besides, in the case of *zämädä-zämäd*, the idea that he wants to present is missed: he uses this phrase to refer to many relatives or all family members, like in the Amharic *zämäda-zämäd*, but its right meaning is 'relative of relative' and it refers to a single person only. However, these few imperfections should not diminish one's appreciation of the author.

Secondly, the author's creativity is of some interest. To express some minor elements, he invents new phrases by combining two or three different words. For instance, he uses *məhlaḥfä-qal* (lit. 'passage of word') to mean 'telephone'; *mäṣḥetä-ʿayn* (lit. 'mirror of eye') meaning 'eye glass'; *betä-gəbr* (lit. 'house of work') to say 'work place' or 'office'; and *lə'ul betä-fəṭḥ* (lit. 'great house of justice') to mean 'high court'. All these phrases are innovations (pp. 96, 119, 121).

The author presents such an exciting book in Gə'əz using all his potentials, sharing his knowledge and experience in the stories that he creates based on realistic facts. It is recommended that any person reading Gə'əz should read this book. For Gə'əz scholars, I think, it is an inspirational work which should stimulate the composition of new Gə'əz texts alongside the analysis of the old texts.

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MARIA BULAKH and LEONID KOGAN, *The Arabic–Ethiopic Glossary by al-Malik al-Afdal: An Annotated Edition with a Linguistic Introduction and a Lexical Index*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, 1, The Near and Middle East, 113 (Leiden–Boston, MA: Brill, 2017). xix, 473 pp., 20 illus. Price: €149. ISBN: 978-90-04-32182-3.

Over the last few years, Maria Bulakh and Leonid Kogan—both researchers at the Institute for Oriental and Classical Studies, National Research University, Higher School of Economics (Moscow)—have published several significant works on the diachronic development of (Ethiopian) Semitic and

its genetic classification, clearly demonstrating the high level of their expertise on matters related to (Ethiopian) Semitic studies.<sup>1</sup>

Their command of the subject is found in the present book, *The Arabic–Ethiopic Glossary by al-Malik al-Afdal*, in which they present a very thorough description and analysis of one of the oldest extant data on an Ethiopian Semitic language other than Gəʿəz,<sup>2</sup> going back to the second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>3</sup> The Arabic–Ethiopian Semitic glossary is found in an Arabic text collection of the Yemenite sultan al-Malik al-Afdal, who reigned from 1363 to 1377. Actually, Franz-Christoph Muth was the first to

<sup>1</sup> See for instance M. Bulakh, ‘Negative markers \*ʔay-, \*ʔi- and \*ʔal- in Ethio-Semitic’, *Babel und Bibel*, 6 (2012), 385–420; M. Bulakh, ‘Word Order in Epigraphic Gəʿəz’, *Aethiopica*, 15 (2012), 136–175; M. Bulakh, ‘Multiple Exponence in the Long Prefix Conjugation of the Transversal South Ethio-Semitic Languages’, in R. Meyer, Y. Treis, and Azeb Amha, eds, *Explorations in Ethiopian Linguistics: Complex Predicates, Finiteness and Interrogativity*, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, 91 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), 149–178; M. Bulakh, ‘On Static Verbs in Gəʿəz’, in R. Meyer and L. Edzard, eds, *Time in Languages of the Horn of Africa*, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, 107 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016), 15–52; M. Bulakh and L. Kogan, ‘The Genealogical Position of Tigre and the Problem of North Ethio-Semitic Unity’, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 160 (2010), 273–302; M. Bulakh and L. Kogan, ‘South Ethiopian Pronouns and Verbs in an Arab Grammatical Text Revisited after Seventy Years’, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 131/4 (2011), 617–621; M. S. Bulakh and L. E. Kogan, ‘Efi-josemitskije jazyki’ (‘Ethio-Semitic languages’), in M. S. Bulakh, L. E. Kogan, and O. I. Romanova, eds, *Jazyki mira: Semitskie jazyki, Efi-josemitskie jazyki* (‘Languages of the world: Semitic languages, Ethio-Semitic languages’), *Jazyki mira* (Moskwa: Academia, 2013), 1–141; M. Bulakh and L. Kogan, ‘More on Genealogical Classification of Ethiopian Semitic’, *Babel und Bibel*, 7 (2014), 599–608; L. Kogan, ‘Common Origin of Ethiopian Semitic: the Lexical Dimension’, in D. Nosenitsin, in collaboration with S. Frantsouzoff, L. Kogan, and B. Lourié, ed., *Varia Aethiopica: In Memory of Sevir B. Chernetsov (1943–2005)* (Saint Petersburg: Byzantinorossica, 2005 = *Scrinium*, 1 (2005)), 367–396; L. Kogan, ‘Proto-Semitic Lexicon’, in S. Weninger, in collaboration with G. Khan, M. P. Streck, and J. C. E. Watson, ed., *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft, 36 (Berlin–Boston, MA: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 179–258; L. Kogan, *Genealogical Classification of Semitic: The Lexical Isoglosses* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Here, names of places, ethnic groups, and languages follow the transliteration system of the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, rather than that of the volume under review or my own.

