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ዘሞትነ ንሕነ ወዘነገሥነ ንሕነ
Notes on relative and correlative constructions in Gəʿəz

OLGA KAPELIUK

Preliminary remarks

The Gəʿəz title of the present paper has been extracted from the ceremonial formula which served as proclamation (*ʿawāḡ*) at the coronation of a new King of Kings: **ዘትነ ንሕነ ወዘነገሥነ ንሕነ ኅዝኑ በእንተ ትነ ወተፈሥሐ በእንተ መንግሥትነ** *za-motəna nəḅna wa-za-nagaśna nəḅna ḥəznu ba-ʿanta motə-na wa-tafasśəḅu ba-ʿanta mangəśta-na* (Šərʿata mangəśt III:1).¹ Whether we translate the two opening relative constructions of the formula² by a genuine cleft sentence: “[It is] we who died and [it is] we who became king, mourn because of our death and rejoice because of our reign”, or by a pseudo-cleft sentence: “We [are he] who died and we [are he] who became king”, or by a plain verbal sentence as does the editor “Wir sind gestorben und wir sind zur Regierung gekommen”³, it cannot be denied that the use of such a relative construction, in what doubtless was a lapidary expression meant to be understood by all, points out to its common character.

And, as a matter of fact, the use of relative clauses in Gəʿəz is extremely frequent and diversified, much more so than in any other classical Semitic language. The reason for this phenomenon may be attributed, at least partly, to the fact that they allow to fill some deficiencies in its morphological system. Gəʿəz has relatively few morphological means for creating adjectives and the relative verbs are often used instead, similarly to what happens in the coterritorial Agaw languages and in modern Ethio-Semitic.⁴

¹ In VARENBERGH 1915–16: 15. In transcribing the Gəʿəz examples I follow LESLAU (1987) and the gemination rules established by MITTWOCH (1926); I transcribe **ḫ** by *ṣ* and **ḥ** by *ts*. In the translation of the examples words which are in the text but should be omitted in the translation are put in parentheses while words which should be added to the translation are inserted in square brackets.

² Disregarding the attraction of the person of the main sentence to the relative clause which is almost a rule in the relative clauses in Gəʿəz. The literal translation of the formula is: “Who-we.died we, and who-we.became.king we”.

³ Id p. 31.

⁴ Cf. APPELYARD 1975: 332, 338; HETZRON 1976: 19; CONTI-ROSSINI 1912: 136–138; KAPELIUK forthcoming a.

Sometimes a verb directly preceded by a relative pronoun (or, in other terms, a relativized verb or a relative complex) is lexicalized as an adjective that even allows the rendering of the comparative degree, e.g.: **ወይከውን ደኃሪቱ ዘየአኪ እምቀዳሚቱ** *wa-yəkawwən dabārit-u za-ya-akki ʾəm-qadāmit-u* (Matthew 12:45) “And his end will be worse (lit. will.be which-is.bad, Greek χείρων) from his beginning”, whereas **እኩይ** *ʾakkuy* would simply mean “bad”. Certain prepositional complexes are equally lexicalized as adjectives, e.g.: **ዘለዓለም** *za-la-alam* “eternal” (lit. who-to-world=eternity). Also the reduced possibility of deriving original active participles from verbal roots and their almost generalized substantivization lie behind many relative complexes. Thus in translating Greek participles Gəʾəz often resorts to the combination of the relative pronoun and a verb; suffice it to compare the Gəʾəz version of Matthew 10:37-42 from **ዘያፈቅር** *za-yāfaqqər* “Who loves” and up to **ዘአስተየ** *za-astaya* “Who gave to drink” with the Greek original to get the most convincing illustration of this phenomenon; in these six verses Gəʾəz has eleven constructions with a relative pronoun, outnumbering even the Greek participles, which, contrary to the Gəʾəz construction, cannot be negated.⁵

Beside these, there are several other constructions with relative clauses which syntactically correspond to deverbal nouns such as the infinitive or noun of action, i. e. where the relative complex acts “abstractly”, as an equivalent of a that ... clause. First and foremost among them are the cleft-sentences, another common trait with the Agaw languages of the area, the use of which reached its peak in modern Ethio-Semitic⁶, e.g.: **ወዘኒ ዘእብለኩም እንዘ እዛለፈኩም** *wa-za-ni za-ʾəbəlakkəmu ʾənza ʾəzzāllafakkəmu* (I Corinthians 6:5) “And [it is] while blaming you that I am saying this to you”. But other cases are also extant, especially when the relative pronoun of the 3rd person masculine singular acts as a conjunction introducing a content clause, e.g.: **እስመ ሰምዑ ዘገብረ ዘንተ ተአምረ** *ʾasma samʿu za-gabra zanta taʾāmməra* (John 12:18) “Because they heard that He made this miracle”, or is combined with a preposition to form a conjunction of subordination, e.g.: **ወእምዘ ፈጸመ ፍርየተ ሰቤሃ ይፈኑ ማዕደ** *wa-ʾəmza faṣṣama fəryat-a sobəha yəfennu māʾtsada* (Mark 4:29) “And when it finishes ripening then he sends the sickle”, etc.

The relative clauses in Gəʾəz may be divided into two primary kinds: relative clauses *stricto sensu* which accompany, as an attribute, an explicit headnoun, and those in which the headnoun is missing and which, consequently, are substantivized and may act as the syntactic equivalent of a noun⁷; in the

⁵ For the translation of Greek participles see HOFMANN 1977: 247–248.

⁶ KAPELIUK 1985; id. 1988: 101–146; id. 1980; APPELYARD 1989; PALMER 1962.

