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978-1-107-46078-2 - The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St John
in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church

Roger W. Cowley

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***Microfiche**
(in wallet at end of volume)

The microfiche contains the Geez text of
TERGWAME QĀLĀMSIS
reproduced from MS. A (British Library MS. Orient 13830,
volume 2, pages 116–92), together with
1. List of the variant readings of MS. B
2. Selected variants from MS. X
3. Selected variants from text D.

*now available for download from www.cambridge.org/9781107460782

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PREFACE

The aim of this study is to describe the traditional Biblical and patristic Amharic commentary material of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and to present in translation a sufficient sample of the Amharic, and also the Geez, commentary material, that its character can be clearly seen. Accordingly, the study is divided into three parts – a general introduction, an annotated translation of a Geez commentary, and an annotated translation of an Amharic commentary. The book chosen for parts II and III is the Apocalypse of John, for the following reasons:

(a) the *andāmta* commentary on the Apocalypse is extensive, and includes material culled from a variety of sources,

(b) the text of this *andāmta* commentary has been printed,¹

(c) a critical edition of the Geez text of the Apocalypse is available,²

(d) a Geez commentary on the Apocalypse, which is among the sources of the *andāmta* commentary, is available.³

No other part of the *andāmta* corpus at present satisfies all these criteria, though there are many parts of it which will repay further study (notably Matthew, and also Genesis, Psalms, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Hosea, John, Hebrews, the Liturgy, *Wəddase Maryam*, and Philoxenus).

In order to limit the scope of this study, the following matters have been excluded:

(a) critical consideration of the textual history of Geez and Amharic texts,

¹ *Liqā liqawnt Māhari Tərfe, Māṣahəftä ḥaddisat sostu*, A.A., 1951 E.C. pp. 347–484.

² Hofmann, J., *Die äthiopische Übersetzung der Johannes-Apokalypse*, C.S.C.O., vols. 281 and 282, also vol. 297, *Die äthiopische Johannes-Apokalypse kritisch untersucht*.

³ I.e. *Tərgwame Qälāmsis*, part II of this book.

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(b) matters relevant to the Ethiopian understanding of the Bible, but outside the actual commentary tradition, such as the representation of Biblical stories in art,

(c) the semantic content of the religious vocabulary,¹

(d) comparison of Ethiopian exegesis with other exegetical traditions,

(e) detailed consideration of the theology of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

Study of this commentary material has lagged behind the study of other branches of Ethiopian literature, probably because of its restricted availability, wide extent, and difficulty.² It is hoped that this study will begin to redress the balance, and facilitate further work in this field. It is, however, very inadequate; the world of the *andämta* commentaries, like that of the rabbinic commentaries, is a world in which a person's whole life may be lived, and such a tradition is clearly not to be sufficiently described in one volume.

I am most grateful to the very many people who have assisted me in my studies, in particular to all teachers and students of commentary in Gondar, Ethiopia, especially *Abunä* Ēndrəyas, *Aläqa* Mānkər Mäkwännən, *Māmhar* Kəflä maryam Yəmār, *Māmhar* Ḥaddis Mādḥane, *Māmhar* Gäbrä əgzi'abəḥer Gäbrä ḥəywät; in Makalle to *Abunä* Yoḥannəs and *Mäl'akä* Məhrāt Yared Gərmay; in Addis Ababa, to *Liqä Səlṭanat* Habtä maryam Wärqnäh; to all who have done scribal work for me, especially Mānbäru Färrädä, Mogäs Getahun and Ḥaylä maryam Bäläw; to the staffs of the British Library (especially Mr. E. Silver), the Ethiopian monastic library in Jerusalem, the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin, the National Library, A.A., and the Holy Trinity Cathedral Library, A.A.; to the editorial staffs of the journals which have published articles for me; to all who have discussed problems with me, and supplied information, especially Professors E. Bosworth, G. Goldenberg, E. Hammerschmidt, F. Heyer, C. F. D. Moule, H. J. Polotsky, S. Strelcyn and E. Ullendorff, Drs P. Alexander, S. Brock, D. George, Getatchew Haile, W. F. Macomber, R. Pankhurst, and Sərgəw Ḥablä səllase,

¹ For which see Gebre Yessus Wolde Mikael, *Investigation into the Religious and Cultic Vocabulary of the Ethiopic (Geez) Bible Version*, Ph.D. thesis (in Hebrew), April 1977, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

² Previous studies, in addition to my own, are Heyer, F., 'The Teaching of Tergum in the Ethiopian Church' in *Proceedings of the Third International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, vol. II, Addis Ababa, 1966, pp. 140–50, and *Die Kirche Äthiopiens*, Berlin and New York, 1971, pp. 132–45, and Alaka Imbaqom Kalewold, *Traditional Ethiopian Church Education*, New York, 1970, especially pp. 29–32.

