

Philological Analysis of the Manuscripts of *Gädlä Yəmፍata*

by HAGOS Abrha¹

Abstract

*The following text is based on the analysis of ten manuscripts of the *Gädlä Yəmፍata* found in Wäjjärat, Southeastern Tigray, and different areas of Gärsalta, Eastern Tigray. Eight of the manuscripts are from Gärsalta and two from Wäjjärat. These manuscripts are parched in two ways, with cloth and leather. This article presents the physical and internal features (focusing on the family tree / stemma codicum) of these manuscripts. Based on a paleographic analysis, the manuscripts seem to date to the 19th century. The *Gädlä Yəmፍata* itself claims that the original text (Urtext) of this hagiography was written by Saint Yared. Philologically the manuscript found in Guh (from Gärsalta) is more archaic than the other manuscripts. However, it is the Vorlage of only some of the manuscripts, which means that there was another (older) manuscript that would have been the archetype of all of them. The family tree presented in this article was constructed based on a documentation of the conjunctive errors and the Lachmannian method. Some linguistic differences between the manuscripts and some polygenetic errors are also presented, which show some banal corruptions of the manuscripts. At the end the family tree of the whole manuscripts follows.*

Keywords: *Gädlä Yəmፍata* – stemma codicum – Saint Yəmፍata – Saint Yared – Nine Saints – Guh – Gärsalta – Wäjjärat – Tigray

Introduction

Yəmፍata was one of the so-called „Nine Saints“ (Roman monks according to tradition) who came to Ethiopia in the 5th / 6th centuries, generally known as the Second Christianization period of Ethiopia. The Nine Saints contributed a great deal to the spreading of Christianity throughout the northern parts of Ethiopia. Each of the Nine Saints has his own hagiography (*gädl*). At least three of them have been edited and published by Italian scholars, for instance, the *Gädlä Arägawi* by Guidi and the *Gädlä P'änt'älewön* by Conti Rossini. The *Gädlä Yəmፍata* is among the unedited and unpublished hagiographies. Manuscripts of the hagiography of Saint Yəmፍata are found in Gärsalta and Wäjjärat. The focus of this article is a philological analysis of the *Gädlä Yəmፍata*. I have collected ten manuscripts of the *Gädlä Yəmፍata*, digitalized and printed them.

The manuscripts copied from the original ones are kept at various churches and monasteries in Tigray. The sites of the manuscripts can be

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devided in two groups, i.e. areas north and south of Mekelle [Mäk’älä], the capital city of Tigray.

The manuscripts stemming from areas north of Mekelle were found around Gäፍalta, in Guፍ (rock-hewn church and the church attributed to Yəmፍata), ፍAddi-ፍAgwa, ፍAddi-Mäyda, ፍAddi-Bäläw, Maryam-Bäraqit, ፍAddi-ፍhiza, ፍAddi-Yəፍolo; there are two manuscripts in ፍAddi-Bäläw (the word *ፍaddi* means ‘house/home’ in Tigrinya). Manuscripts from areas south of Mekelle were found in Wäjjärat ፍIsra-ፍAddi (‘twenty districts’); they are only two in number (manuscript of ፍAddi Batti and manuscript of K’irk’os Hala). Wäjjärat is located around 80-90 kilometers south of Mekelle. All the manuscripts are named after the place where they were found.

The main objective of this article is to show the physical and internal features (mainly the stemma codicum) of the manuscripts, and some linguistic differences between the manuscripts. Philologically, the paleography, parchment, number of folios, number of columns, penmanship, family tree, archetype, and sub-archetypes of the manuscripts have been analyzed.