⁷ To the point of being able to serve in its turn as the headnoun of another relative clause, e.g.: **ይመጽእ ዘይጸንዐኒ እምድኅራየ ዘኢይደልወኒ ...** *yəmaṣṣə ʾa-yəṣanna-anni ʾəmdəḫre-*

following example the same relative verb **ዘርኢኩ** *za-rəʾiku* acts as a substantive and in another variant of the verse as an attribute: **ትክልኩ ትንግረኒ ሕልምየ ወዘርኢኩ** (var. **ዘርኢኩ**) **ወፍካሬሁኒ** *təkəl-nu təngər-anni həlmə-ya wa-za-rəʾiku* (var. *za-rəʾiku*) *wa-fəkkāre-hu-ni* (Daniel 2:26) “Could you tell me my dream and what I saw (var. my dream which I saw) and also its interpretation”. Whereas the construction with a headnoun is the most obvious one and most commonly used in the other Semitic languages, as well as in the major European languages, in Gəʿəz it is the second one which is the most diversified in its functions and probably statistically more frequent. Considering that in the absence of an explicit headnoun the relative pronoun takes its place, we shall follow A. Dillmann’s terminology and refer to these constructions as correlative clauses. A. Dillmann, with his usual acumen in matters of syntax, describes in detail both types of constructions⁸; consequently, what follows is meant only to provide some more systematic formulations on certain points of grammar based, as far as possible, on formal criteria.

The relative pronouns

The relative pronouns in Gəʿəz are: **ዘ** *za-* for the masculine singular, **እንተ** *ʾanta* for the feminine singular, and **እለ** *ʾalla* for the masculine and feminine plural⁹. Theoretically there is no difference whether they stand at the opening of relative or correlative clauses. In both cases the pronouns belong to the same paradigm. In this Gəʿəz differs, for instance, from classical Arabic where the pronouns **من** *man* and **ما** *mā* may only be used correlatively meaning respectively “he who” and “that which” as opposed to the regular relative pronouns from the **الذي** *al-ladī* “who, which” etc. series¹⁰. It also differs from English and French in which correlative pronouns normally demand a prop word such as “the one who, he who” and “celui qui” respectively. Also two relative adverbs **ኅበ** *haba* “where, the place in which” and **አመ** *ʾama* “when, at the time when” are found both in relative and in correlative clauses¹¹. Yet there is a certain difference, based on syntactic con-

ya za-i-γəḍalləw-anni ... (Mark 1:7) “[The one] who is stronger than me, whom I am not worthy ... will come after me”, or as the direct or indirect object of a governing verb, e.g.: **እስከ ይሬኢ ዘይከውን ሀገር** *ʾaska γərəʾi za-γəkawwən hagar* (Jonah 4:5) “Until he sees [that] which becomes of the city”; **አንትሙሰ ትሰግዱ ለዘኢተአምሩ** *ʾanttəmu-ssa təsaggədu la-za-i-taʾamməru* (John 4:22) “But you worship whom you don’t know”, etc.

⁸ DILLMANN 1907: 527–538 (§201–203.1).

⁹ DILLMANN 1907: 119 (§64), 332–333 (§147a); PRAETORIUS 1886: 29–33. KAPELIUK forthcoming b.

¹⁰ WRIGHT 1962: II 321–322.

¹¹ The use of the relative adverbs for designating place or time is not mandatory, e.g.: **እስመ ምድር ኅበ ትከይድ ቅድስት ይእቲ** *ʾəsmā mədr haba təkayyəd qəddəst yəʾəti*

rations, between relative and correlative constructions as far as the use of the pronouns **ዘ** *za-*, **እንተ** *ʾanta* and **እለ** *ʾalla* is concerned.

In attributive relative clauses, in principle, the relative pronoun agrees in gender and number with its antecedent, e.g.: **ወናሁ ከከብ ዘርእዩ ዘእምጽባሕ ይመርጸሙ** *wa-nāhu kokab za-rəʾayū za-ʾam-šəbāḥ yəmarraḥ-omu* (Matthew 2:9) “Behold the star (masc. sg.) which they saw, which guides them from the East”; **ወሰፍሕት ፍኖት እንተ ትወስድ ውስተ ሀገሩ ውበዙኝን እሙንቱ እለ ይበውኡ ውስቲታ** *wa-səfəḥt fənot ʾanta təwassəd wəsta haḡ^wal wa-bəzūḥān ʾamuntu ʾalla yəbawwəʾu wəstet-ā* (Matthew 7:13) “For spacious is the road (fem. sg.) which leads on to destruction and many (masc. pl.) are those who enter through it”; **ወእምዝ ኦገዝ ኢየወስ ይሒሶን ለአህጉር እለ በውስቱቶን ገብረ ጎይለ ብዙኅ** *wa-ʾamzə ʾahaza ʾIyasus yəḥis-on la-ʾahgur ʾalla ba-wəstet-on gabra ḥayla bəzūḥa* (Matthew 11:20) “And then Jesus began to reproach the cities (fem. pl.) in which he performed many wonders”. By using relative pronouns in agreement with their headnoun in gender and number Gəʿəz conforms to the pattern of relative clauses in ancient South-Western Semitic, together with classical Arabic and Epigraphic South Arabian.