<sup>3</sup> See F.-C. Muth, ‘Frühe Zeugnisse des Amharischen und der Gurage-Sprachen in einer polyglotten Wortliste von Al-Malik Al-Afdal (gest. 778/1377)’, *Folia Orientalia*, 45–46 (2009–2010), 87–109, here p. 94; M. Bulakh and L. Kogan, op. cit. (2011).

discover this glossary, and to make it known to a broader audience in 2009.<sup>4</sup> M. Bulakh and L. Kogan recognized the importance of the glossary for Ethiopian studies and published their own preliminary linguistic analysis in a series of three journal articles in *Aethiopica*.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, M. Bulakh elaborated elsewhere on the assumed purpose of this glossary and the methods applied for its compilation.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the book under review does not provide entirely new findings, but rather summarizes, elaborates, and extends previous research, making the findings more easily accessible.

The book consists of three major parts: the Introduction (pp. 1–32), the annotated edition of the glossary (pp. 33–326), and an apparatus consisting of two appendices and a lexical index (pp. 328–473), as well as a facsimile of the glossary. In addition to a discussion of the current research vis-à-vis the previous findings of Franz-Christoph Muth (pp. 3–4), the introductory part provides background information on the creation of the three-page long Arabic–Ethiopian Semitic glossary by al-Malik al-Afḍal who compiled it in about 1374/1375 CE. Furthermore, general features of the glossary are described over five consecutive subsections (cf. ‘Generalities’, pp. 1–4; ‘Paleography’, pp. 4–6; ‘The Arabic Language of the Glossary’, pp. 6–7; ‘Presentation of the Material’, pp. 7–9; ‘Reconstructed Ethiopic Forms’, pp. 9–12). The current glossary, which is probably a copy of the original (p. 3), contains 475 Arabic lemmas for which 525 Ethiopian Semitic correspondences are given (p. 2). The Arabic of the glossary is most probably from a Yemeni-Arabic dialect, as the authors deduce from certain lexical items (p. 6). The glossary groups the Arabic lemmata into thirty-four sections according to broad semantic topics, like ‘man and human body parts’, ‘names of diseases and related terms’, ‘names of wild animals’, ‘names of insects and small animals’, ‘kinship terms’, ‘color terms’, and so on, but there is also ‘a list of basic verbs’ (pp. 2–3). A list of cognate items is given in the ‘Lexical Index’,

<sup>4</sup> Cf. F.-C. Muth, op. cit. (2009–2010).

<sup>5</sup> M. Bulakh and L. Kogan, ‘Towards a Comprehensive Edition of the Arabic–Ethiopic Glossary of al-Malik al-Afḍal, Part I: New Readings from the First Sheet’, *Aethiopica*, 16 (2013), 138–148; ‘Towards a Comprehensive Edition of the Arabic–Ethiopic Glossary of al-Malik al-Afḍal, Part II: New Readings from the Second Sheet’, *Aethiopica*, 17 (2014), 151–168; ‘Towards a Comprehensive Edition of the Arabic–Ethiopic Glossary of al-Malik al-Afḍal, Part III: New Readings from the Third Sheet’, *Aethiopica*, 18 (2015), 56–80.

