



Aethiopica 7 (2004)

International Journal of Ethiopian and
Eritrean Studies

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Review

MICHAEL WALTISBERG, *Die St-Stämme des Altäthiopischen*

Aethiopica 7 (2004), 253–262

ISSN: 1430–1938

Published by

Universität Hamburg

Asien Afrika Institut, Abteilung Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik

Hiob Ludolf Zentrum für Äthiopistik

Reviews

gärradočč (local leaders) and the five *wäyzazart* (renowned ladies), the genealogy of Haji Aliye 'Sasar', Sälte titles, the Sälte language, and the historical and cultural heritages of the Sälte, which would have been described better in the first part. The authors try to explain or justify (but without reference or evidence) as to how they chose the term Sälte by avoiding the other commonly used names (Sumut Sälte and Sälṭi). It seems that the difference between the three names or terms is not clear (p. 207).

The writers emphasize the significance of oral tradition and encourage parents to teach their children the history, tradition and genealogy of the Sälte. Finally the authors present a map showing the geographical location of the Sälte and an (incomplete) bibliography. In sum, the efforts of the authors should be acknowledged. Undoubtedly, the book will be useful as an additional reference for language teachers at schools and colleges to teach the values, traditions, wisdom, philosophy, literary expressions, etc., of the people of Sälte through their proverbs.

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MICHAEL WALTISBERG, *Die St-Stämme des Altäthiopischen* = *Lincom Studies in Afroasiatic Linguistics* 8. München: Lincom Europa, 2001. 93 pp. Price: € 40.50. ISBN: 3–89586–391–2.

Original linguistic studies in Ethiopic have been rather scarce after DILLMANN's *Grammar* (1857, 1899, 1907) and *Lexicon* (1865). Except for records of the traditional pronunciation, *Säwasəw* and some studies of specific problems,¹ most further treatment of Gə'əz grammar or lexicology relies heavily or totally on DILLMANN's work. The main works of reference, even KIDANÄ-WÄLD *MSG* and LESLAU *CDG*, are in substance based on DILLMANN.² Detailed studies on the main chapters of Ethiopic morphology and syntax have not been made for quite some time, and in view of

¹ Contributions to Ethiopic syntax are mainly listed in WENINGER *Verbalsystem* 4–6.

² This is mainly true for the lexical part of *MSG* and for the greater part of the data, though not for the etymologies, in LESLAU *CDG*. Of all college textbooks, only PRAETORIUS *Äthiop. Gr.* includes original observations and independent views.

the dearth of fresh research in this field, the appearance of monographic studies on Gəʿəz grammar would be especially welcome. Two such monographs have been published during 2001, viz. WALTISBERG's *St-Stämme* and WENINGER's *Verbalsystem*. The latter, a revised version of the author's *Habilitationsschrift*, is a thorough original analysis of the Ethiopic tense-system, based on the extensive perusal of various Gəʿəz texts. The former — the book under review — is based on the author's MA-thesis intended mainly (v. p. 15) to identify and describe the semantic oppositions between the *st*-stems and other stem-forms of the same verbs. While Ethiopic stem-formation looks systematically clear, and the analysis of *st*-stems as *ʾas-tä-*, i.e. causative of the reflexive &c., rather obvious (v. DILLMANN *Gr.* §83), a detailed description, based on textual evidence, of the formal correspondences and semantic relations between *st*-forms and forms of the same verbs in other stem-forms is a subject well suitable for theses and dissertations. Better it might be studied in the context of the stem-system as a whole and not restricted to *st*-forms.