In the other Semitic branches the distinction of gender and number tends to be obliterated with time in favour of an invariable relative particle¹². This process has also been completed in modern Ethio-Semitic¹³ and its early symptoms are already discernible in Gəʿəz. Thus the masculine singular relative pronoun **ዘ** *za-* sometimes serves as a general relative marker in attributive clauses, irrespective of the gender and number of its headnoun, e.g.: **ወሰበ ርእዩ ኢየወስ ሰብአ ብዙኝ ዘተለውዎ** *wa-soba rəʾaya ʾIyasus sab^a-a bəzūḥān-a za-talawə-wwo* (Matthew 8:8) “And when Jesus saw many people who (masc. sg.) followed Him” against **እለ ይተለውዎ** *ʾalla yətalləwə-wwo* in verse 10; **ነሥኡ ሎሙ አንስቲያ ዘነረዩ** *naš^u lomū ʾanəstiyā za-ḥarayū* (Genesis 6:2) “They married the women whom (masc. sg.) they chose”. On the other hand a collective

(Acts 7:33) “For the land where you walk is holy” which in its original version in Exodus 3:5 has the usual relative pronoun: **እስመ መካን እንተ አንተ ትቅውም ምድር ቅድስት ይእቲ** *ʾasma makān ʾanta ʾanta təqawwəm mədr qəddəst yəʾəti* “Because the place [in] which you stand is a holy land”. Both **ነበ** *ḥaba* and **አመ** *ʾama* also serve as prepositions meaning “to, by” and “at the time of” respectively. **ነበ** *ḥaba* is extremely frequent, **አመ** *ʾama* much less so, e.g. **ንግሥተ አዜብ ትትነሃእ ምስለ ዛቲ ትውልድ አመ ደይን** *negešt-a ʾazeb tətnaššā^w məsla zətti təwədd ʾama dayn* (Luke 11:31) “The queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the time of judgement”.

¹² LIPINSKI 1997: 324–327, 521–522; WRIGHT 1962: I.270–274; KOGAN & KOROTAYEV 1997: 225, 240.

¹³ KAPELIUK 1989: 308–309; for modern South Arabian see SIMEONE-SENELLE 1997: 412, 417.

noun may be qualified by a relative pronoun in the plural, e.g.: **እስመ እነረ ብእዎ መከራንን እነ ወብዩ ሐራ እለ እኳንን** *asma ʿana-hi bəʿasi mak^wannən ʿana wa-bəya harā ʿalla ʿak^wennən* (Matthew 8:9) “For I myself am also an officer and I have an army which (pl.) I command”. This lack of consistency in the agreement is characteristic of the attributive clauses. It points out to the rather secondary status of the relative pronouns in them, considering that they function as a mere mark of the relation of subordination between the head-noun, which is part of the main sentence, and the relative clause, its attribute.

In the correlative clauses, on the other hand, the relative complex becomes a primary, i. e. a substantival component of the main sentence. Consequently, the relative pronoun acquires a more important status and its choice is no more arbitrary. Although in the relative pronouns used correlative the distinction of gender is lost in the singular¹⁴, in the plural the opposition between **ዘ** *za-* and **እለ** *ʿalla* is strictly observed according to whether the putative headnoun, and the pronoun which replaces it, are considered as being in the singular or in the plural; this applies to concrete relative complexes which correspond to active participles and may be translated as “the one who, he who, the thing that”, e.g.: **እነ ወ-እቱ ዘሀሎ ወከመዝ ትብሎሙ ለደቂቀ እስራኤል ዘሀሎ ፈነወኒ ኅቤክሙ** *ana wəʿatu za-hallo wa-kamaza təbəl-omu la-daqiq-a ʿsrāʿel za-hallo fannawa-nni habe-kekəmu* (Exodus 3:14) “I am who is, and speak thus to the children of Israel [the one] who is sent me to you”; **ወእለሂ ተሰቅሎ ምስሌሁ** *wa-ʿalla-hi tasaqlu məsle-hu* (Mark 15:22) “And also [those] who were crucified with Him”. The same distinction between singular and plural applies to nominal correlative clauses, e.g.: **እምከሙ ኢኮነ ዕድወክሙ ዘምስሌክሙ ውእቱ** *əmkaṃma ʿi-kona ʿədwa-kekəmu za-məsle-kekəmu wəʿatu* (Luke 9:50) “As long as [one] is not your enemy, [one] is (who) with you”, and in the definite plural: **ወደገንዎ ስምዖን ወእለ ምስሌሁ** *wa-deganə-wwo Səṃʿon wa-ʿalla məsle-hu* (Mark 1:35) “And Simon and [those] who [were] with him pursued Him”.

There is, however, another sub-category of correlative constructions which, irrespective of the number of the subject of the verb, regularly admits only the relative pronoun **ዘ** *za-*, to the exclusion of the pronoun **እለ** *ʿalla*. These are the constructions in which **ዘ** *za-* corresponds to a conjunction of subordination and those, much more frequent, in which the correlative complex serves as the abstract subject of a cleft sentence¹⁵ forming a that

¹⁴ But see in DILLMANN 1865:1030 a rare example of correlative **እንተ** *ʿənta* in the feminine serving as an impersonal pronoun: **አድኅኒ እምእንተ እፈርህ** *adhən-anni ʿəm-ʿənta ʿəfarrəb* “Save me from what (lit. which – fem. sg.) I fear”.

¹⁵ KAPELIUK 1985. The use of **ዘ** *za-* as a conjunction of subordination will not be discussed in this paper but see KAPELIUK forthcoming b.