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Msgr J. M. Sauget of the Vatican Library, Fr Dr E. Eising, *Qes Färrädä Ayyälä*, *Abba La'äkä maryam Asrat*, and Sister Kirsten Pedersen; to Dr A. Irvine, who taught me Amharic; and to those who have helped with typing, especially my wife.

This study was submitted, together with some journal articles on the same subject, in 1979 in application for the degree of B.D. at Cambridge University. I acknowledge with gratitude the award of the degree, and the kindness of the Degree Committee of the Faculty of Divinity in allowing me to incorporate in the published work various corrections and additions, of the Publications Committee of the Faculty of Oriental Studies in accepting the work for publication, and of Cambridge University Press in the production of it.

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ABBREVIATIONS

(Page numbers in brackets refer to the pages on which fuller explanations will be found)

A	<i>Andəm</i> (p. 3)
A.A.	Addis Ababa
AC	<i>Andəmta</i> commentary (p. 3)
ACD	<i>Amharic Church Dictionary</i> (in Amharic), ed. Sergew Hable Selassie
Acts	Acts of the Apostles
AM	<i>Arägawi mänfäsawi</i> , writings of John Saba (p. 12)
Amh.	Amharic (language, version, text)
ASCT	Cowley, 'Additional sources for a copula <i>TT</i> in old Amharic', <i>Israel Oriental Studies</i> , VII, 1977, pp. 139–43.
BAC	Cowley, 'The Beginnings of the <i>andəm</i> Commentary Tradition', <i>JES</i> , x, 2, pp. 1–16.
Bar.	Baruch
Baumstark	Baumstark, A., <i>Geschichte der syrischen Literatur</i> , Bonn, 1922, repr. 1968.
B.L.	British Library (London)
B.N.	Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris)
ch./Ch.	chapter
Chr.	Chronicles
Col.	Colossians
Cor.	Corinthians
C.S.C.O.	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</i>
Cyr.	Writings of Cyril of Alexandria
Cyr E	Cyril of Alexandria, <i>Ḥstəgubu'</i> (p. 12)
Cyr P	Cyril of Alexandria, <i>Ḥäladyos</i> (p. 12)
Cyr T	Cyril of Alexandria, <i>Täräfä Qerällos</i> (p. 12)

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Dan.	Daniel
Dt.	Deuteronomy
Did.	(Ethiopic) Didascalia
E	Explanation (i.e. section of TQ headed <i>fəkkare</i>)
E.C.	Ethiopian calendar
Ecc.	Ecclesiastes
Ecclus.	Ecclesiasticus
EMML	Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, A.A.
En.	Enoch
EOCCL	Cowley, 'The Identification of the Ethiopian Octateuch of Clement', <i>OKLS</i> , band 27, heft 1, pp. 37–45
Eph.	Ephesians
Ep.Jer.	Epistle of Jeremiah
Est.	Esther
Ex.	Exodus
Ezra K	Ezra <i>Kalə</i> , 1 Esdras
Ezra S	Ezra <i>Sutu'el</i> , Ezra Apocalypse (p. 7)
Ez.	Ezekiel
FN	<i>Fəṭha nāgäst</i> , 'Law of the kings'
Gal.	Galatians
Gen.	Genesis
Gk.	Greek
Graf	Graf G., <i>Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur, Studi e Testi</i> , no. 118 (vol. I) and no. 133 (vol. II)
Guidi	Guidi I., <i>Storia della letteratura etiopica</i> , Rome, 1932
H.	<i>Ḥatāta</i> , an explanation in a commentary
HA	<i>Haymanotä abāw</i> , 'Faith of the fathers'
Hab.	Habakkuk
Hag.	Haggai
Heb.	Epistle to the Hebrews
HMML	Hill Monastic Manuscript Library, Collegeville, U.S.A.
Hofmann	Hofmann J., <i>Die äthiopische Übersetzung der Johannes-Apokalypse</i> , <i>C.S.C.O.</i> , vol. 281
Hos.	Hosea
HWS	Həruy Wäldä səllase, <i>Yähəywät tarik</i> , A.A., 1915 E.C.
Int.	Introduction