WALTISBERG's study will mainly be examined with regard to its source data, methodological framework, research procedure, analysis and conclusions, but a word should be said about the very definition of the stems here discussed, which is also reflected in the title of the booklet. As well recognized by the author (pp. 10–11), there are in fact no *st*-stems in Gəʿəz (nor in other Ethiopian languages). From a comparative point of view, the A- will be regarded as being generalized for the causative-active, and added to the *ST to make AST the derivational prefix of the causative of the passive-reflexive. The A- + *S- has made the AS-, the same as the *N- is made AN-. The parallel generalization of T- for the passive-reflexive created the sporadic TST (in Amharic) and TN (also in Gəʿəz); see already PRAETORIUS *Äthiop. Gr.* §43 & §45 (before NÖLDEKE ap. DILLMANN *Gr.* §83n).³ When letters were substituted for roman numerals as stem-labels, to represent more transparently the stem-derivational prefixes, stems IV were naturally labelled as AST, as in GETATCHEW *Verbalsystem* or WENINGER *Gəʿəz*. To speak of ST-stems in Ethiopic can be misleading.

Source data and analysis

A major drawback of W's research is that it depends entirely (see p. 4) on DILLMANN's *Lexicon* and its supplements. It also uses LESLAU *CDG*, but mostly for quoting its English definitions, which are generally translations

³ DILLMANN thought that AS- and AN- were the original ancient prefixes, later shortened to S- and N- resp. in some nominal derivations; he nevertheless regarded the Gəʿəz AN- forms as derived by prefixing the causative A-: *AN- > N-> AN-; see DILLMANN *Gr.* §83 & §87.

of Dillmann's Latin. Basing a study of verbal stems on dictionaries instead of examining actual usage in connected texts will necessarily bring on numerous mistakes all along the way, specially in analysing causatives and factitives. When, e.g., X causes (Y forgive Z), and a causative verb-form is translated in the dictionary as "cause to forgive", such translation can in no way be taken as evidence that the verb *ʾastäsräyä* (AST₁) is the causative of *säräyä* (O₁) "forgive", as claimed by W. p. 23. With Z as object and Y unspecified, *kahən yastäsärri xätawəʾa həzb* literally says that the priest causes the sins of the people to be forgiven, and *ʾastäsräyä* is obviously the causative of *täsäryä* (T₁) "be forgiven". Also *ʾastäbalha* (AST₃), translated as "order to liberate, order to be liberated" is not the causative of *balha* (O₁) "liberate, save", as suggested by W. p. 25, but of *täbalha* (T₃) "be liberated, be saved". Similarly, *ʾastäarakäbä* (AST₃), translated in LESLAU CDG rightly as "cause to meet &c.", is also translated there as "cause to find", but in no sense does it make a causative of *räkäbä* (O₁) "find" (W. p. 23); it is the ordinarily expected causative counterpart of *täarakäbä* (T₃) "meet, find each other", as in *kämä yastäarakba wäluda* "that he may cause her to meet her children". Also *ʾastäʾaxazä* (AST₁), translated as "make seize" &c. is in fact not the causative of *ʾaxazä* "hold, seize" (W. p. 23),⁴ but of *täʾaxzä* "be seized, be held", as in *wä-ʾastäʾaxazä kʷəllo gäbrä betä ʾagziʾabəher bä-ʾädä kahnat* "and he made all the offices of the house of the Lord be held in the hand of the priests".

A form like *ʾastäqatälä* (AST₃) should have caused no problem, since its basic sense is "make [people &c.] fight (and kill) each other", clearly the causative of *täqatälä* (T₃), as rightly stated in W. p. 32. In Rev. vi 8, however, *ʾastäqatälä* occurs in a sense that could seem less clear: Death and Hell are seen with the power that they can bring death upon the people (*kämä yastäqatlomu*) by war, famine, plague and wild beasts. It was this occurrence of *ʾastäqatälä* that made DILLMANN define a second meaning of *ʾastäqatälä*, viz. "bellum gerere" (DILLMANN *Lex.* 440), and the same instance possibly led LESLAU to add "also 'help to kill, incite to kill'" to the same entry (LESLAU CDG 451b). Reflecting in a way the description of the rider holding the sword on the red horse in Rev. vi 4, who was given the power to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another (*kämä yätqatälu bäbäynatihomu*), verse 8 says *yastäqatlomu* (AST₃) about causing *kämä yätqatälu* (T₃). W.'s listing of the same occurrence of *ʾastäqatälä* as adjunctive to O₁ (p. 53) and as synonymous to T₃ (p. 67), (besides the ordinary function of the same form as causative of T₃) is an error typically resulting from making dictionary definitions one's prime source for analysing morphosyntactic features.