<sup>6</sup> M. Bulakh, ‘Al-Malik al-Afḍal’s 14th-century “Arabic–Ethiopic Glossary” as an Attempt at Language Documentation’, *Chroniques du manuscrit au Yémen*, 1 (2017) = *From Mountain to Mountain: Exchange between Yemen and Ethiopia, Medieval to Modern*, 1–30.

which, along with the Arabic lemmata (pp. 407–412) and the plainly transcribed Ethiopian Semitic correspondences (pp. 412–416) and their reconstructed forms (pp. 416–422), also contains the list of Proto-Ethiopian Semitic and Proto-South Ethiopian Semitic cognates (pp. 422–423), as well as cognates from Gəʿəz (pp. 423–426), Epigraphic Gəʿəz (p. 426), Təgre (pp. 426–428), Təgrəñña (pp. 428–432), Amharic (pp. 432–437), Old Amharic (pp. 437–438), Argobba in general (pp. 438–439), Argobba of Aliyu Amba (pp. 439–441), Argobba of Tollaḥa (pp. 441–443), Southern Argobba (p. 443), Harari (pp. 443–445), Ancient Harari (pp. 445–446), East Gurage (p. 446), Səlṭe (pp. 446–448), Wäläne (pp. 448–450), Zay (pp. 450–451), Gafat (pp. 451–453), Gunnän Gurage (p. 453), Kəstane (called ‘Soddo’; pp. 453–455), Dobbi (called ‘Gogot’; pp. 455–457), M<sup>w</sup>əḥər (pp. 457–459), Mäsqan (pp. 459–462), Əža (pp. 462–464), Čaha (pp. 464–466), Ənor (called ‘Ənnämör’; pp. 466–467), Əndägañ (pp. 468–470), Geto (pp. 470–471). In addition, the ‘Lexical Index’ lists cognates from Semitic languages other than Arabic and Ethiopian Semitic, as well as from Cushitic and Omotic, and also from Indo-European languages (pp. 472–473). A summary of the forty-eight entries with two (or rarely more) Ethiopian Semitic equivalents of an Arabic lemma and a discussion of probable causes for these multiple translations is given in § 7 (pp. 28–30). The largest subsection of the Introduction is concerned with possible Ethiopian Semitic language(s) represented in the glossary (‘The Source Languages’, pp. 12–28). Based on assumed phonological features (including the distribution of gutturals, palatalization, weakening of *k* and *b*, sonorant alternations, and the shortening of word-final vowels; pp. 12–25) and on reconstructed cognate lexical items (pp. 25–28), the authors conclude that the glossary represents a mixture of all Ethiopian Semitic languages, in which Transversal South Ethiopian Semitic is dominant,<sup>7</sup> particularly (Old) Amharic (p. 26). The last section of the Introduction, ‘Morphological and Syntactic Features in the Glossary’ (pp. 30–32), deals with prominent grammatical features of the Ethiopian Semitic entries in the glossary. They include the plural suffix *-ač*, the use of the bare (or simple) imperfective for (most probably) Old Amharic or Argobba verbs as the citation form (whereas in all contemporary Transversal South Ethiopian Semitic languages this verb form is limited to subordination, or obligatorily followed by a temporal auxiliary in affirmative main clauses), a single instance of the causative prefix *ʾas-*, which is an exclusive feature of Amharic and Argobba (other Ethiopian Semitic languages have the causative prefix *ʾat-*

<sup>7</sup> Transversal South Ethiopian Semitic consists of Amharic, Argobba, Harari, and the East Gurage languages Səlṭe, Wäläne, and Zay.

instead),<sup>8</sup> two phrasal verbs consisting of (an invariable) meaning bearing element followed by the (inflected) verb ‘say’, and the negative prefix <sup>ʾ</sup>*al-* with perfective and imperfective verbs.

The main part of the present book is the annotated edition (pp. 33–326), in which each entry of the glossary is described and analysed. The glossary consists of a table with twelve paired columns of Arabic–Ethiopian Semitic correspondences written in Arabic on one and a half folia. The data of the glossary are presented according to the system developed by Franz-Christoph Muth (p. 1), in which each correspondence is given an identification number consisting of the page number (217, 218, or 219) in the original manuscript followed by a capital letter (A–F) for the paired (Arabic–Ethiopian Semitic) column, and a number (1–29/30) for the line in which the pair is situated. Arabic and Ethiopian Semitic terms are written (or transcribed) in the Arabic script, which causes a certain degree of ambiguity for the interpretation of the Ethiopian Semitic terms, especially with regard to vowels, palatalized consonants, and ejectives (cf. especially Appendix 2 ‘Arabic Graphemes and the Values Ascribed to Them in the Edition’, pp 404–406). The authors, therefore, provide two entries for the Ethiopian Semitic terms: a pure transliteration of the Arabic letters and a reconstructed Ethiopian Semitic form, derived from a comparison of cognates drawn from existing lexicographic works on Ethiopian Semitic languages (see also pp. 7–12).

