



# ABSTRACTS



**1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Ethiopia's Manuscripts**

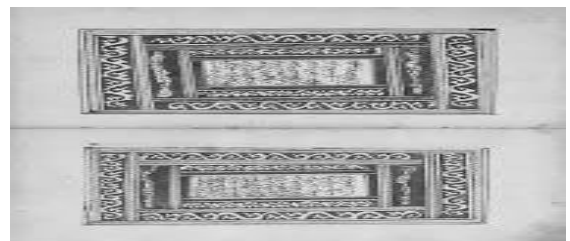
**8 & 9 October, 2018,**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**



**Hosted By**

**the National Archive and Library of Ethiopia at  
the Hall of the Ethiopian Authority for  
Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage**



# Conference Schedule

Time	Event	Presenter	Moderator
<b>Day I: 8<sup>th</sup> October - Morning Session</b>			
8:30 – 9:00	Registration and Reception		
9:00 – 9:30	Opening Speech	Guest of Honor	
9:30 – 10:00	Keynote Address	Prof. Getatchew Haile (USA)	Dr. Mersha Alehegne
10:00 – 10:20	Toward a comprehensive study of the Ge'ez Manuscript: The case of the Mordini collection in Parma (Italy)	Prof. Gianfrancesco Lusini (Italy)	
10:20 – 10:40	Æthiopian Manuscript Heritage, the Unknown Story: Æthiopia in Æthiopic and non- Æthiopic	Rev. Dn. GabraAgziaabhir J. (UK)	
10:40 – 10:55	Discussion		
10:55-11:30	<b>COFFEE &amp; TEA BREAK</b>		
11:30 – 11:50	The World History of Edition of Gyorgis Wäldäl Amid – Edition of a Geographical Treatise in the First Part of this Work, and Ways of its Transmission	Carsten Hoffmann (Germany)	Dr. Abba Daniel Assefa
11:50 – 12:10	በአባ ገሪማ ወንጌልና ዛሬ እየተጠቀምንበት ባለው ወንጌል መካከል የተደረገ ንጽጽራዊ ጥናት	ዶ/ር ሙሉቀን አንዱዓለም (ኢትዮጵያ)	
12:10 – 12:30	Discussion		
12:30 – 2:00	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>		
<b>Day I: Afternoon Session</b>			
2:00 – 2:20	A Handwritten Letter from Liqä Mäk <sup>w</sup> ännän from Gondär: The written heritage of letters	Dr. Verena Böll (Germany)	Dr. Taye Assefa
2:20 – 2:40	Hemerology in Ethiopic Manuscripts	Dr. Veronika Six (Germany)	
2:40 – 3:00	Discussion		
3:00 – 3:30	<b>COFFEE &amp; TEA BREAK</b>		
3:30 – 3:50	የአረብኛ ፊደል አመጣጥና እድገት በኢትዮጵያ	አህመድ ዘካሪያ (ኢትዮጵያ)	Dr. Zelealem Tefera
3:50 – 4:10	Ethiopian Peasant Intellectuals and Their Private Handwritten Collections as ‘Cultural Capital’: Abba Hamido’s Family Private Collections from Bale	Hassan Mohammed (Ethiopia)	
4:10 – 4:30	The Arabic and ‘Ajami’ manuscripts in Bale, southeast Ethiopia: Origin, Circulation and Accessibility	Nuraddin Aman (Ethiopia)	Dr. Endris Mohammed

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Moderator</b>
4:30 – 4:50	Ajami Manuscripts of Harar from the 19th Century Court Documents & Harari Text being Sung	Dr. Muna Abubeker (Ethiopia)	
4:50 – 5:30	Discussion		
<b>Day II: 9th October – Morning Session</b>			
8:30 – 9:00	Keynote Address	Prof. Alessandro Bausi (Germany)	
9:00 – 9:20	The Muhmal of Sayyid Ibrahim of Cale – Arabic Poetic verses	Dr. Endris Mohammed (Ethiopia)	Dr. Antonella Brita
9:20 – 9:40	Vitae of Gäbrä Maryam (Harbäy): A Quest for Restitution	Alula Yohannes (Ethiopia)	
9:40 – 10:00	Ethiopian Manuscript Culture as Reflected in the Manuscripts of Abunä Abrham: from Codicological Perspectives	Dr. Hagos Abrha (Ethiopia)	
10:00 – 10:30	Discussion		
10:30 – 11:00	<b>COFFEE &amp; TEA BREAK</b>		
11:00 – 11:20	Introducing the Ethiopic Manuscript Unicode Font Initiative (EMUFI)	Daniel Yacob (USA)	Prof. Zelealem Leyew
11:20 – 11:40	The Business of Scribing: Commissioning and Selling Manuscripts	Dr. Sean M. Winslow (Austria)	
11:40 – 12:00	Manuscript conservation in Ethiopia, current efforts and future perspectives	Mr. Marco di Bella (Italy) and Dr. Nikolas Sarris (Greece)	
12:00-12:30	Discussion		
12:30 - 2:00	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>		
2:00 – 2:20	The Value of Writing in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch	Dr. Daniel Assefa (Abba) (Ethiopia)	Prof. Baye Yimam
2:20 – 2:40	On the Indigenous Preservation Methods of Gə'əz Manuscripts	Dr. Mersha Alehegne (Ethiopia)	
2:40 – 3:00	Discussion		
3:00 - 3:30	<b>COFFEE &amp; TEA BREAK</b>		
3:30 – 4:00	From Dust to Dust: Ethiopia's Disappearing Manuscript Heritage	Prof. Michael Gervers (Canada)	
4:00 – 5:30	General Discussion: the way forward	Discussants: Ato Yikunnoamlak Mezgebu; Prof. Dr. Alessandro Bausi; Prof. Shiferaw Bekele	
6:30 -	Reception		