⁴ The same *ʾastäʾaxazä* (AST₁) is elsewhere (W. p. 44) said to be the factitive of T₃; if it were, *ʾastäʾaxazä* in such contexts should be recognized as AST₃.

Whatever the semantic nuances are, it is not only that the formal structure of AST as the causative &c. of T remains unshaken, but in semantic terms as well it is this relation between the two formal categories that really matters. Even where the relevant T-form is not attested, it may still be the pertinent basis for understanding the derived AST-form. Such form is, e.g., *ʾas-tämaḥarä* “cause to have compassion for one another”, even though **tämaḥarä* seems not to be attested.

The “lehrreiche Stelle” (DILLMANN *Gr.* §83n) in the New Testament where twelve parallel repetitions of different AST verb-forms (including *ʾastämaḥarä*) are used in successive sentences, if it is translated precisely, may provide insight into the basic sense common to AST-stems rather than support some of DILLMANN’s (and W.’s) distinctions:⁵

⁴*Täfaqero yastäʿeggäs, täfaqero yastämaḥər, täfaqero ʾi-yastäqannəʾ wä-ʾi-yastäxaffər wä-ʾi-yastäʿebbi läbbä. ʾwä-ʾi-yaxäśśäs tädla lä-baḥtitu, ʾi-yastämaʿəʿ wä-ʾi-yahelli ʾəkkuyä. ʾwä-ʾi-yastäfeśśəḥ bə-gəfʿ wä-yastäfeśśəḥ bə-ṣədq. ʾbä-kʷəllu yastämaḥər, wä-bä-kʷəllu yastäʿeggäs, wä-bä-kʷəllu yastäʾammən, wä-bä-kʷəllu yastäwekkəl* (1 Cor. xiii 4–7).

“⁴Loving one another makes [people] patient, loving one another causes [people] to have compassion for one another, loving one another makes [people] not to be jealous of one another, makes [people] not to shame each other, and causes the heart not to be arrogant; ⁵and it makes one not seek one’s own benefit, and causes [people] not to be angry at one another, and it causes not to think evil; ⁶and it makes one not to rejoice over iniquity but to rejoice at justice. ⁷In all [events] (or everywhere) it causes [people] to have compassion for one another, and in all it makes [people] patient, and in all it causes [people] to trust one another, and in all it makes [people] feel confidence”.

This eulogy of the virtues of love is developed in the Greek original by personification of Love itself as forbearing, being kind, not being jealous, not being braggart or puffed up. Love itself is said not to behave unseemly, not to be seeking its own interests, not to be irascible and not thinking evil &c. In the Ethiopic version, loving one another is literally described as inspiring those human virtues, not as possessing them. Paraphrases suggested in the Amharic commentary express sometimes clearly the causative meaning: *yastäʿeggəs* (AST₂) is rendered in Amharic as እንዲታገሙ ፡ ያደርጋል “it makes that they should be patient”; *yastäwekkəl* is translated into Amharic ተሰፋ ፡ እንዲይዙ ፡ ያደርጋል “it makes that they feel confident” (periphrastic causatives of generic 3rd pl.) (*Pauline Epistles & Commentary* 267).

⁵ Quotations from the same passage will also be found in WALTISBERG pp.12 & 37.