Each entry starts with the Arabic lemma, its Ethiopian Semitic equivalent in the Arabic script, and its transliteration. The authors provide a translation based on Lane’s lexicon (1863–1893) for most Arabic entries.<sup>9</sup> The plainly transcribed Ethiopian Semitic equivalent is followed by its recon-

<sup>8</sup> The prefix <sup>ʾ</sup>*at-* also exists in Amharic in an assimilated form, as in <sup>ʾ</sup>*at-gaddälä* > <sup>ʾ</sup>*aggaddälä*, ‘cause to be killed by each other’, ‘cause to kill each other’. Compared to the <sup>ʾ</sup>*as-* causative these assimilated forms are less frequent and limited to the causative of certain reciprocal stems. For further details cf. Bezza Tesfaw Ayalew, ‘Causative of the ‘Passive’ in Amharic’, in Eyamba G. Bokamba, R. K. Shosted, and Bezza Tesfaw Ayalew, eds, *Selected Proceedings of the 40th Annual Conference on African Linguistics: African Languages and Linguistics Today* (Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, 2011), 53–64.

<sup>9</sup> E. W. Lane, *القاموس An Arabic–English lexicon, derived from the best and the most copious Eastern sources; Comprising a very large collection of words and significations omitted in the Kāmoos, with supplements to its abridged and defective explanations, ample grammatical and critical comments, and examples in prose and verse. In two Books: The first containing all the classical words and significations commonly known to the learned among the Arabs: the second, those that are of rare occurrence and not commonly known*, I–VIII (London–Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1863, 1865, 1867, 1872, 1874, 1877, 1885, 1893).

structed form for which the authors list the comparable data from Ethiopian Semitic languages, and then provide their assumption of one or several possible source languages. The entries may also contain comments on uncommon Arabic symbols and difficulties in deciphering the Arabic script, as well as additional information on the reconstructed form and the selection of the source language(s). Discrepancies between the first publication by Franz-Christoph Muth and the current publication are also noted.<sup>10</sup> A concise overview of the glossary is given in Appendix 1, ‘Summary of the Contents of the Arabic–Ethiopic Glossary’ (pp. 328–403), which only contains the identification number, the Arabic lemma (in the original script and transliteration), its English translation, and the Ethiopian Semitic equivalent (in the Arabic script, a plain transcription of the entity, and the reconstructed form).

The present book is well edited and clearly organized. However, for the ‘Lexical Index’ (pp. 407–473), it would have been helpful if the cited languages (for which see above) were also listed individually in the Table of Contents (or at another prominent place), since the heading alone gives no definite indication as to whether or not the index contains a language-specific subdivision. Furthermore, ‘Ethiopic’ as translation equivalent of the Arabic term *ḥabašīyy-* (p. 1) is somewhat misleading because Ethiopic has also been widely used as an alternative name for Gəʿəz, which is obviously not intended. A more precise term relating to the Semitic languages of Ethiopia/Eritrea would be preferable, for instance the linguistic group designation ‘Ethiopian Semitic’ (which is used in this review to replace Ethiopic). In addition, obsolete language names like Gogot, Soddo, ʿAnnāmor could have been replaced by the actually used names Dobbi, Kəstane, and ʿNor, respectively. Similarly, the term *Səlti* (with final *i*) refers to a former administrative unit, whereas *Səlte* (with final *e*) denotes the people and the language they speak.<sup>11</sup>

For the reconstruction of Ethiopian Semitic terms, the underlying processes are not always fully explained. On page 12, for instance, it is stated, ‘the forms reconstructed as the source lexemes are not homogeneous in what concerns their characteristic phonological features.’ Given the difficulty of deciphering Ethiopian Semitic terms (cf. the discussion in §§ 2 and 5 of the Introduction) and the fact that the glossary contains almost the earliest

<sup>10</sup> This includes new or alternative readings for 163 Ethiopian Semitic and 44 Arabic entries (pp. 3–4). Cf. F.-C. Muth, op. cit. (2009–2010).