# **The Transmission of Written Heritage in the Ethiopian Manuscript Culture: Formatting Content**

**Prof. Alessandro Bausi**

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Manuscripts are written artefacts, that is, material objects provided by man with visual signs. Visual signs are their contents that express, record, store, and transmit human culture in its broadest meaning. Contents are formatted according to patterns, and patterns are in turn determined by settings and practices. No formatting is therefore neutral, but every single feature of each pattern adopted is determined by specific factors that are culturally and materially determined. There are cases, however, when transmission or use of the written artefact and specific practices determine more complex formatting types. More artefacts or multiple graphic and pictorial signs can be combined and co-present in one object, and multiple scripts and languages can be used. Cases in point are the adjoining of more, originally distinct, written artefacts (typically in the case of composite manuscripts or even inscriptions), or the addition of one or more content layers within a single one, resulting in a complex multi-layered artefact that is liable to a proper investigation according to the archaeological methods of stratigraphic analysis; or written artefacts where diagrams, drawings and non-script notation plays a major role, alone or along with script; or multiple-script and multilingual manuscripts and inscriptions. The basic and necessary relationship within the written artefact between the material object and its contents is revealing in many ways of how human cultural production is expressed, reflected, represented, transmitted, and used, at given points. Distinct sequences of varying relationships between contents and material object actually provide a fresh and more precise and adherent understanding of human cultural production in the process of its transmission and fruition, as far as it is attested by written artefacts. The respective features of each adopted pattern in a given stage of the sequence will highlight some

aspects, whereas other aspects will be ignored. Conversely, a subsequent stage can be at variance with a previous one and will highlight additional or new aspects, while losing part of the older ones up to complete deletion, yet all centering around the same cultural production seen in its continuum, including the extreme options of acceptance and total rejection. This vantage point of observation has no parallel in terms of heuristic power when applied in a diachronic and comparative perspective to complex artefacts (i.e. multi-layered, multi-graphic, multi-script, and multilingual) of a given manuscript culture. This kind of analysis and concept can be usefully applied to the transmission of written heritage in the Ethiopian manuscript culture and I intend to make some reflections with the example of a few selected cases of transmission of written heritage: (1) in multi-script and multilingual epigraphic documents, (2) in ancient translations dating from the Late Antique, and (3) in the latter's merging with new translations and original production, resulting in completely new formats in the Early Solomonic period, yet at the earliest time limit of our more substantial documentation.

### **Toward a Comprehensive Study of the Ge'ez Manuscript: The Case of the Mordini Collection in Parma (Italy)**

**Prof. Gianfrancesco Lusini**

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After the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei of Rome and, the Biblioteca Ambrosiana of Milan, the Biblioteca Palatina of Parma (Emilia-Romagna) boast the biggest collection of Ge'ez manuscripts in Italy. This remarkable body of 43 codices is made of two sections: the oldest consists of 25 pieces gathered by Dr. Antonio Mordini (1904-1975) during his stay in Ethiopia as civil servant. Since 1994, the Biblioteca Palatina of Parma looks after the Mordini collection together with a minor group of 18 manuscripts recently donated by different owners.

In addition to the renowned 15<sup>th</sup> Century copy (the oldest one) of the Ethiopic version of the *Shepherd* of Hermas (Parm. 3842), the Mordini collection boasts a 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> Century copy of the Biblical *Book of Isaiah* and at least two 14<sup>th</sup> Century Mss.: a prayer book (Parm. 3845) and an anthology of three excerpts from the *ZenaĪskändər* or *Christian Romance* of Alexander the Great (Parm. 3837), representing the oldest – though partial – witness of a literary work to be dated from the times of *aše* ‘AmdäŞəyon’s reign (1314-44).

The ongoing scientific catalogue of the manuscripts included in the Mordini collection gives an opportunity for several reflections about the study of the Gə‘əz manuscripts, particularly those now kept outside Ethiopia, in order to ascertain in which Ethiopian ecclesiastic foundation they were originally handwritten, in what historical period they were produced and for what purpose, to what extent they can contribute to the history of the Ethiopian religious literature, and how they were moved to Europe during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **Æthiopian Manuscript Heritage, the Unknown Story:**

#### **Æthiopia in Æthiopic and non- Æthiopic**

**Rev. Dn. Gabra ’AGZI’AABHÎR JR**

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Epigraphy, manuscript studies and literature in general in relation to Æthiopia, have been hitherto isolated as if upon an island, reduced to almost ‘Only a South Arabian Context’ in the early period or otherwise a Syriac, Coptic or Arabic manuscript context in the later one. This is due to the limits set by *western* scholars and institutions in regard to its ancient and mediaeval history. As a consequence, the kingdom of *Æthiopia* (*Abyssinia*) itself is contracted, to a relatively late period, viz. the so-called Aksumite<sup>1</sup>. Scholarship

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<sup>1</sup> Or Aksumite I and Aksumite II

thus has a narrow lens focused within these parameters for literary sources, whereas, in reality, Æthiopia is spoken of throughout the known world. There are *written accounts* of Æthiopia in *all genres*, whether in the *ancient* or *medieval* epochs, recorded in languages Africa, Asia and Europe.