The reliability of the evidence collected from dictionaries can be frequently problematic with regard to data and definitions alike. In the chapter about “pluralitive function” (W.p.51), e.g., some forms and all the definitions quoted are not based in the dictionaries on textual evidence, and the examination of these sources as given in the footnotes is often misleading. References to SYLVAIN GRÉBAUT’s supplements to DILLMANN refer actually very often to quotations from the lexical list of the Italian Capuchin Father GIUSTO DA URBINO (1814–1856), abbr. JU, who did not look for any written evidence neither for the Gəʿez forms nor for their meanings, but relied on intuitive personal knowledge. As an example of such pluralitive we thus find LESLAU’s *ʾästäšäbʾa* / *ʾästäšabəʾa* (AST_{1/3}) “be used to making war”, defined as a pluralitive of *šäbʾa* (O₁) “make war”. In fact *šäbʾa* is well attested and means “attack, take military action against”; it is the T₃ stem that normally means “fight (each other)”. The AST₁ form *ʾästäšäbʾa* is found only in JU as quoted by GRÉBAUT, it is not attested in Ethiopic texts and is probably erroneous. AST₃ *ʾästäšabəʾa* is brought in LESLAU CDG on the authority of the great Ethiopian scholar KIDANÄ-WÄLD KƏFLE, who had this form defined as “cause to fight each other” (አጣላ ፥ አዋጋ), with an example from the story in Acts vii 26 about the two Hebrews who were fighting with each other and Moses saying to them, *mənt yastäšabbəʾakkəmu ʾənzä ʾaxaw ʾantəmu* “what makes you fight with each other while you are brethren?” (KIDANÄ-WÄLD MSG 740a). This was a single reproach of a single event of fighting one against one. The verb-form thus used could by no means be regarded as “pluralitive”, and it is clearly a causative referring to the reason why the two men were fighting with each other (*täšabəʾu*). In the whole chapter on pluralitive there is hardly evidence to any such function of AST-forms: both *ʾastəkafälä* (AST₃) “apportion” and *təkafälä* (T₃) “share” involve plurality, which is typical of the reciprocity of T₃ and carried over to its causative AST₃; AST₁ of the same verb is dubious, and AST in any way is not a “pluralitive” of O₁. For the four other AST-forms in the same chapter there is no reliable evidence at all: *ʾastəwəḥayä* is in all likelihood a textual mistake for *ʾastəwəʿayä* “ignite”, and the other three were taken from JU.

Within the rather coherent system of Ethiopic verbal stems, deeper insight into the subtleties of the derived forms may be gained by probing their syntactical usage. Thus AST₁ *ʾastämḥarä* is basically a factitive which means “acting so that mercy be shown”, and it can be related to T₁ *täməḥrā*. It is of great specific and general interest that an object suffix governed by this AST₁ can refer either (1) to the beneficiary or (2) to the mediator: (1) Tobit iii 15 *ʾastämḥəranni* means literally “do that pity be taken of me” (ἐπίταξον...ἐλεῖσ αἰμῆ); (2) Gen. xlii 21 *täʿawwärrnä səqayə lä-ʾəxunä ʾənzä yastämḥərännä* “we were blind to the suffering of our brother when he asked us for mercy”. Re-

garding the same AST₁ *ʾastāmḥarä* form as being both a desiderative to O₁ (W. p. 52) and synonymous to O₁ (W. p. 58) raises a problem of method, but this needs to be discussed in broader context.

Theory, Terminology and Method

The chapter on semantic theory as used for the description and analysis of the Ethiopic verbal stems (W. pp. 14–15) just states in general terms that every expression in a language has meaning and that between linguistic meanings there are relations; that nearly all meanings here listed are taken without comment from LESLAU *CDG* and DILLMANN *Lex.* and that binary oppositions are the basic tool for establishing linguistic structure. With EDZARD *Stämme* singled out as an exemplary study of verbal stems in a Semitic language, the task of W.'s monograph is stated to be the identifying and describing of the semantic oppositions between AST-verbs and other stem-forms. This should have resulted in an attempt to define as far as possible the most general sense marked by the formal oppositions, which underlies the nuanced functions implied in various contexts but not marked or signified linguistically. Fifteen technical terms referring to such "functions" of AST stems are listed and briefly explained in a special chapter (W. pp. 15–20), where some further comments are added. The main part of W.'s study (pp. 23–67) is a list, for each such semantic function, of AST₁, AST₂ and AST₃ verbs with their oppositions. The differentiation of so many functions linguistically unmarked may give rise to doubts whether it had not better been advisable to find a common denominator, e.g., to Causative, Factitive, Adjutative, and even Tolerative, or else to Estimative, Declarative (as here employed) and Simulative. It could also well be considered to give up discussing functions of AST-stems labelled as Pluralitive, Intensive and Finitive, for which no evidence is here provided.