Abbreviations

A:	ፍAddi - ፍAg ^{wa}	K’:	K’irkos-Hala
Bl1:	ፍAddi- Bäläw1	M :	ፍAddi-Mäyda
Bl2:	ፍAddi- Bäläw2	Ms:	Manuscript
Br :	Maryam-Bäraqit	Mss:	Manuscripts
Bt :	ፍAddi-Batti	Rc:	Recto
F:	Folio	Vr:	Verso
G:	Guፍ	Y :	ፍAddi-Yəፍolo
ፍh :	ፍAddi -ፍhiza		

1. Some orthographic differences between the manuscripts

There are several examples of orthographic differences between the mss.:

I. ጸ, ፀ

1. **ዘትትናጸር** [zätətnas’s’är] ‘opposite to’ MssBl, Y, A, ፍh, M, Br, G
vs. **ዘትትናፀር** [zätətnas’s’är] Mss Bt and K’
2. **ፀድያ** [s’ädya] Mss Bl, Bt, K’, M, G, Br
vs. **ጸድያ** [s’ädya] Mss Y, A, ፍh

II. ፍh - h - x

1. **ፀግጎደር** [maxədär] ‘shelter’ in all the manuscripts except Ms K’
vs. **ፀግሀደር** [mahədär] Ms K’
2. **አልሀም** [ʔalhəmt] ‘cows/cattle’ in all the manuscripts except Ms Y
vs. **አልሀምት** [ʔalhəmt] Mss Y, A

The form with x is correct; but x and ḥ frequently interchange in Geez manuscripts.

III. The word Wäjjärat is written in three forms:

1. ዋጅራት [Wajjərat] Mss Bl, G, Br, K'
2. ዋጅጊት [Wajjirat] Mss M, A, Y, ḥ
3. ወጀራት [Wäjjärat] Ms Bt

The last reading (Bt), which is found in Wäjjärat itself is the correct reading, because the people in Wäjjärat only use the pronunciation [Wäjjärat]. Elsewhere in Tigray all three pronunciations can be found.

IV. One day, according to the manuscripts, robbers killed a boy; his mother heard and cried out በግዓር 'in a moan'.

1. በግዓር [bägäʕar] Mss Bl, M, A, ḥ, G, Br
2. በገአር [bägäʔär] MsY
3. በገዐር [bägäʕär] Ms K'
4. በሀገር [bähägär] Ms Bt

The normal form of the word is በግዓር, with a pharyngeal. The sound [ʕa] can be spelled ʕ or o based on today's Geez; Ms K' spells it with o. Ms Y uses አ instead. An interesting change can be seen in MsBt. Manuscript Bt presents a totally different word ሀገር 'country' instead ግዓር. It must have been corrupted from MsK' because, orthographically, o and u are very similar. Plausibly, the change was በገዐር -> በገሀር -> በሀገር. It can be assumed that manuscript K' is the Vorlage / archetype of manuscript Bt. Reasons for this can be: Geographically they are located in the same area (Wäjjärat). The copyist of MsBt must have considered that በገዐር was written as በገሀር, which has no meaning, and 'corrected' it to በሀገር. This progression only makes sense if Ms K' was the Vorlage of Ms Bt.

V. A more substantial difference involves the name of the mother of Saint Yəməʕata, which is written in different ways in the manuscripts:

1. ቁስጥንጥንያ [K'ust'ənt'ənəya] Mss K', Bt, A
2. ቁስጥንጥያ [K'ust'ənt'əya] Mss Bl1, Bl2, M, G, Br, ḥ
3. ቁስጥጥንያ [K'ust'ət'ənya] Ms Y

The reading found in the first group fits to the toponym ቁስጥንጥንያ [K'ust'ənt'ənəya], which means in Geez 'Constantinople' (the center of the Byzantine Empire, historically derived from the personal male name Constantinos). Thus this form should be the original. The others are plausibly corruptions, created by different processes of haplography, which deleted either the first *n* (group 3) or the second *n* (group 2).

There are also morphological and syntactic differences between the manuscripts. The following sentence, discussed in chapter one, can serve as an example.