In *Asia*, in the Samskrit language, there are literary sources that refer to ancient Æthiopia, left untouched (e.g. विष्णु पुराण *Viṣṇu Purāna*, containing some geographical notices). In Æthiopic literatures, there are historical narratives relevant to India/Saṃskrit). *Hamitic* continental sources are also extant, viz. Ægyptian epigraphic texts of lowland Æthiopia/Nubia/Meroë; one is referring not to the decidedly late graffiti of the ‘Oîzânâ (Ezana) period<sup>2</sup>. In the *Semitic* region are biblical or rabbinic literatures: but a number of them remain uncommented upon (e.g. רַפְּרָא /xafir ēa·yâšâr/ or ‘*Sepher\_Ha-Yashar*’ appearing in the Hebrew/Ladino Language, giving a lengthy account in line with Josephus, of Moses sojourning within Æthiopia). Equally, *non-Æthiopian* philologists seem wilfully or unwittingly ignorant of some *important* biblical and historical Æthiopian texts (e.g. ሙጽሐፈ:ሱባኤዘበአማን:ካልዕ /maṣhaf|a subâ’aî zaba-’aamân kâl‘o/; its original text is said to contain the Æthiopian ‘*Sepher\_Ha-Yashar*’. The original manuscript was found in an old Church in Sudan and translated into Amharic [in a number of books<sup>3</sup>] in its present printed-redacted form(s)<sup>4</sup>). In Europe, there are also many (e.g. ‘*De rebus gestis a Beato Matthæo Apostolo et Evangelista*’ (lib.vii), recording the *three principal languages spoken in 1<sup>st</sup> century Æthiopia*, ‘two of which are non-Æthiopic-languages’. The text was originally written contemporaneously in Hebrew, Greek, and preserved in Latin and, thereafter, all Romance/Teutonic languages). What is more, this same hagiographical tradition is independently extant in oral tradition in Æthiopia, but unknown to both indigenous Æthiopian and non-Æthiopian neo-scholarship alike.

The present paper endeavours to review some of these texts.

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<sup>2</sup> The so called Aksumite II period

<sup>3</sup> E.g. [ሙጽ ሐፈ: ]ጃን: ሾዋ /[maṣhaf|a] ḍân šûwâ/ said to contain ‘*The Book of the Wars of the LORD*’, these accounts have not been classified as either authentic biblical, extra-biblical, pseudo-epigrapha or otherwise

<sup>4</sup> This text has not yet come under rigorous academic scrutiny

## **The World History of Giyorgis WäldäAmid – Edition of a Geographical Treatise in the First Part of this Work, and Ways of its Transmission**

**Carsten Hoffmann**

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The world history of *Giyorgis Wäldä Amid*, also known as *Elmacinus* or *Ĝirĝis al-Makīn Ibn al-‘Amīd*, is the primary source for world history in Ethiopian literature. It contains a short treatise on the world’s geography, but is equally important for the documentation and transmission of geographical knowledge in Ethiopia. In that way it is crucial to understand geographical horizon of Ethiopians for many centuries and is vital to reconstruct Ethiopian Common Sense Geography.

The world history is a translation of the Arabic text of the 13<sup>th</sup> century AD Egyptian writer *Ĝirĝis al-Makīn Ibn al-‘Amīd*. Various scholars have stated that this text had been translated at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It remained the most important source for world history and world geography despite the fact that more accurate information must have become available over the time.

This paper points out the importance of this text for Historical Geography in Ethiopia, and forwards arguments that indicate the most likely date of this translation. In addition, it provides some reflections that may help to understand the transmission process over several hundred years.