... clause. It concerns such cleft sentences in which the foregrounded element corresponds to any member of the relative clause except the subject of the relativized verb and the latter equals an infinitive or a noun of action, e.g.: ወኪያየሰ አኮ ዘልፈ ዘትረክቡኒ *wa-kiyā-ya-ssa ʾakko zalf-a za-tərakəəbu-ni* (Mark 14:7) “And it isn’t always that you will find me” (lit. that -you.find-me (= your-finding-me) not always); አኮ በገቢረ ሕገገ አሪት ዘይጸድቁ ዘእንበለ ዳእሙ በአሚን *ʾakko ba-gabir-a ḥəgag-a ʾorit za-yəṣaddəqu zaʾənbala dāʾəmu baʾamin* (Romans 4:16) “It is not by following the laws of the Bible that they will become worthy, but rather by faith”. The following example, which contains both a concrete relative with the correlative pronoun in the plural and an abstract relative in the plural but with **ዘ** *za-* illustrates well the basic syntactic difference between the two constructions: ውእቱ ተ በእንተ ሉ ከመ እለሂ የሐይወ. አኮ ለርእሶሙ ዘየሐይወ. *wəʾətu mota baʾənta kəʾəlu kama ʾalla-hi yəḥayyəwu ʾakko la-rəʾəs-ommu za-yəḥayyəwu* (II Corinthians 5:15) “He died for the sake of all in order that also [those] who will live, it won’t [be] for themselves that they will live”.

The cleft sentences which have been examined until now and in which the relative pronoun stands invariably in the singular belong to that variety in which the foregrounded element is other than the subject of the relativized verb and the relative complex is conceived abstractly as a that ... clause. Beside these there are the cleft sentences in which the foregrounded element is the subject of the relative verb itself and the relative complex acts as the equivalent of a concrete noun, comparable to a participle¹⁶. In such cleft sentences the pronoun sometimes occurs in the plural, in which case the sentence may be translated as a pseudo-cleft sentence, e.g. in the positive: መኑ ወመኑ አንትሙ አለ ተሐውሩ *mannu wa-mannu ʾanttəmu ʾəlla təḥəwəru* (Exodus 10:8) “Who and who [are] you who will go?”, or in the negative, e.g.: እስመ ኢኮንክሙ አንትሙ አለ ትትናገሩ *ʾasma ʾi-konkəmu ʾanttəmu ʾəlla tətnāggaru* (Matthew 10:20) “Because you aren’t [the ones] who will speak”, but the singular pronoun is more frequent, and then the construction corresponds to a regular cleft sentence, e.g.: አኮ አንትሙ ዘፈነውክሙኒ *ʾakko ʾanttəmu za-fannawkkəmu-ni* (Genesis 45:8) “[It is] not you who sent me”. We may conclude this chapter by indicating that the choice of the relative pronoun is dictated not only by formal morpho-syntactic requirements, but also by the syntactical function of the explicit or putative headnoun.

¹⁶ In Amharic the distinction between the two kinds of cleft sentences is rendered explicit by the copula which remains invariable beside an abstract relative and agrees in person, gender and number with a concrete relative verb (KAPELIUK 1988:109–112); for Tigrinya see id. 1980:19.

The headnoun

As indicated above, it is the presence or the absence of a headnoun which underlies the classification of the relative constructions into regular relative clauses and correlative clauses. In common relative clauses the headnoun is normally a substantive. If the subject of the main sentence is in the first or the second person it is normally attracted to the relative clause, despite the fact that the relative pronouns are, by definition, in the third person, e.g.: **አንተ ውእቱ ንጉሥ ዘበይከ ወጸናዕከ** *ʾanta wəʾətu nəgus za-ʿabayka wa-šanāka* (Daniel 4:18) “You are the king who (you) became big and strong” (also in the Aramaic original: *הוּא הַמֶּלֶךְ הַזֶּה הַיּוֹנֵן הַבָּרְבִּיבִּי*). Also demonstrative and independent personal pronouns may act as headnouns, in which case there is often attraction of the first and second person to the relative clause, e.g.: **አማን ነቢይ ውእቱ ዝንቱ ዘመጽአ ውስተ ዓለም** *ʾamān nabiyy wəʾətu zəntu za-maṣʾa wəsta ʿālam* (John 6:14) “Truly this [one] who came into the world is a prophet”; **ይቀትል እንጋ ርእሶ ለሊሁ ዘይብለኒ ...** *yəqattəl ʾəngā rəʾəs-o lali-hu za-yəbəl-anna ...* (John 8:22) “Hence, will He kill Himself, He who says to us ...”; **መኑ እንከ እነ ዘእክል ከሊኦቶ ለእግዚአብሔር** *mannu ʾənka ʾana za-ʾəkəl kaliʾot-o la-ʾəgziʾabher* (Acts 11:17) “Hence who am I that I may (lit. who-I.may) hinder God”; **አንተ እንከ ምንትኑ አነተ ዘትግእዝ ነባሬ ባዕድ** *ʾanta ʾənka məntə-nu ʾanta za-təgəʾəz nabāre bāʿəd* (Romans 14:4) “You, then, who (lit. what) are you who censure[s] another's servant?” Particularly frequent as headnoun is the determinant **ኩሉ** *kəwəlu* “all” in expressions that correspond to a participle, e.g.: **ወኩሎም እለ ገሰደዎ የሐይወ.** *wa-kəwəlomu ʾəlla gasasə-wwo yəḥayyəwū* (Mark 6:56) “And all [those] who touched Him are healed”.