<sup>11</sup> Hussein Mohammed Musa, *Silt’e as a Medium of Instruction*, MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University (2010), 27–30.

linguistic data on a still unknown number of (South) Ethiopian Semitic languages,<sup>12</sup> it remains unclear as to exactly what is meant by ‘phonological homogeneity’, and what actually constitutes a ‘characteristic phonological feature’. Related to this is a statement about the phonemic status of vowel length. On page 10, it is said that vowel length is phonemic in some South Ethiopian Semitic languages (namely in Zay, Səlṭe, Ənor, Əndägañ, and Geto), but that long vowels ‘do not always have etymological value’. Such a statement could imply that Proto-Semitic vowel length was retained in some of the Ethiopian Semitic terms in the glossary, which is questionable, as it is a secondary phenomenon due to language contact with Cushitic languages (and language internal development). The statement that Argobba is ‘the only ES [Ethiopian Semitic] language where the loss of the final vowel [i.e. short *ä*] is a regular feature of the 3 sg.m. of the perfect[ive]’ (p. 24) is not entirely correct, as the same process is also found in Zay.<sup>13</sup> Related to this is the reconstruction found in 219 F 9 (pp. 315–316), in which Harari, Səlṭe, or Wäläne are assumed possible source languages for the assumed Ethiopian Semitic verb *\*alhäsš(a/ä)*, ‘I do not wish’, consisting of the negative prefix *al-* and the verb *\*käšša* (> *\*häsša*), ‘want’. The weakening process *\*k > \*h* (i.e. IPA [x]) is well attested in Ethiopian Semitic, but the reverse process is less common, and often involves Arabic loanwords or results in *k/h* as alternating allophones of the same underlying consonant.<sup>14</sup> It is therefore highly unlikely that the Wäläne and Səlṭe verb *käšše*, ‘want’ (cf. p. 315 entry 219 F 8) is the source of this entry, as this would presuppose the uncommon re-fortification process *\*h > k*. Thus, only Harari *häsša*, ‘want’, would be a plausible source. Finally, the assumption that the suffix *-m* is ‘obligatory’ in the negation of declarative main-clause verbs in South Ethiopian Semitic (p. 32) is not accurate, as this use is limited to Amharic, Ar-

<sup>12</sup> The Arabic script creates a high degree of ambiguity in the transcription of the Ethiopian Semitic terms due to unreliable and inconsistent vocalization and the (also inconsistent) representation of consonants not found in Arabic, for instance the Ethiopian Semitic ejective *ʃ* is transcribed variously by the Arabic letters *šim* (ش), *ṣ* (ص), or *qāf* (ق) (cf. pp. 404–405).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. e.g. R. Meyer, *Das Zay: Deskriptive Grammatik einer Ostguragesprache (Äthio- semitisch)*, Grammmatische Analysen afrikanischer Sprachen, 25 (Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2005), 55–57.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. e.g. B. Podolsky, *Historical Phonetics of Amharic* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1991), 26, 29–32.



gobba, Harari, and Gafat.<sup>15</sup> According to Girma,<sup>16</sup> it was also not as widespread in Old Amharic as it is in current Amharic.

Most of the few critical remarks are a matter of opinion rather than factual errors. The present book is a major milestone in the documentation of the earliest accessible linguistic remnants of Ethiopian Semitic (other than Gəʿəz). All available philological and linguistic information with regard to the Arabic and Ethiopian Semitic entries in the glossary are meticulously summarized and presented. Consequently, the reasoning of the authors is clearly outlined, and critical readers are given the chance to crosscheck proposed hypotheses and interpretations. The present book is of interest for specialists in Ethiopian Semitic linguistics, comparative Semitic lexicography, and also Arabic dialectology.

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. the discussion in R. Hetzron, *Ethiopian Semitic: Studies in Classification*, Journal of Semitic Studies, Monograph, 2 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972), 95–96. For an overview of negation in Gurage languages, cf. R. Meyer, ‘Finiteness in Gurage Languages’, in R. Meyer, Y. Treis, and Azeb Amha, eds, *Explorations in Ethiopian Linguistics: Complex Predicates, Finiteness and Interrogativity*, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, 91 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), 225–258, here 236–240. Hetzron’s hypothesis (R. Hetzron, op. cit. (1972), 96) that *-m* was weakened to *\*-w/\*-u* and then lost in East Gurage and elsewhere in Gunnän Gurage lacks evidence, as the vowel *-u* on negated main-clause verbs in Zay is not connected (formally or functionally) to the suffix *-m* (for details cf. R. Meyer, op. cit. (2014), 242–245).

<sup>16</sup> Girma A. Demeke, *Grammatical Changes in Semitic: A Diachronic Grammar of Amharic*, 2nd edn (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2017), 132.