**በአባ ገሪማ ወንጌልና ዛሬ እየተጠቀምንበት ባለው ወንጌል መካከል  
የተደረገ ንጽራዊ ጥናት**

**ሙሉቀን አንዱዓለም (ዶ/ር)**

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ወንጌል ማለት ብሥራት ማለት ሲኾን ኢየሱስ ክርስቶስ ያስተማረው፤ አራቱ ወንጌላውያን (ማቴዎስ፣ ማርቆስ፣ ሉቃስና ዮሐንስ) የጻፉት፣ የኢየሱስ ክርስቶስ ደቀ መዛሙርት እና ሰባ ኹለቱ አርድኦት እንዲሁም በእነሱ እግር የተተኩ ሊቃውንት ለዓለም የሰበኩት የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ክፍል ነው። የአባ ገሪማ ወንጌል ሲባል በእሳቸው የተጻፈ ለማለት እንጂ ስለእሳቸው የተጻፈ እንዳልኾነ ለማንም ግልጥ ነው። የዚህ ጽሑፍ ዓላማ በኹለቱ በአባ ገሪማ ወንጌልና አሁን እየተጠቀምንበት ባለው የኢትዮጵያ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ማኅበር በአሳተመው የግእዝ ሐዲስ ኪዳን በተለይ በአራቱ ወንጌላት መካከል ያለውን የቃላት፣ የአሉታ፣ የአሥራው፣ የአንዳንድ ስሞችና ፊደላት/ሆሄያት አጠቃቀም ልዩነትን ማሳየት ነው። ይህ ጥናት የተጠናቀረው ከብዙ የጥናት ዘዴዎች መካከል በሰነድ ፍተሻ አማካይነት ሲኾን የሚተነተነው ግን ዓይነታዊ የመተንተኛ ዘዴን በመጠቀም ይኾናል። በዚህ ጥናት ከላይ የተጠቀሱትን ዘዴዎች በመጠቀም ተሰርቶ የተገኘው ውጤት ብዙ ቢኾንም ለዚህ ጥናት አስቀድሞ የታለመው ግን በአሉታዊ ዐረፍተ ነገር፣ በአስራው፣ በተወሰኑ ስሞችና በፊደላት ቅርፅ፣ በግስ እርባታ አካሄድ እና ከጉሮሮ ድምፆች ጋር ባለው የግስ እርባታና አጠቃቀም ሰፊ ልዩነቶች በኹለቱ መጻሕፍት መካከል ጎልተው ታይተዋል። ሥርዓተ ጽሕፈት በማንኛውም ቋንቋ ያለና የሚኖር ከመኾኑም ባሻገር እንደ ቋንቋው ልማዳዊ አጠቃቀም የራሱ የኾነ ሕግና ሥርዓት አለው። በመኾኑም የግእዝ ቋንቋ የራሱ የኾነ ሥርዓት እንዲኖረው ከጥንት ጀምሮ የተጻፉ የግእዝ መጻሕፍትን በንጽጽር ማየትና ማጥናት ሥርዓተ ጽሕፈቱ ቋሚ ሕግ እንዲኖረው ከማገዙም በላይ የቋንቋውንም ለውጥና እድገት ለማየት ያስችላል።

## **A Handwritten Letter from LiqaLiqawént Mämher Mäk<sup>w</sup>ännén from Gondär: The Written Heritage of Letters**

**Dr Verena Böll**

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Handwritten letters from Ethiopian scholars are a very precious source of Church history and manuscript studies. The correspondence between the teachers of five Church schools and the German Tabor Society, a society supporting the traditional education, is immense. One letter is from LiqaLiqawént Mämher Mäk<sup>w</sup>ännén, deceased teacher at Mänbarä Mängéit Mädòane ÝAläm Church school in Gondar. He was a master in the field of Mäshaf bet, the school of exegesis. In his letter, addressed to the founder of the Tabor Society, Prof. Friedrich Heyer, he gives an example of his field and comments on several passages of the Bible. Some of his commentaries in the letter seem to be unique, as they have been composed especially in honor of Prof. Heyer. The letter writer wrote his letter partly in Geez, partly in Amharic. Like the manuscript chirography, he used red ink for the holy names, the biblical quotations, the prayers and the names of important persons. He used the same punctuation system as in the manuscripts, too. The handwritten testimony is a good example for the cultural significance of scholar's letters for theology and history. Furthermore, it gives audience to the wide handwritten correspondence between Ethiopian and German scholars since the seventies of the last century.

The paper gives an insight into the topic of handwritten letters as part of manuscript studies and Ethiopian written heritage and presents a letter of a famous scholar of the Mäshaf bet in Gondär, Ethiopia.

## Hemerology\* in Ethiopic Manuscripts

**Dr. Veronika Six**

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The Ethiopic title: Kdv" é é |" "é " = calculation of the favorable and unfavorable (days) exactly can be designated by the term Hemerology (< Greek: ἡμερολόγιον\*\*), which means the prediction of days of the year which are important to predict success or avoid misfortune. One finds this text mostly in 19th or 20th century Ethiopic manuscripts, very often added by a different hand to the main part of a manuscript and therefore mostly described by scholars in the category “varia” or the like (for example: Getatchew Haile in EMMML catalogues).

Variants of the text, the so-called: Kdv" é é |" "é " , have already been published in the *Révue de l'Orient Chrétien* (vol. 18, 1913, pp. 97f.) by S. Grébaut and in the *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici* (vol. 5, 1946-47, pp. 79-82) by P. Armido Gasparini. Both authors give only the Ethiopic text and the translation but no further details about the origin or background, except a reference to the publication by M. Nau of a variant of a Greek version of the calculation (published in the *Révue de l'Orient Chrétien*, vol. 12, 1907, pp. 14-21). Moreover, EAE has no separate entry for this concept. Only a passing mention in the entry dealing with “oracles and divination” (EAE vol.4, p. 36a) offers the expression: “a calculation of the lucky days” (consulting the Gadl to which the quote in EAE refers, just the word Kdx" is written).

In my paper, I would like to propose some additional facts and remarks about the background and character of the text as well as a possible origin of the Kdv" é é |" "é " .

\*See, J. Thomann, Square horoscope diagrams, in: Philippe Forêt und Andreas Kaplony, The Journey of Maps and Images on the Silk Road, Leiden-Boston 2008 (= Brill's Inner Asian Library, vol.21) p. 97.