Even suffixed object pronouns may be qualified by an attributive relative clause, e.g.: **እሬእየከ ዘትነብር በእምዝ መሪር** *ʾərəʾəy-akka za-tənabbər ba-ḥəmz marir* (Acts 8:23) “I see you who sit[s] in bitter gall”, and with an object pronoun in the third person: **ረከቦ ዘወድአ ረቡዐ መዋዕለ እምዝ ተቀብረ** *rakab-o za-waddəʾa rabbuʿ-a məwāʿəl-a ʾəmza taqabra* (John 11:17) “He found Him buried already for four days”; **ይሬሰዮም እለ ይረውጹ ቅድመ ሰረገላቲሁ** *yəressəy-omu ʾəlla yərawwəṣu qədma saragallāti-hu* (I Samuel 8/11) “He will make them [those] who run in front of his chariots”. A pronoun attached to a preposition may also act as a headnoun, e.g.: **በእንቲእነሂ እለ አመነ** *ba-ʾəntiʾa-na-hi ʾəlla ʾamanna* (Romans 4:24) “Also for the sake of us who believed”. The suffix pronoun may further be rendered overt by a noun to which it stands in apposition, e.g.: **ወይእይሰ ተገሥሎ ትቅትሉኒ ብእሴ ዘጽድቀ እነግረክሙ** *wa-yəʾəze-ssa təḥāsśāsū təqtəlu-ni bəʾəs-e za-ṣədqa ʾənaggər-akkəmu* (John 8:40) “But now you are seeking to kill me, a man who tells you the truth”.

An interesting case is found in constructions which contain a transitive verb with an inalienable part as its direct object. In these constructions the verb has appended to it a suffix pronoun designating the possessor, followed by the substantive designating the inalienable part, which stands in the accusative, in apposition to the pronoun¹⁷, e.g.: **ሰምዐኒ እምነ ጸረሐ መቅደው ቃልየ** *sam^ca-nni ʾamənnā šarḥ-a maqdas-u qālə-ya* (II Samuel 22:7) “He heard (me) from his temple, my voice”; **አእመሮሙ ኢየሱስ እኩዮሙ** *ʾaʾamar-omū ʾIyasus ʾəkay-omū* (Matthew 22:18) “And Jesus knew (them), their malice”. In the same manner the inalienable object of the verb may be rendered by a substantivized relative complex while the suffixed object pronoun designating the possessor is maintained, e.g.: **ወሰምዕዎ አጋዊሁ ዘይቤሉሙ** *wa-sam^ca-wwo ʾəḫaw-ihu za-yəbel-omū* (Genesis 37:27) “And his brothers heard (him) what he said to them”; **ወአእመሮሙ ኢየሱስ ዘይሔልዩ** *wa-ʾaʾamar-omū ʾIyasus za-yəḥelləyu* (Luke 5:22) “And Jesus knew (them) what they thought”.

Also whole sentences may function as the headnoun of a relative clause, in which case the latter has an expletive function and has to be considered as a that ... clause. In the following example the first relative clause is attributive and the second expletive: **ምንትኑ ማቲ እኪት ዘገበርክሙ ላዕልዩ ዘነገርክምዎ ከመ ብክሙ እኅወ** *mənt-nu zātti ʾəkkīt za-gabarkkəmu lāʿle-ya za-nagarkkəmə-wwo kama bə-kkəmu ʾəḫ^w-a* (Genesis 43:6) “What is this bad [thing] which you did to me, that you told him that you have a brother?” If in the sentence which serves as the headnoun it is the subject of the verb which is qualified by the relative complex, there are two possible interpretations of the construction: either as expletive corresponding to an abstract relative complex, i. e. a that ... clause, or as attributive, corresponding to a participle that stands in apposition to the pronoun incorporated in the verb-headnoun, e.g.: **ወናየ ገበርክ ዘመጸእክ** *šannāy-a gabarka za-mašāʿka* (Acts 10:33) “You did well that you came” or “You did well, you who came”; **ምንተ ትገብሩ ዘትፈትሑ ዕዋለ** *mənt-a təgabbəru za-təfattəḫu ʿəwāl-a* (Marc 11:5) “What are you doing that you unfasten the colt” or “What are you doing, you who unfasten the colt?”. The Greek original opts in these cases for a participle, but the modern Amharic and Tigrinya versions show that it was understood by the local translators as an abstract that ... clause.

If we turn now to the correlative clauses in which there is no overt headnoun we may roughly distinguish between two sub-categories: those in which the putative headnoun has been elided but may easily be recovered and those in which there seems to be no headnoun at all. In the first group the relative complex often refers to a concrete and specific substantive

¹⁷ As a *الكل من البعض بدل*; see KAPELIUK 1973.

which was mentioned before and was omitted for the sake of brevity, e.g.: **ወደቤሎሙ ኢየሁስ አንሰ ብዩ ወብልዐ ዘእበልዕ ... ቦኑ እንጋ ሰብእ ዘአምጽአ ሎቲ ዘይበልዕ** *wa-yəbel-omū ʾIyasus ʾanā-ssa bə-ya mablə-a za-ʾəballə* ... *bo-nū ʾəngā sabə ʾza-ʾamṣəʾa lo-ttu za-yəballə* (John 4:32-33) “And Jesus said to them ‘I have food which I eat’ ... ‘Is there someone who brought Him [food] which He will eat?’”; **ከመ እግበር ፈቃድ ለአቡዩ ለዘፈነወኒ** *kama ʾəgbar faqād-o la-ʾabu-ya la-za-fannawawanni* (John 4:34) “That I do the will of my Father who sent me”, and the same correlative with the headnoun elided: **ዘይሰምዕ ቃልዩ ወየአምን በዘፈነወኒ** *za-yəsammə qālə-ya wa-ya ʾammən ba-za-fannawawanni* (id 5:24) “He who listens to my word and believes in [the one] who sent me”; **አልቦ ዘትብቀኑ ወኢምንተኒ** *ʾal-bo za- təbaq ʾəu wa-ʾimənt-a-ni* (John 12:19) “There isn’t [a useful thing] which you can do, nothing at all”.

