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HIRUIE ERMIAS, Universität Hamburg

Dissertation Abstract

The Issues of ʾAggabāb (Classic Gǝʿǝz Grammar) According to the Tradition of Qǝne *Schools*

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Dissertation Abstracts

Hiruie Ermias, *The Issues of ʾAggabāb (Classic Gəʿəz Grammar) According to the Tradition of* Qəne *Schools*, PhD Dissertation in Ethiopian Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Hamburg, defended on 20 February 2019.

In Ethiopia, the *qəne* schools are the most important centres for the study of the Gəʿəz language. The study has two major sections, *sawāsəw* and *qəne*. *Sawāsəw* deals with the grammatical aspects of the language while *qəne* is specifically concerned with composing and reciting *qəne* 'Gəʿəz poetry'.

Sawāsəw has four distinct parts which are known as *gəśś*, *rəbā qəmr*, *rəbā gəśś*, and *ʾaggabāb*. According to the documented tradition of the schools, *ʾaggabāb* is the final and the most essential part of the grammatical study of Gəʿəz. It deals with various linguistic elements of which the grammar of the language is constituted. In the *qəne* schools, studying *ʾaggabāb* is one of the five requirements for graduating in *qəne* and the Gəʿəz language.

In this work, two hundred and thirty-four linguistic elements are categorized into various divisions and subdivisions. In accordance with the tradition of *ʾaggabāb*, the elements are classified into three groups: *ʿAbiyy ʾaggabāb*, *Nəʿus ʾaggabāb*, and *Daqiq ʾaggabāb*.

However, from the perspective of modern linguistics, these elements can be grouped into seven lexical categories, namely Adverbs, Conjunctions, Prepositions, Relative Pronouns, Interrogative Pronouns, Interjections, and Particles. The purpose of this research is to discuss what *ʾaggabāb* is and to compare the main issues within the perspectives of various scholars. Thus, to give the study a present-day relevance, the elements are recategorized and analysed within a linguistic perspective.

The particular focus of *ʾaggabāb* encompasses the etymologies, meanings, and grammatical functions of the elements included in the categories mentioned above. It also touches upon rules concerning sentence structure, pronunciation, word construction as well as prefixation and suffixation.

The other important feature of the study is that it provides ample evidence, with examples to illustrate each theory. Of course, in the traditional teaching the evidence is mostly mentioned without reference to sources and the sources are not easy to identify. Thus, one of the challenging tasks in the writing of this dissertation was to detect the correct sources of a considerable number of quotations, and to provide fitting textual evidence for the

theories which lack evidence. Finally, to make the study more transparent and understandable, a relevant textual source is given for each theory or analysis.

The tradition of the schools maintains that the introduction of the existing Gǝʿǝz grammar ʾaggabāb goes back to fifteenth-century scholars. Thus, it can be identified as a classical grammar of Gǝʿǝz.

The knowledge which has come down to our time comes through oral transmission. Even today, the methodology which is applied in the schools is based on oral teaching.

DARIA ELAGINA, *The Textual Tradition of the Chronicle of John of Nikiu: Towards the Critical Edition of the Ethiopic Version*, PhD Dissertation in Ethiopian Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Hamburg, defended on 29 July 2019.

The *Chronicle of John of Nikiu* is an important source for the history of the conquest of Egypt by the Arabs, as well as for the history of Late Antiquity in general. It was composed by a Coptic bishop, John, in the seventh century in Egypt and tells the history of the world starting from Adam and Eve till the author's time. The first part of the *Chronicle* relies on diverse sources and offers an impression of the scope of literary works available to the author of the *Chronicle*. The second part is, however, an account written down by an eyewitness to the Islamic conquest and thus represents a highly valuable historical document.

The original language of the *Chronicle* is still debatable. There are arguments for Coptic as well as for Greek. Presumably around the twelfth century the text was translated into Arabic. In 1601 it was translated into Ethiopic and, at the very end of the nineteenth century, into Amharic. According to the current state of knowledge, only these two versions, Ethiopic and Amharic, have survived. The *Chronicle* consists of 122 chapters prefaced with an Introduction and a Table of Contents with short descriptions of chapters and followed by a Conclusion and a Colophon. However, the latter belongs exclusively to the Ethiopic version and only contains information on the circumstances of the translation into Ethiopic.

The complete text of the *Chronicle* was published and translated for the first time by Hermann Zotenberg in 1883 on the basis of two manuscripts (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Éthiopien 123 and London, British Library, Or. 818). An English translation was published by Robert Henry Charles in 1916, and is based on Zotenberg's edition. Since that time the number of available witnesses to the Ethiopic version of the *Chronicle* has