\*\* ἡμερολόγιον; hēmerolōgion is a text arranged according to the days of the year; see, Rüpke, Jörg (Erfurt), “Hemerologion”, in: Brill's New Pauly, antiquity volumes edited by: Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider, English Edition by: Christine F. Salazar, Classical Tradition volumes edited by: Manfred Landfester, English Edition by: Francis G. Gentry.

**የአረብኛ ፊደል አመጣጥና እድገት በኢትዮጵያ**

**አህመድ ዘካሪያ**

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ቋንቋ የሰብዕና ሲሆን ጽሑፍ የሥልጣኔ አካል በመሆን ይጠቀሳል። የሰው ልጅ ሥርዓቱንና ደንቡን፣ ታሪክና ትዝታውን፣ የፈጠራ ውጤቱንና የወደፊት ዓላማውን ለማስተላለፍ ከተጠቀመባቸው መላዎች ዋናው የጽሑፍ ጥበብ ነው። ኢትዮጵያ በፊደል ቀረጻም ሆነ በጽሑፍ ክምችት አሉ ከሚባሉት ባለቤቶች አንዷ ናት። አገር በቀል የፊደል ቀረጻ መከራዎች መሐከል የግእዝ ፊደል አሁንም በተጠናከረ መልክ በሥራ ላይ ይገኛል። በሂደትም የአረብኛና የላቲን ፊደሎች ለተለያዩ አገራዊ ቋንቋዎች ሥራ ላይ ውለዋል። ይህ ጥናት ስለአረብኛ ቋንቋ አፈጣጠርና ከግእዝ ፊደል ጋር ስላላቸው ግንኙነት የመነሻ ዳሰሳ ያደርጋል። በመቀጠልም ስለአረብኛ ፊደል ወደ ኢትዮጵያ አመጣጥና ሥርጭት አንዳንድ ጉዳዮችን ያነሳል።

**Ethiopian Peasant Intellectuals and Their Private Handwritten Collections as ‘Cultural Capital’: Abba Hamido’s Family Collections from Bale**

### **Hassen Muhammed Kawo**

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Abba Hamido's family are scholars living in Oromia Regional State, Bale Zone, Agafra District. The family are known for their Islamic education and *Wayyoma* "arbitration". In addition to their social responsibility, they have preserved a small collection of Islamic manuscripts in their private archives. This paper will focus the history of the collections and the collectors: how the collections were made, for what purpose and their preservation status.

### **The Arabic and 'Ajemi Manuscripts in Bale, South East Ethiopia: Origin, Circulation and Accessibility**

#### **Nuraddin Aman**

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Ethiopia has a rich corpus of different ancient manuscripts produced by foreign and native scholars of the country. Some of these important heritages of the country have not properly explored. Taking into consideration the discovery of the old manuscript, the present research will intend to investigate the origin, circulation and accessibility of the Arabic and 'Ajemi manuscripts in Bale, one of the least studied areas of south eastern Ethiopia. In fact, the literary tradition flourished in the region during the establishment of various medieval Muslim Sultanates of Ethiopia. The expansion of Islam and its traditional education in this area had played a big role in producing the Arabic and 'Ajemi manuscripts of diverse subject matters. Therefore, this study has employed descriptive

method of analysis and has found out that most of the oldest manuscripts disseminated in this area are largely deal with the history of Islam, Islamic panegyrics, politics, poems, personal biography, parables, theology, etc. At last, as a philological work, the study will present the general description of the manuscripts studied from this area from various aspects.

***Ajami* Manuscripts of Harar from the 19<sup>th</sup> century court document  
and a Harari text being sung today**

**Dr. Muna Abubeker**

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Harari ajami manuscripts are the oldest Ethiopian ajami manuscripts. Harari language has been written in Arabic language for centuries. The oldest Harari ajami text is attested to be *Kitab al Faraid*, written at least in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in ancient Harari language. Although Harari ajami texts generally represent Harari sounds that are not part of the Arabic language, the representation shows different trends. To demonstrate this, the paper will compare the orthographies of one *zikri* text (religious song or menzuma) and a 19<sup>th</sup> century court document.

**The *Muhmal* of Sayyid Ibrahim of Cale – Arabic Poetic verses**

**Dr. Endris Mohammed**

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Sayyid Ibrahim of Cale (d. 1956) is one of the most outstanding Arabic experts of Ethiopia who had produced a number of works in Arabic and Amahric ‘aḡamī in

different genres. Among the topics he dealt with is a biographical treatment of the life of Prophet Muhammad. This work is claimed to exceed in its content and Arabic proficiency the classical Arabic works in the same field. The panegyric works are well known among the clerical class, especially in religious gatherings and ceremonies. He is generally known to have produced 26 Arabic and eight Amharic ‘aḡamī works. The *Muhmal* text is an exemplary work that shows the Arabic prowess of the author who uses only the dot less alphabets which account for about half of the 28/29 Arabic alphabets. The paper, thus, attempts to describe and analyze the text showing the Arabic proficiency of this local Ethiopian author.