Other very frequent correlative constructions from the first group don’t refer to an existing headnoun but the latter may be reconstructed with the help of some general prop word, mostly **ኩሉ** *kəwəlu* “all”. These constructions generally correspond to a participle and, if they express a general truth, they stand in the singular, e.g.: **ኩሉ ዘይሰእል ይነሥእ ወዘሂ ዩጎሥሥ ይረክብ ወለዘሂ ገዑገዑ ይትረጎም** *kəwəlu-ū za-yəsəʾəl yənasśə ʾwa-za-bi yəḥāsśəs yərakkəb wa-la-za-bi gʷadgʷada yətrəḥaw-o* (Matthew 7:8) “Every one (lit. all) who asks will receive and also he who seeks will find and also he who knocks it will be opened to him”. On the other hand, similar constructions in the plural, with the relative pronoun in agreement with the verb, usually refer to a specific and definite putative headnoun. We may say that in this case Gəʿəz resorts to the opposition between the singular and the plural in order to compensate for the absence of the definite article, e.g.: **ወዘይፈቅድ ያድጎና ለነፍሱ ይገድፋ** *wa-za-yəfaqqəd yādḥənā la-nafs-u yəgaddəf-ā* (Mark 8:35) “And whoever wishes to save his soul will lose it”; **ወአልቦ ዘየጎሥሥ ለእግዚአብሔር** *wa-ʾal-bo za-yəḥāsśəs la-ʾəgzrʾəbḥer* (Mark 2:22) “No one looks for God”, against the specific or definite plural, e.g.: **ወአለሂ ተሰቅሉም ስሌሁ** *wa-ʾəlla-bi tasaqlu məsle-bu* (Mark 15:22) “And those who were crucified with Him”; **ቦ እለ ተንሥኡ ሰማዕተ ሐሰት** *bo ʾəlla tansəʾu samā-t-a ḥassat* (Mark 14:56) “There are [those] who stood up as false witnesses”; **ለእለ ርእይዎ ከመ ተንሥኡ ኢአመንዎሙ** *la-ʾəlla rə ʾəyə-wwo kama tansəʾa ʾi-ʾamanə-wwomu* (Mark 16:14) “They didn’t believe [those] who saw Him that He had risen”. If the verb is in the first or second person the expression is definite by definition, as in the formula in the title of the present article, in which the headnoun **ንጉሥ** *nəguś* “the king” may be reconstructed.

In the second sub-category of correlative clauses no putative headnoun may be reconstructed because their relative complex syntactically corresponds to a true noun and not merely to the equivalent of an attribute which was

substantivized in the absence of its headnoun. These are mainly abstract correlative constructions corresponding to that ... clauses, particularly frequent as the subject of those cleft sentences in which any element except the subject of the relative verb is foregrounded. It may be noted that the distinction of the two sub-categories of missing headnouns coincides with the two sub-categories of correlative clauses which have been established in § 2 according to whether the relative pronoun agrees in number with the relativized verb or remains in the singular. Consequently, the pronoun will be in the singular, irrespective of the number of the relative verb, as may be seen in the examples of cleft sentences quoted at the end of § 2. But again it should be noted that cleft sentences in which the foregrounded element is the subject of the relative verb have a double nature, as has been indicated in connection with the choice of the relative pronoun, and there is a possibility, though extremely rare, of recovering the headnoun, e.g.: **ኖሁ እነ ዘአበሱ ። ወእነ ኖላዊ ዘገበርኩ እኩየ** *nāhu ʾana za-ʾabbasku. wa-ʾana nolāwi za-gabarku ʾakkuy-a* (II Samuel 24:17) “Behold, [it is] I who have sinned. And I am the shepherd who did wrong”.

Relativized nominal clauses and nota genetivi

The most common kind of relative and correlative clauses contains a verbal predicate and these were described in detail in the extant literature. However, verbless sentences with a nominal predicate also act in Geʿez¹⁸ as relative and correlative clauses and they deserve a few remarks. What distinguishes a relative nominal sentence from a verbal sentence, beside the obvious absence of a verb in the latter, is the fact that a verb contains its own subject, whereas in nominal sentences the subject has to be expressed formally and this function is incumbent on the relative pronoun. Generally speaking there are three basic patterns of nominal sentences in general¹⁹ and in relative clauses as well: relational - indicating the relation of the headnoun in space or time, equational - identifying it, and qualifying that specifies its characteristics.

Frequently nominal relative and correlative clauses have an adverbial predicate, mostly composed of an adverb or a preposition with its complement, and they serve to situate the headnoun in relation to space or time; the predication in these nominal sentences is automatic and there is no need to introduce a copulative pronoun, e.g.: **ወትንእስ እምኩሉ አዝርዕት ዘውስት ምድር** *wa-tənəʾəs ʾəm-kʷəl-u ʾazrəʿt za-wəsta- mədr* (Mark 4:31) “And it is smaller than any seed which [is] in the earth”; **ዎላዩነ ዘለለ ዕለትነ ሀበነ ዮም**

¹⁸ For a thorough study of nominal sentences in Geʿez see COHEN, D. 1984:151–232 and in particular: 172–177, 185–187, 201–203; see also DILLMANN 1907:498–499 (§ 194).

