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Dissertation Abstract

The 'Gadla Lālibalā collection of textual units': tradition and documentation

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historical and linguistic commentaries including notes on an extensive comparison of the actual content of chapters with their short descriptions in the Table of Contents. The English translation is enhanced by a transliteration of proper names and ambiguous lexical items, which, hopefully, will provide for a better understanding and analysis of the content of the *Chronicle of John of Nikiu*.

NAFISA VALIEVA, *The ‘Gadla Lālibalā collection of textual units’: tradition and documentation*, PhD Dissertation in Ethiopian Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Hamburg, defended on 25 September 2019.

The present dissertation is an elaborate study of twenty-three manuscripts containing the basic ‘*Gadla Lālibalā* collection’ which consists of fourteen textual units. The ‘*Gadla Lālibalā* collection of fourteen textual units’ is a working title used in this dissertation for what is often referred to as the *Gadla Lālibalā*, and which is considered to be the main source concerning the life and deeds of King Lālibalā, a saint. King Lālibalā is considered to be a saint along with other kings of the so-called Zāg^we dynasty, who ruled in the twelfth–thirteenth centuries CE. It is believed that he had the renowned rock-hewn churches constructed in the city of Lālibalā, the city which bears his name. The term ‘*gadl*’ (lit. ‘combat’) defines a text written in the hagiographic genre, a genre with its own rules and conventions, but which also reveals the author’s own ideas. Therefore, hagiographical texts are excellent witnesses to the history of thought, mentality, and practices. As yet, the only scholarly, if only partial, edition of the *Gadla Lālibalā* was carried out by the French philologist Jules Perruchon in 1892.

The main hypothesis of this dissertation is that the *Gadla Lālibalā* is anything but a homogeneous text that simply recounts the life of Lālibalā. Rather, it is a composite of multiple textual units revolving around Lālibalā, that are partially independent of each other and occur in different combinations in different manuscripts. The units are organized on both a logical and a physical basis.

Some of the textual units have already been identified by other scholars as independent of the *Gadla Lālibalā*. Other units—this dissertation counts fourteen of them—have always been thought to be an intellectual unit of production. These fourteen textual units are defined here as the ‘basic’ collection referred to in my dissertation as the ‘*Gadla Lālibalā* collection of fourteen textual units’, and appear under the siglum HagLal. While some textual units of the HagLal are known to be part of other collections, some

others are known only as part of the HagLal. It implies that, while the non-homogeneous nature of the HagLal is well defined, the final number of the textual units within HagLal remains hypothetical. Briefly, the concept is the following: the term ‘textual unit’ was introduced to avoid the ambiguous term ‘text’. A textual unit is defined here as a possible segmentation of the content of the ‘*Gadla Lālibalā* collection of textual units’, articulated in the manuscripts and confirmed semantically. Thus, if a portion of a text within the ‘*Gadla Lālibalā* collection of textual units’ is attested in some of the manuscripts with a particular *mise en texte* and *mise en livre*, with its own title, with a supplication, and/or if it circulates as part of a different collection, it receives its title in this work, it is considered to be a textual unit. This methodology is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

The earliest attestation of HagLal can be found in three manuscripts datable to the fourteenth/fifteenth century: Təgrāy, monastery of Dabra Şəyon ʾAbuna ʾAbrəham, DabŞey-001;¹ Lake Ṭānā, Kəbrān island, monastery of Kəbrān Gabrəʾel, Ṭānāsee 31/Kebrān 31; and London, British Library (= BL), Orient. 719. Although the origin of these manuscripts remains unknown, the *recensio* demonstrates that none of these three manuscripts could have served as a *Vorlage* for another, for they all contain disjunctive errors. The colophons contained in MSS DabŞey-001 and Kəbrān 31 allow us to associate these manuscripts with their current places of preservation, the monastery of Dabra Şəyon ʾAbuna ʾAbrəham and the monastery of Kəbrān respectively, distant both from each other and from the modern centre of veneration, the town of Lālibalā. Both of these manuscripts were donated by the clergy, which might mean that King Lālibalā was already commonly recognized as a saint by that time. The origin and further itinerary of MS BL Orient. 719 prior to Gondar is obscure. Therefore, there are arguments for a much earlier date of composition, for, already by the fourteenth/fifteenth century, multiple textual units had taken the shape of the HagLal, and copies reached three religious centres of Ethiopia, all at some distance from each other.