### **Historical Insights on the Hagiographic Accounts of Gäbrä Maryam/Harbäy (ca.1093-1133 A.D)**

**Alula Yohannes**

Department of History and Heritage Management, Aksum University, Ethiopia; and PhD Candidate, Department of Linguistics and Philology, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia;  
alulay2@gmail.com

The Hagiographic accounts of the kings of the Zag<sup>w</sup>e Dynasty have been the subject study by Ethiopicist Scholars, but little is known about the life of Gäbrä Maryam. Gäbrä Maryam (Harbäy) is one of the venerated kings of Ethiopia. The biography of Harbäy is believed to be one of the least known subjects in Ethiopian medieval study. Nevertheless, through extensive research for three years, I have come to find substantial material, written on parchment in the second half of 18<sup>th</sup>C, about the life of Gäbrä Maryam. Unlike this source, EMMML 6591 is considered incomplete. Both manuscripts give accounts about the genealogy of kings, the dispute between Lalibäla and Harbäy, the disagreement with Alexandria, famine and starvation, flood, land grant, and the likes. Given this, the aim of this paper is to evaluate both manuscripts using historical and philological methodologies and determine the historical value of the new manuscript.

## **Ethiopian Manuscript Culture as Reflected on the Manuscripts of Abunä Abrham from Codicological Perspectives**

**Dr. Hagos Abrha**

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The monastery of Abunä Abrham is one of the known rock hewn churches of Gär‘alta (in Central Tigray). The monastery was said to have been built in the mediaeval period, at the time of King Lalibela. The monastery has preserved more than 71 Ge‘ez manuscripts including Gädlä Lalibela. All the manuscripts were digitized by St. Yared Center for Ethiopian Philology and Manuscript Studies (Mekelle University) in 2018. Thus, the objective of this paper is to present the Ethiopian manuscript culture based on the reflection on these manuscripts. These manuscripts have different physical features: the parchment they are made up of, the number of columns, manuscript size, cover type, number of folios, decoration, content, quiring system, number of quires, overall condition, etc. Most of the manuscripts have two columns, but there are also manuscripts that have one, three and four columns. The biggest manuscript in folio number is Mäşəḥafä Bərhan (with 211 folios) and the Gospel of John the smallest (with 12 folios); the number of quires of the manuscripts varies from Mäşəḥafä Bərhan (with 30 quires) to Mälkə‘a Abunä Abrham with a single quire. Some big manuscripts are in a bad condition; however, most of the manuscripts are moderate in their physical condition since their average date seems to be later than 16th C. As an example, we can take one manuscript, namely, Dərsanä Mäsqäl from the collection. This manuscript is kept on a shelf inside a case that helped its good overall condition, covered by leather. This manuscript begins with recto and consists of 86 folios (80 of which are written). Its parchment Length x Width x Breath is 12x9.3x2.7. This manuscript is full of decoration and marginalia but not colophon. This Dərsanä Mäsqäl has 13 quires and its quire structure is: Q21: (10,20), Q82: (10,80; 20, 70; 30,60; 40,50), Q63: (10,60; 20, 50; 30,48),



Q104: (10,100; 20, 09; 03,80; 40,07; 50,06), Q85: (10,80; 20, 70; 30,60; 40,50), Q86: (10,80; 20, 70; 30,60; 40,50), Q107: (10,100; 20, 09; 03,80; 40,70; 05,60), Q88: (10,80; 20, 70; 30,60; 40,50), Q89: (10, 80; 20, 70; 30,60; 40, 50), Q810: (10,80; 20, 70; 30,60; 40,50), Q811: (10,80; 20, 70; 30,60; 40,50), Q612: (10,60; 20, 50; 30,40), Q213: (10,20). To understand the archeology of the manuscripts in detail, which leads to understand the codicological culture of Ethiopian manuscripts, the following formula has been set for the quiring the structure of all the manuscripts in this paper. The last order of the quire is the total number of quires in the manuscript (e.g. Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4); there are four quires in the manuscript, 2.  $x + y - 1 = PfQ = 2S$ , 3.  $Z = 0N$ , 4.  $AfQ = (x+y) - (z+1) = (2s-z)$ , 5.  $Pfm = (PfQ1 + PfQ2 + PfQ3 \dots \dots \infty)$ , 6.  $Afm = AfQ1 + AfQ2 + AfQ3 \dots \dots \infty$ , 7.  $X0 = 1$  (the folio of the structure does exist), 8.  $0x = 0$  (the folio of the structure doesn't exist), 9. X and Y are always N (natural number), 10. (X,Y) has four possibilities= (0,0), (0,1), (1,1), (1,0). Finally, in this paper the manuscripts of Abunä Abrham have been analyzed based on the material point of view. It has been found that their common features can be representations of Ethiopian manuscript culture mainly in the codicological aspect. The study would help in simplifying the complexity of the steps in conserving manuscripts.

## **Introducing the Ethiopic Manuscript Unicode Font Initiative (EMUFI)**

**Daniel Yacob**

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The Ethiopic Manuscript Unicode Font Initiative is a new effort launched at the start of 2011(EC) to draw together scholars and font designers to address the remaining gaps to fully digitize Ethiopic manuscripts as text that can be searched, typed, copied, and pasted while preserving the visual appearance of the symbology of the original artifact.

The EMUFI project draws inspiration from, and indeed is modeled after, the successful “Mideaveal Unicode Font Initiative” (MUFI) for Latin (western) script. Digitizing

manuscripts as text opens the doors to further research possibilities where text analytics and data mining approaches become applicable. Manuscript content also becomes keyword searchable and more readily managed by web and eBook software.