¹⁹ See COHEN, M. 1924:75.

sisāy-a-na za-la-la-^calatə-na hab-anna yom (Matthew 6:11) “Give us today our daily food”; **ወይንሥኣ ሕዝብ ዘእምባቢሎም** *wa-yənašš^ʿā həzb za-^ʿəm-bābilon* (Dillmann 1866: 3/9) “And a people (which) from Babel will take her”. A special variant of the prepositional predicate is represented by the constructions **ቦ** *bo-* and **አልቦ** *ʿal-bo* which indicate possession, e.g.: **የሐዩ እምኩሉ ደሰ ዘቦ** *yahayyu ʿəm-k^wəlu dawwe za-bo* (John 5:4) “He is healed from whatever sickness he has”. The headnoun may be omitted producing correlative constructions, e.g.: **ወለእለሰ አፍኣ በምሳሌ ኩሉ ይከውኖሙ** *wa-la-^ʿalla-ssa ʿaf^a ba-məsāle k^wəlu yəkarəwəwən-omu* (Mark 4:11) “But for [those] who [are] outside everything will be in parables”; **ከመ ኢትዓምፀ ወኢሐዘርእነ ወኢዘምስሌነ** *kama ʿi-ta^camməts-anna wa-^ʿi-la-zar^ʿə-na wa-^ʿi-za məsle-na* (Genesis 21:23) “That you won’t wrong us nor our posterity nor [the one] who [is] with us”; **ወለዘቦ ይሁብም ወይሰስክም ወለዘሰ አልቦ እለሂቦ የሀይድዎ** *wa-la-za-bo yəhubə-wwo wa-yəwəssəkə-wwo wa-la-za-ssa ʿal-bo ʿalla-hi-bo yahayyadə-wwo* (Mark 4:25) “And to [the one] who has they will give and add, but [the one] who hasn’t also [the things] which he has will be snatched away from him”. Perhaps the nominal clause which defines indirectly the headnoun, by means of something belonging to him, may also be included in the relational sub-category because it also doesn’t admit the copulative personal pronoun, e.g.: **ወሀሎ አሐዳ ብእም በሀገረ ደማስቆ ዘእምውስተ እርድእት ዘስሙ ሐናንያ** *wa-hallo ʿahadu bəʿasi ba-hagar-a damāsqa za-^ʿəm-wəsta ʿardə^t za-səm-u hannanyā* (Acts 9:10) “And there was a man in the city of Damascus, (who) from among the disciples whose name [was] Hananya”.

The remaining two sub-categories of nominal relative clauses have for their predicate either a noun or an adjective; the former serves to identify the headnoun, the latter - to qualify it, as in the following example which contains: 1. a regular correlative clause with a verb which acts as the headnoun of the following relative clauses, 2. a qualifying nominal relative clause with an adjective for predicate, 3. an identifying nominal relative clause with a noun for predicate, and 4. another qualifying nominal relative clause with a passive participle for predicate: **ወአመከሩ ዘይፈቅድ እግዚአብሔር ዘሠናይ ወዘጽድቅ ወዘፍጹም** *wa-^ʿamakkaru za-yəfaqqəd ʿəgzīʿabher za-šannāy wa-za-šədq wa-za-fəšsum* (Romans 12:2) “And explore what God desires, which [is] good and justice and perfect”. The minimal identifying relative clause which has the noun **ጽድቅ** *šədq* “justice” alone for predicate belongs to a rather unfrequent kind and it probably appears here in order not to upset the rhythm dictated by the two other nominal clauses. Usually relative clauses with a noun for predicate are completed by a personal pronoun serving as the copula, e.g.: **ወበዐባይ ዕለት ዘውእቲ ተፍጻሜተ በዓል** *wa-ba-^cabbāy ʿalat za-wəʿətu tafšāmeta ba-^cāl* (John 7:37) “And on the great day which (it) [is] the end of the festival”; the following example contains a rela-

tional nominal sentence without the copulative pronoun and an identifying one with the copula: **ወ-ሱተ ሀገረ ምንባሬ እንተ ወ-ሱተ ሐቅል እንተ ይእቲ ኪብሮን** *wəsta hagar-a mənḃāre ʾənta wəsta ḥaql ʾənta yəʾəti Kebron* (Genesis 35:27). “In the country of Mamre which [is] in the field, that (she) [is] Hebron”. The presence of the copulative pronoun in identifying nominal sentences allows to avoid confusion with constructions in which the relative pronoun serves as *nota genetivi*.

It is well known that the same pronouns which are used in relative and correlative clauses are found connecting two nouns in what corresponds to a possessive complex.²⁰ These constructions are characterized by the presence of a noun, followed by a relative pronoun, usually accorded to it in gender and number, and preposed to another noun. This complex basically serves to render a qualification of the first component, in particular the material from which it is made, e.g.: **ምስል ዘወርቅ** *məsl za-warq* (Daniel 3:5) “The golden image”, and is comparable to an adjective, e.g.: **ወግበር ለከ ታቦተ እንተ ዕዕ ወርብዕት** *wa-gəbar la-ka tābot-a ʾənta ʾəts wa-rəbət* (Genesis 6:14) “And make yourself a wooden and square ark”. But equally frequently it is used to replace a genuine possessive construct state in case the latter is inadmissible for formal reasons, i.e. when the first member is a proper name, or has a suffix pronoun attached to it, or is in the accusative, or is qualified by a following adjective, or is itself a possessive complex, or is multiple. Some of these complexes became lexicalized and may be used with or without the first component, similarly to what happens with the headnoun in correlative clauses, e.g.: **በቤተ ስምዖን ዘለምጽ** *ba-bet-a Səməʾon za-lamṣ* (Mark 14:3) “In the house of Simon the leper”, and: **ወብዙኃን እለ ለምጽ ሀለዉ በወ-ሱተ እስራኤል** *wa-bəzuhān ʾəlla lamṣ hallawu ba-wəsta ʾəs-rāʾel* (Luke 4:27) “And there were many lepers inside Israel”; **ወወረደ ኅቤሁ ዘኅደፍ** *wa-warada ḥabe-hu za-ḥadaf* (Jonah 1:6) “And the captain (lit. who.of-oar) went down to him”²¹.