In a section on "Verbalstämme und Aktionsarten" (W. p. 20, §2.4.19), "Aktionsarten" are regarded as inherent temporal properties according to which verbs can be classified. They are said to depend strongly on the context and be irrelevant to the definition of what verbal stems signify. Such definition is partly true of aspects, but not of Aktionsarten in the distinctive sense of the term, which has been well established as a most apposite denomination for categories such as causative, factitive, intensive, inchoative, iterative, frequentative, resultative or the like, and consequently most suitable for defining the meanings of Semitic verbal stems. Cf., e.g., KNOBLOCH *Sprw. Wb.* I 76–78; ISAČENKO *Russische Sprache* 387–388, 398; MASLOV *Aspektologija* 70–79, spec. 77; ABRAHAM *Terminologie* 15.

Functions and Oppositions

The formal system of Ethiopic stem-derivation is clearly structured. Its most reasonable description is still that given in DILLMANN *Gr.*, with three common root-internal “types”, viz. basic (1), augmented by gemination of the penultimate radical (2), and augmented by a phonetic zero actualized as lengthening of the vowel preceding the penultimate radical (3).⁶ For each of these types there are stems with no derivational prefixes (0), and with derivational prefixes A, or T, or AST. It is well known that internal root augmentation as in forms 2 and 3, by which morphologically-related verb-stems can be derived e.g. in Arabic, are not productive in Gəʿəz (DILLMANN *Gr.* §77.3 at the end, §78 in the beginning), though some exceptions will still be found.⁷ Prefixal derivation, however, is fully alive, A providing causatives, T – reflexives-passives, and AST – causatives of T. There is one stem-form only that involves internal augmentation in productive derivation, and that form is T₃, which besides making reflexives-passives of verbs whose basic form is O₃ (and besides being itself the basic form of verbs not used otherwise) expresses mostly a special sense of reciprocity (“do with each other”), or participation (“do with sb.”). Since AST is formally the causative of T, it is advisable to isolate its main function from the shades of meaning carried through the T (and perhaps other stems). Thus, e.g., meanings like “intensive” or “reciprocal” have nothing to do with AST as such, but belong to the T-stems on which the AST is built. It remains, however, to be found out whether, or to what extent, the actual relations and oppositions between the functions and meanings of various stem-forms really reflect the componential structure of formal derivation. This in fact is the task with which W. has come to cope. He collected from the linguistic literature fourteen technical terms used for defining verbal functions and tried to attribute the functions so defined to the Ethiopic AST forms. By far the greater majority of such forms will naturally be found to indicate causative or factitive or estimative functions. These terms, listed in W.’s classification, are not disparate. In fact, Factitive, as coined by BECKER *Organism* and as later adopted, was conceived, and usually employed, referring to some special usages also of causative constructions, actually implying the simulative, declarative and tolerantive.⁸ Although one might wish, for practical reasons, to enumerate

⁶ The classification is DILLMANN’s, but not the description of the categories as here formulated.

⁷ Some such exceptions, or survivals, are listed by DILLMANN *ibid.* For a detailed examination of such forms in Amharic, v. MANTEL-NIEĆKO *Type A/B–C*; cf. COWLEY *A and B Stems*; also COHEN *Nouvelles études* 225–226.

contextual nuanced senses of the same form or construction, such distinctions hardly belong to the structure of the language.