A simple survey finds some 300 letters forms, numeral variants, punctuation and zema “qirts” that need to be reviewed to reach consensus for which symbols should be supported in a font and be promoted in computing standards. The presentation will review these critical topics as well as cover how experts and institutes can get involved to assure their experience and views can inform the applicable international standards.

## **The Business of Scribing: Commissioning and Selling Manuscripts**

**Dr. Sean Michael Winslow**

Zentrum für Informations modellierung

Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities, Vienna; [sean.winslow@uni-graz.at](mailto:sean.winslow@uni-graz.at)

The issue of how much books cost to commission compared to how much they cost to make is a rather difficult subject to track due to fluctuations in prices and scant data points, but, based upon field research done for my dissertation (upcoming book) “Ethiopian Manuscript Production: Practices and Contexts” (Toronto, 2015), I will present some sample cases of the prices charged by scribes for contemporary books running back about fifty years and compare the prices quoted by my informants to some historical examples, to present an idea of the economic viability of manuscript production in the near past. In the process, I will present the ways that my informants took commissions and produced books for the market.

## **Manuscript Conservation in Ethiopia, Current Efforts and Future Perspectives**

**Marco di Bella<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Nikolas Sarris<sup>2</sup>**

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Ethiopia is the only country in the world in which manuscript production is still alive and follows all the practices of this craft almost unchanged since its origin, thus creating an extraordinary environment for manuscript scholars that can benefit from the comparison with the current practice to better understand historical manuscripts. Manuscripts are still scattered all over the country in a wide array of conservation conditions and this great wealth of written heritage demands a huge effort to be preserved. Inventory, cataloguing, digitization projects promoted by Ethiopian authorities and foreign missions aim to identify and study these collections but there is a growing interest in and understanding of the importance of physical safeguard of the original manuscripts, despite the huge difficulties in carrying out conservation and preservation treatments with the necessary level of high standard when combined with remote locations and absence of dedicated facilities. This paper will explore the authors' experience in preserving and conserving Ethiopian manuscripts in several on-site projects, presenting suggestions for future activities.

### **The Value of Writing in 1 Enoch and Related Ethiopic Texts**

**Dr. Aba Daniel Assefa**

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[danielassefakas@gmail.com](mailto:danielassefakas@gmail.com)

Several kinds of books written for different reasons are mentioned in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch. Thus, Enoch, called scribe of righteousness (1 En 15:1), was said to have been commanded by God and angels to write what he saw. All that he would write would be handed down to his son Methuselah and, later on, to future generations. Enoch was not, however, the only one to write books. According to 1 En 33:4, angels too wrote books. The angel Uriel, after showing to Enoch the trajectories, the constellations, their number and the names of the stars of heaven, wrote down all the information for him. Enoch received a book about the stars, in addition to other books that dealt with other topics like the earthly and human activities or the future realities. This short paper aims at exploring the value attached to writing based on the analysis of selected Ethiopic texts, especially the Book of Enoch and other related passages.

### **On the Indigenous Conservation and Preservation of Gə'əz Manuscripts: Rationale, Techniques and Methods**

**Dr. Mersha Alehegne**

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For Ethiopia, Ge'ez manuscripts are the life-blood of her collective memory. The hundreds of manuscripts document the social, cultural, historical, economic, artistic and aesthetic experiences of the country. Thus, conserving and preserving manuscripts is protecting the intellectual heritage of the country. At this tumultuous time when the safety of Ethiopia's written heritage is endangered, it is necessary to discuss all the possible mechanisms of its protection. This paper presents the indigenous means and techniques of conserving and preserving manuscripts. It employs interview as the main source of data collection.

### **From Dust to Dust: Ethiopia's Disappearing Manuscript Heritage**

**Michael Gervers, PhD**

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It has been estimated that there are between 200,000 and a million handwritten manuscripts in Ethiopia. The great majority of these have ecclesiastic content and are held in monastic and church repositories throughout the land. The upkeep of this enormous repertory is beyond the means of Church and State, the consequence of which is that these collections have fallen into a continuing state of deterioration. There is no school of conservation and preservation in which students can learn how to protect this precious heritage, but even if there were, the number of manuscripts which could be cared for would be minimal in terms of the corpus as a whole. Even the Garima Gospels, the most important of all Ethiopia's ancient written texts both for Ethiopia and for the world, have only received modest attention, and that by the good will of voluntary external assistance. Each time any one of the three of the world's earliest Gospel manuscripts is opened, they crumble further. The British Library (BL) has recognized that the worldwide need for the preservation of manuscripts can only be resolved by having them photographically digitized. To this end, the BL has in recent years provided funds for researchers and other concerned parties to undertake such digitization through their Endangered Archives Programme. This paper will emphasize the urgency required to capture the content of Ethiopia's manuscript heritage and will recommend the mobilization of a concerted international effort, in cooperation with the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, to undertake a massive digitization program before this priceless surviving repertory is lost forever. The paper will also recommend the establishment of an independent Centre for Conservation and Preservation of endangered objects.