Considering that in nominal relative and correlative clauses of the identifying kind what follows the relative pronoun on the surface is also a noun, a confusion may ensue as to its function, i. e. whether it is the complement of the first noun or the predicate of a nominal relative clause. As pointed out above, the insertion of the copulative personal pronoun renders explicit the predicational relationship within the relative and correlative clauses. It is a mistake to consider the complex with the *nota genetivi* as identical with the relative clause because they differ in their deep structure and, conse-

²⁰ DILLMANN 1907:468–470 (= § 186a).

²¹ For the special case of **ወልድዮ ዘበኩርዮ** *waldə-ya za-bak^wəṛə-ya* (Exodus 4:22) “My first-born son” see in particular: DILLMANN 1907:535 note 1.

quently, in their function; the *nota genetivi* indicates possessivity or appurtenance, certainly not identity, e.g.: ወግርዖም እንተ ያዕቆብ ዘይንእሰ *wamāryām ʾanta yāʾəqob za-yəṇəʾəs* (Mark 15:40) “And Mary of Jacob the younger” and definitely not **“Mary who is Jacob”*; on the other hand, relative clauses with a noun for predicate express identity, which is completely different from possessivity, e.g.: እመ ርእየክሙ ድግዱጋኒክሙ እምደቅ እለ ቢጽክሙ *ʾamma rəʾəya-kkəmu dəgdugāni-kkəmu ʾam-daqq ʾalla biṣə-kkəmu* (Daniel 1:10) “If he sees you thinner from children who [are] your peers”, and not **“from children of your peers”*.

The last sub-category of nominal clauses, both relative and correlative, has a qualifying function and its predicate consists of an adjective or of an adjectival participle. The predicative function of such an adjective may easily be deduced from cases in which it is negated, e.g.: እምነ እንሰሳ ዘንጹሕ አብእ ምሰሌክ ... ወእምነ ኩሉ እንሰሳ ዘኢኮነ ንጹሕ *ʾamməna ʾənsəsā za-nəṣuḥ ʾabə ʾməslə-ka ... wa-ʾamməna kʷəl-u ʾənsəsā za-ʾi-kəona nəṣuḥ* (Genesis 7:2) “Bring with you from the animal[s] which [are] clean ... and from all the animal[s] which aren’t clean”. Considering that the primary function of relativization is to transform a whole sentence into an adjective, basically, a sentence which already has an adjective for predicate, need not be relativized. However, clauses with an adjective preceded by a relative pronoun are sometimes found in the texts, especially beside other relative clauses. In certain cases the reason is to be sought in the formal status of the headnoun itself, for instance when it is provided with a possessive pronoun or a nominal complement causing some difficulty in placing the adjective, e.g.: ትንሣኦ እምነቤየ ወርቀ ዘኣየ ዘንጡፍ ወጽሩይ በእሳት *tənsā ʾəmbəbe-ya warq-a ziʾa-ya za-nəṣuf wa-ṣəruy ba-ʾəsāt* (Revelation 3:18) “You will take from me my gold which [is] purified and cleansed by fire”; እሁበክሙ ጽድቅ ለዳዊት ዘእሙን *ʾəhub-akkəmu ṣədq-o la-Dawit za-ʾəmun* (Acts 13:34) “I shall give you David’s righteousness which [is] trustworthy”, whereas እሙን *ʾəmun* without *።* *za-* in this example would refer only to David and not to the whole possessive complex. Sometimes the adjective itself is expanded forming an entire sentence, e.g.: ነፍሰ እንተ ሕይወት ውሰተ ማይ *nəfs ʾanta ḥəyāwət wəsta māy* (Leviticus 11:10) “[Every] creature which lives (lit. which alive) in water”.

But there are also relativized adjectives which cannot be explained by formal reasons, e.g.: አሐዱ እምነቢያት እለ ቀድምት ተንሥኦ *ʾəmnabiy-āt ʾalla qaddamt tənsəʾa* (Luke 9:8) “One of the ancient (lit. who ancient) prophets came to life”; ላዕለ ርእው ለውእቲ ኅርጌ ዘሕይወ *lāʾəla rəʾəs-u la-wəʾətu ḥarge za-ḥəyāw* (Leviticus 16:21) “On the head of the live (lit. which live) goat”. Perhaps we may consider the presence of the redundant relative pronouns with adjectives, both in Gəʿəz and in the modern languages, as yet another symptom of the influence of the Agaw substrate in

which adjectives are inseparable from the notion of relativization²², beside such evident “cushiticizing” factors as the cleft sentences or the lexicalized adjectival relatives.

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²² For Amharic adjectives accompanied by the relative particle see LESLAU 1995:202.

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Summary

The relative verb accompanied by its headnoun, forming a relative clause which functions as the equivalent of an adjective, is the normal construction in the Semitic languages. In Gəʕəz, however, it is the substantivized relative clause, in which the headnoun is missing, that is the most diversified in its function and probably statistically more frequent. These are the correlative clauses. They present some specific morpho-syntactic features; thus the feminine relative pronoun is not encountered in them and the number of the relative pronoun is consistently accorded with the putative headnoun. In the regular relative clauses the headnoun is a noun or an independent pronoun but also suffixed pronouns and whole sentences may be qualified by a relative clause. Nominal sentences are common as relative or correlative clauses. In case the predicate of the nominal clause is a substantive, a pronoun with copulative function is introduced preventing the confusion between the construction in question and a possessive complex with *nota genetivi*.