In the examination of AST forms, we should like to find out the oppositions between AST and other forms of the prefixal derivation classes, also to learn to what extent the distribution of the derivationally non-productive type 1 and type 2 (also O_3 and A_3) is consistent throughout the derived stems. We have already seen how regarding AST as causative of O_1 is mostly mistaken. In too many cases, as already noted, the evidence is unreliable or the interpretation incorrect. Thus, e.g., a form like *ʾastäḥayäwä*, attested only in Isa. xix 9, does not fit in the context in any sense related to living or restoration, and is most probably mistaken, but used by W. twice, both as evidence of AST_3 as causative of O_1 (p. 24) and as factitive of O_1 (p. 39); an example like *ʾastänabärä* “laid out” literally means “made it be placed (in order)” and is the causative of *tänabärä* T_3 (KIDANÄ-WÄLD MSG 622 a) and does not make sense as causative of *näbärä* O_1 ; AST_2 *ʾastänässəḥa* “make do penance” is quoted from LESLAU CDG 402a and regarded as a causative of O_2 *nässəḥa* “repent, do penance”, but if such a form is found, it is naturally the causative of T_2 *tänässəḥa* “repent” &c. In the chapter on the causative function, only AST_1 as causative of T_1 and AST_2 as causative of T_2 are sufficiently supported by reliable evidence, and AST_3 as causative of the fully productive T_3 is plentifully attested.

The Ethiopic stem-system with its clear formal structure and richness of grammaticalized distinctions, is highly interesting for understanding the language as a whole, for its historical and comparative evaluation and for linguistic typology in general. It may be hoped that based on these preparatory lists the author will now be able to plunge in the Ethiopic literature to bring up the inner structure of Gəʿəz stem-system as it works in actual usage.

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⁸ “Alle Verben und Adjektive, in deren Begriff eine kausative Richtung aufgenommen ist, fordern zur Ergänzung des Begriffes ein Objekt in der Beziehungsform des Faktitivs z. B. ‘zu Etwas werden, machen, wählen’, ‘in Etwas verwandeln’, ‘für Etwas halten, gelten, erkennen, ausgeben’, ‘als Etwas ansehen, betrachten’ ” (BECKER *Organism* 384 & ff.).

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Reviews

WENINGER *Verbalsystem* — STEFAN WENINGER, *Das Verbalsystem des Altäthiopischen* (Wiesbaden 2001).

Gideon Goldenberg, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

RONNY MEYER and RENATE RICHTER, *Language Use in Ethiopia from a Network Perspective* = Schriften in Afrikanistik Vol. 7. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003. 130 pp. Price: € 27,50. ISBN: 3-631-50259-1.

This little book contains much more valuable information, both for linguists and non-linguists, than can be inferred from its subtitle: “Results of a Sociolinguistic Survey conducted among High School Students”. Product of cooperation between Renate Richter, the well known and highly experienced specialist on Ethiopian sociolinguistics and her former student and promising young linguist Ronny Meyer, it contains not only the results of the above-mentioned survey conducted by a joint team from the Universities of Mainz and Addis Ababa in 1997 and 1998 (Chapters 3–6, pp. 41–81) but also an introductory Chapter (no 2, pp. 23–40) which contains a concise and enlightening description of the actual linguistic situation and of language policy in Ethiopia since the beginning of the 20th century. This chapter should become basic reading material for any sociologist, anthropologist and researcher in political science dealing with modern Ethiopia. Another merit of the book, beyond its purely sociolinguistic contribution, lies in its succinct analysis of the first really accurate and scientific data on the linguistic situation in Ethiopia as represented in the population census of 1994 (pp. 23–28 and Appendix III pp. 94–123).

The fact that during the last century the official language policy in Ethiopia has been completely reversed, though, for the time being, perhaps more in theory than in practice, clearly exemplifies the evolution in the political and social thinking of the leadership of this multilingual society. It started during the reign of Haile Sellasie as an uncompromising program of amharization¹ with gradual passage to English as language of instruction in more advanced stages of education. Haile Sellasie was quoted as having said: “Are Ethiopian only those who speak Amharic”.² In this connection it might have been inter-

¹ In addition to the numerous sources quoted in the book see also, for the language policy under Haile Sellasie: M. CHAUVIN, “Politique linguistique du gouvernement éthiopien”. In: *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies – Session A*, Nice 19–22 December 1977. Rotterdam: Balkema 1980, pp. 425–446.

² CHAUVIN, *op. cit.*, p. 428.