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Is.	Isaiah
Jas.	James
Jdg.	Judges
JE	Jerusalem Ethiopic (MSS preserved in Jerusalem)
Jer.	Jeremiah
JES	<i>Journal of Ethiopian Studies</i> , A.A.
Jn.	John
Jon.	Jonah
Josh.	Joshua
Jub.	Jubilees
Jud.	Judith
Kgs.	Kings
KWK	Kidanä wäld Kəfle, <i>Maṣḥafä säwasəw wägəss wämäzgäbä qalat ḥaddis</i> , A.A., 1948 E.C.
Lam.	Lamentations
Lev.	Leviticus
Lk.	Luke
LXX	Septuagint
MA	Aklilä bərhan Wäldä qirqos, <i>Mäṣḥetä amin</i> , A.A., 1946 E.C.
Macc.	(The Ethiopian books of) Maccabees (p. 7)
Mal.	Malachi
MEHI	Cowley, ‘ <i>Mämhər Esdros and his Interpretations</i> ’, <i>Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Tel Aviv</i> (forthcoming).
Mic.	Micah
Mk.	Mark
MK	<i>Mäṣḥafä kidan</i> , Book of the Covenant (pp. 11–12)
ML	Aklilü bərhan Wäldä qirqos, <i>Märḥa ləbbuna</i> , A.A., 1943 E.C.
MM	<i>Mäṣḥafä mənākosat</i> , books of the monks (p. 12)
MS. A	Geez MS. of TQ (p. 65ff.)
MS. B	Geez MS. of TQ (p. 65ff.)
MS. D	Text contained in MS. Berlin (Dillmann) 63 (p. 68ff.)
MS. R	MS of AC to Paulines, Catholic epp. and Rev. (pp. 160, 165)
MS. X	Geez MS of TQ, contained in EMMML 2082 (p. 65ff.)
MS.(S)	manuscript(s); when added to a reference, it means that the matter referred to is found in certain manuscripts, but not in the printed edition.
MW	<i>Mäqdäma wängel</i> (p. 1)

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MY	<i>Mar Yəshaq</i> , writings of Isaac of Nineveh (p. 12)
Nah.	Nahum
Nat.Lib.	National Library, A.A.
Neh.	Nehemiah
NT	New Testament
NTIAC	Cowley, 'New Testament Introduction in the Andemta Commentary Tradition', <i>OKLS</i> , band 26, heft 2/3, pp. 144–92
Num.	Numbers
Ob.	Obadiah
<i>OKLS</i>	<i>Ostkirchliche Studien</i> , Würzburg
OT	Old Testament
OTIAC	Cowley, 'Old Testament Introduction in the Andemta Commentary Tradition', <i>JES</i> , vol. xii no. 1, pp. 133–75
P	<i>Filkasyus</i> , writings of Philoxenus of Mabbug (p. 12)
Pet.	Peter
<i>P.G.</i>	Migne <i>Patrologia</i> , series graece
Phil.	Philippians
Phm.	Philemon
PIAC	Cowley, 'Patristic Introduction in the Ethiopian Andemta Commentary tradition', <i>OKLS</i> , band 29, heft 1, pp. 39–49.
pl.	plural
PN	Cowley, 'Preliminary notes on the baläandəm commentaries', <i>JES</i> , vol. ix, no. 1, pp. 9–20
<i>P.O.</i>	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i> , Paris
Pr.	Proverbs
Ps.	Psalms
Qal.	<i>Qälemāntos</i> , the Ethiopic 'Clement'
Qid.	AC on <i>Qəddase</i> , the liturgy
QidM	AC on <i>Mästäbqwə</i> ', prayers attached to the liturgy
QidTH	AC on TH
Rev.	Revelation
Rom.	Romans
Rt.	Ruth
s.	singular
Sam.	Samuel
SAQ	Cowley, 'Scholia of Aḥob of Qaṭar', <i>Le Muséon</i> , 1980, tome 93, pp. 329–43.
Sin.	<i>Sinodos</i>

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Song	Song of Solomon
T.	<i>Tarik</i> , a historical pericope
Tag.	<i>Tägsaš</i> , one of the 5 books of Solomon (p. 8)
TBar.	<i>Täräfü Barok</i> (IV Baruch)
TH	<i>Təmhərtä həbu'at</i>
Thess.	Thessalonians
Tim.	Timothy
Tit.	Titus
TO	<i>Tərgwame Orit</i> , Geez commentary on Octateuch (pp. 36, 38)
Tob.	Tobit
TP	<i>Tərgwame Ɣawlos</i> , Geez commentary on Pauline epp. (pp. 37–8)
TQ	<i>Tərgwame Qälämsis</i> , Geez commentary on Revelation (pp. 38, 65)
T.V.	Textual variant
TW	<i>Tərgwame Wängel</i> , Geez commentary on Gospels (p. 37)
Ullendorff	Ullendorff, E., <i>Ethiopia and the Bible</i> , London, 1968
v.	verse
Wisd.	Wisdom
WM	<i>Wəddase Maryam</i> (p. 13)
YaWD	<i>Dərsan</i> of Yoḥannəs afä wärq (p. 13)
YaWT	<i>Tägsaš</i> of Yoḥannəs afä wärq (p. 13)
YwK	<i>Yosef wäldä Koryon</i> , 'Josippon's <i>History of the Jews</i> ' (p. 10)
Zech.	Zechariah
Zeph.	Zephaniah

Note: Bible references, unless otherwise specified, follow the Revised Standard Version, except that the Ps. references in the translation of ACRev., and in the footnotes that refer directly to ACPs., follow the Geez (and LXX) enumeration. Biblical references in the footnotes to Part I are to the Biblical AC, and not to the Biblical text.

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I

THE *ANDEMTA* COMMENTARY CORPUS, ITS
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