The study unveils an unceasing interest in the collection, for the number of manuscripts transmitting HagLal reaches thirty-seven. Furthermore, from the fourteenth/fifteenth century on, the ‘*Gadla Lālibalā* collection of fourteen textual units’ was enlarged and enriched with other textual units.

The dissertation consists of an Introduction, six chapters, two appendices, and two editions. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the textual units

¹ This is an uncatalogued manuscript which I photographed and to which I assigned the siglum.

relating to Saint Lālibalā (or simply attested, along with his hagiography) in Gəʿəz (not in Amharic), divided into three groups: (1) textual units that belong to the basic ‘*Gadla Lālibalā*’ collection of fourteen textual units; (2) other textual units transmitted together with group (1); and (3) textual units that have not been attested together with group (1). Chapter 2 describes the manuscripts containing the HagLal, providing basic information on twenty-three such manuscripts. Chapter 3 discusses the transmission of the HagLal and presents the *stemma codicum*. Chapter 4 discusses labels/titles, supplications, *mises en texte*, and *mises en page* as evidence of the scribe’s thought; *mises en livre* as evidence of the editor’s thought; and, finally, philological features of some textual units. All these parameters are used as arguments for my ‘Multi-Unit Hypothesis’ of the HagLal, briefly discussed above. Chapter 5 mainly summarizes observations and interviews made during three field trips to Ethiopia (2014–2017), as well as during my work in the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Collegeville, MN. This chapter attempts to link manuscript culture to its usage, actual or potential, within the communities. Chapter 6 is a prolegomenon to the critical edition, the classical part of the research.

Appendix 1 contains a step-by-step description of my experience of digital collation with CollateX. Appendix 2 contains the description of MS BL Orient. 718, for which the Beta Maṣāḥəft platform is used. Edition 1 contains the critical edition of the first and, partially, of the second textual units of the HagLal itself with a parallel translation into English. The edition and translation were prepared with the help of Classical Text Editor. Edition 2 contains the edition of *Malkəʿa Lālibalā*, attested only in MS UNESCO 2.85 (unknown provenance, sixteenth century?).²

ናፊሳ ሻሊኤሻ ፤ የገድለ ላሊበላ መጻሕፍት ስብስብ ትውፊት እና ሰነድ

ይህ ጥናት ስለ ገድለ ላሊበላ ነው ። ገድለ ላሊበላ የንጉሥ ላሊበላ የቅድስና ሕይወት ታሪክ ፤ ገድል ነው ። ንጉሥ ላሊበላ በአስራ ሁለተኛ—አስራ ሶስተኛ ክፍለ ዘመን እንደ ኤውሮፓ አቆጣጠር (እ ኤ ኦ) በኢትዮፕያ ነገሡ ። ገድሉ ንጉሥ ላሊበላ ከአንድ ድንጋይ ዓሥር አብያተ ክርስቲያናትን ፈልፍለው ሠሩ ይላል ።

ገድለ ላሊበላ አሁን በተለያዩ አገራት የሚገኝ ሲሆን 35 ብራና መጻሕፍት በኢትዮጵያ ፣ በኤርትራ ፣ በጣሊያ ፣ በፈረንሳይ እና በእንግሊዝ አገር ይገኛሉ ። ይህ ጥናት ሃያ ሶስት የብራና መጻሕፍትን ይጠቀማል ። ከሃያ ሶስቱ የብራና መጻሕፍት

² This manuscript was indicated to me by Ted Erho by its shelf mark. The last strophe invokes King Naʿod, which gives us a *terminus ante quem non*. The palaeography of the manuscript seems to correspond to this period. Thus, the hymn and the manuscript are datable to the end of the fifteenth/beginning of the sixteenth century.