### List of Paper Presenters

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address</b>
1	Prof. Getatchew Haile	Ethiopia's Written Heritage (Keynote)	Hill Museum Manuscripts Library, St. John's university, Collegeville, MN; ghaile1445@gmail.com
2	Prof. Alessandro Bausi	The Transmission of Written Heritage in the Ethiopian Manuscript Culture: Formatting Content (Keynote)	Hiob Ludolf Center for Ethiopian Studies, University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany; alessandro.bausi@uni-hamburg.de
3	Prof. Gianfrancesco Lusini	Toward a comprehensive study of the Ge'ez Manuscript: The case of the Mordini collection in Parma	Università di Napoli "L'Orientale", Naples; gianfrancescolusini@yahoo.it
4	Dn. GabraAgziaabhir J.	Æthiopian Manuscript Heritage, the Unknown Story: Æthiopia in Æthiopic and non-Æthiopic	Æthiopian Linguistic and Philological Association, Newcastle, UK; <a href="mailto:gebre_egziabher@yahoo.co.uk">gebre_egziabher@yahoo.co.uk</a>
5	Carsten Hoffmann	The World History of Gyorgis Wäldäl Amid – Edition of a Geographical Treatise in the First Part of this Work, and Ways of its Transmission	Center of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Philipps-University Marburg, Germany; hoffmanc@uni-marburg.de
5	Dr. Muluken Andualem	<b>በአባ ገራማ ወንጌልና ዛሬ እየተጠቀምንበት ባለው ወንጌል መካከል የተደረገ ገጽጽራዊ ጥናት</b>	Abbay Culture and Development Research Center, Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia; burukmuluken@gmail.com
6	Dr. Verena Böll	A Handwritten Letter from Liqä Mäk <sup>w</sup> ännən from Gondär: The written heritage of	Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Germany;

		letters	<a href="mailto:yboell@yahoo.com">yboell@yahoo.com</a>
7	Dr. Veronika Six	Hemerology in Ethiopic Manuscripts	Dr. Veronika Six, ex-member of the German Union Cataloguing Project, Academy of Science, Göttingen: Hamburg-branch; vsix@alice-dsl.net
8	Ahimed Zekariya	የአረብኛ ፊደል አመጣጥና እድገት በኢትዮጵያ	Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia; ahimedzq@yahoo.com
9	Hassan Mohammed	Ethiopian Peasant Intellectuals and Their Private Handwritten Collections as ‘Cultural Capital’: Abba Hamido’s Family Private Collections from Bale	Department of Arabic, Addis Ababa University and PhD candidate at University of Cape Town, Team of Timbuktu Manuscript Project, South Africa; hassenkawo@hotmail.com
10	Nuraddin Aman	The Arabic and ‘Ajami’ manuscripts in Bale, southeast Ethiopia: Origin, Circulation and Accessibility	Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia; nuraman33@yahoo.com
11	Dr. Muna Abubeker	Ajami Manuscripts of Harar from the 19th Century Court Documents & Harari Text being Sung	Department of Linguistics and Philology, Addis Ababa University; mnabubeker@gmail.com
12	Dr. Endris Mohammed	The Muhmal of Sayyid Ibrahim of Cale – Arabic Poetic verses	Department of Linguistics and Philology, Addis Ababa University; indrie_moh@yahoo.com
13	Alula Yohannes	Vitae of Gäbrä Maryam (Harbäy): A Quest for Restitution	Department of History and Heritage Management, Aksum University, Ethiopia; and PhD Candidate, Department of Linguistics and Philology, Addis Ababa

			University, Ethiopia; alulay2@gmail.com
14	Dr. Hagos Abrha	Ethiopian Manuscript Culture as Reflected in the Manuscripts of Abunä Abrham: from Codicological Perspectives	St. Yared Center for Ethiopian Philology and Manuscript Studies  Mekelle University, Ethiopia; <a href="mailto:hagoslem21@gmail.com">hagoslem21@gmail.com</a>
15	Daniel Yacob	Introducing the Ethiopic Manuscript Unicode Font Initiative (EMUFI)	Ge'ez Frontier Foundation, USA; <a href="mailto:dyacob@gmail.com">dyacob@gmail.com</a>
16	Dr. Sean M. Winslow	The Business of Scribing: Commissioning and Selling Manuscripts	Zentrum für Informations modellierung  Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities, Vienna; <a href="mailto:sean.winslow@uni-graz.at">sean.winslow@uni-graz.at</a>
17	Mr. Marco di Bella (Italy) and Dr. Nikolas Sarris	Manuscript conservation in Ethiopia, current efforts and future perspectives	Freelance book and manuscript conservator – Palermo (Italy) <a href="mailto:marcodibella76@gmail.com">marcodibella76@gmail.com</a> ; Book and manuscript conservator, National Library of Greece – Athens (Greece) <a href="mailto:nikolasarris@gmail.com">nikolasarris@gmail.com</a> .
18	Dr. Daniel Assefa (Abba)	The Value of Writing in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch	Capuchin Franciscan Institute, Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; <a href="mailto:danielassefakas@gmail.com">danielassefakas@gmail.com</a>
19	Dr. Mersha Alehegne	On the Indigenous Preservation Methods of Gə'əz Manuscripts	Department of Linguistics and Philology, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia; <a href="mailto:mersha.alehegne@aau.edu.et">mersha.alehegne@aau.edu.et</a>
20	Prof. Michael Gervers	From Dust to Dust: Ethiopia's Disappearing Manuscript Heritage	University of Toronto; <a href="mailto:m.gervers@utoronto.ca">m.gervers@utoronto.ca</a>