የጥንቱ ማለትም ከአስራ አራተኛ እስከ አስራ አምስተኛ ክፍለ ዘመን (እ ኤ አ) አሁን በደብረ አቡነ አብራሐም ፤ ጣና ቂርቆስ እና ብሪቲሽ ላይብራሪ ይገኛሉ ።

በአውሮፓ የገድለ ላሊበላን ጥናት የጀመሩት ጁል ፔሩሾን ነበሩ ። በሳቸው አመለካከት ንጉሥ ላሊበላን በደምብ ይገልጻል ያሏቸውን ዓረፍተ ነገሮች መርጠው ወደ ፈራንስይኛ ተርጉመው በፈረንሳይ አገር በ1892 (እ ኤ አ) በግእዝና በፈራንስይኛ አሳተሙት ። በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የገነተ ማርያም መምህር ገብረ መስቀል ተስፋዬ ከላሊበላ ቤተ መርቆራዎስ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ቀድተው ወደ አማርኛ ተረጎሙት ። የሳቸው 'የላስታ የነገሥታት ታሪክ' የሚል ርዕስ ያለም መጽሐፍም ይህን ትርጉም ተጠቅሟል ። ከግማሽ ክፍለ ዘመን በኋላ ደግሞ የወሎ ምሁር የሆኑት መምህር አለባቸው እረታ በቤተ ጎልጎታ የሚገኘውን የብራና መጽሐፍ ቀድተው ከሌሎች የላሊበላ ምሁራን ጋር በመሆን 'ገድለ ቅዱስ ላሊበላን' በግእዝና በአማርኛ አሳትመዋል ።

እንደዚህ ጥናት ከሆነ ገድለ ላሊበላ በአንድ ደራሲ የተጻፈ ሳይሆን የተለያዩ ጽሑፎች ስብስብ ነው ። ልዩነቱ በአጻጻፍና በይዘታ ይገለጻል ። በዚህ ምክንያት የዚህ ጥናት ርእስ ገድለ ላሊበላ ሳይሆን ፤ የገድለ ላሊበላ የጽሑፎች ስብስብ ነው ።

ሥራው መቅድም ፣ ስድስት ምዕራፎች ፣ ሁለት ተጨማሪ ክፍሎች እና ሁለት እትማቶችን ያካትታል ።

ምዕራፍ አንድ ስለ ላሊበላ የሚናገረው ወይም ከገድለ ላሊበላ ባንድ መጽሐፍ ላይ የተያያዙ ጽሑፎችን ይዘረዝራል ።

ምዕራፍ ሁለት የገድለ ላሊበላ የጽሑፎች ስብስብ የተዛዛዙ ሃያ ሁለት የብራና መጻሕፍትና አንድ የወረቀት መጽሐፍን ያቀርባል ።

ምዕራፍ ሶስት የገድለ ላሊበላ የጽሑፎች ስብስብ ስርጭት ያስረዳል ።

ምዕራፍ አራት ስለገድለ ላሊበላ የጽሑፎች ስብስብ አጻጻፍ ይተነትናል ።

ምዕራፍ አምስት የገድለ ላሊበላ የጽሑፎች ስብስብ ለጎብረተሰብ ያለውን አስተዋጽዖ እና ጥቅም ያብራራል ።

ምዕራፍ ስድስት ስለማተሚያ ዘዴዎች ይገልጻል ።

ተጨማሪው ክፍል አንድ ስለ CollateX በዝርዝር ይነግራል ። ተጨማሪው ክፍል ሁለት ደግሞ Beta Maṣāḥəft በሚባለው መድረክ ያሉትን እንደ BL Orient. 718 የሚጠቅስ የመጽሐፍ ገለጻን ያቀርባል ።

እትም አንድ የገድለ ላሊበላን የጽሑፎች ስብስብን የመጀመሪያ ገጾች የግዕዝና እንግሊዘኛ ትርጉሞችን በClassical Text Editor የያዘ እትም ሲሆን ፤ እትም ሁለት የመልክአ ላሊበላ ከUNESCO 2.85 የብራና መጽሐፍ የታወቅ በግእዝና በአማርኛ የጽሑፍ እትም ነው ።