MsBl, h: ዘደረሰ ለዝንቱ ገድለ አቡነ ብፁዕ ብእሴ እግዚአብሔር ማር ይምዓታ

Zä-däräsä läzəntu gädlä abunä bəs'u? bəʔəse Əgziʔabəher mar YəmṢata

Who wrote this hagiography of father, Saint, person of God, respected YəmṢata

MsY: ዘደረሰ ለዝንቱ ገድለ ብፁዕ አቡነ ይምዓታ

Zä-däräsä läzəntu gädlä bəs'u? abunä YəmṢata

Who wrote this hagiography of Saint, father YəmṢata

MsK': ዘደረሰ ለዝንቱ ገድል ገድለ አቡነ ብፁዕ ይምዓታ

Zä-däräso läzəntu gädl gädlä abunä bəs'u? YəmṢata

Who wrote (it) this hagiography, hagiography of father, saint YəmṢata

MsM: ዘደረሰ ለዝንቱ ገድለ አቡነ ይምዓታ

Zä-däräsä läzəntu gädlä abunä YəmṢata

Who wrote this hagiography of father YəmṢata

MsA: ዘደረሰ ለዝንቱ ገድል ዘአቡነ ይምዓታ

Zä-däräsä läzəntu gädl zä-abunä YəmṢata

Who wrote this father YəmṢata's hagiography

The genitive marker in MsA is different from the others: It is expressed by *zä-* “of” attached to the possessor *ዘአቡነ* (*zä-abunä*). In all the other manuscripts the genitive is indicated by the Construct state of the possessive, *gädl-ä*.

In manuscripts K', B, Bl, h, YəmṢata is called a saint and spiritual person. In the other manuscripts, there is no clear indication that he is a saint, except the word *gädl* itself, which is common to all the manuscripts.

Notice also the distinctive construction of the verb in Ms K': *däräs-o* “he wrote it”, which is found in no other Ms. Manuscript K' also is the only one to repeat the word *gädl*.

All the above points are linguistic differences among the manuscripts. However, these differences are not all useful in constructing a family tree, because philologically most of these errors are common, natural, polygenetic errors rather than conjunctive errors.

2. Physical Features of the Manuscripts

2.1. Physical Material

All the manuscripts are made of parchment and in almost all cases the parchment is thick. They are written with traditional pen, in two colors i.e. red and black. The red ink is used, as usual, mainly for the name of God, Angels and Yəməŋata himself. The word Yəməŋata is written above five hundred times in each manuscript; this is the equivalent of at least five full folios of red ink in a single manuscript or fifty folios in all the manuscripts, which means there could be a single manuscript consisting only of “Yəməŋata”! Each manuscript is bound as a codex. The binding is made of wood covered by leather or cloth, manuscripts (A, G and B12) are covered with cloth; the others are covered with leather. In all of the manuscripts the front and back cover are still well preserved.

2.2. Page layout and writing style

The pages are not numbered, and only Ms Bt has any decorations at all (picture of Yəməŋata). There are page margins on the left, right, top and bottom. Marginalia are most commonly found in the top margin. The text is written continuously, generally with no gaps or blank spaces between lines; only rarely do gaps occur in some of the manuscripts. Except for manuscript (G), which is written in three columns, all the other manuscripts are written in two columns. Catchwords are used only occasionally.

The style of writing of all the manuscripts is very similar, they are written with medium size letters, and there is a word divider, i.e. two dots. The penmanship of the manuscripts is almost completely clear and neat except in a few places. The paleography appears to be quite modern, probably to be dated to the 18-20th centuries, to judge from the samples given in Uhlig (1990).

2.3. Overall condition of the Manuscripts

All the manuscripts are complete, but there are some pages left out inadvertently. For instance, in the manuscript of ሃAddi-Batti (Bt), the copist has left out about three folios unwittingly, between two instances of “In the name of the Father, the son, and the Holy Sprit”.

Recto 67 of B12 reads (like all the other manuscripts):

... መሐለ፡ ሎቱ፡ ከመ፡ ኢይርኣይ፡ ደይነ፡ በስመ፡ ኣብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ኣሁዱ፡ ኣምላክ፡ ኣመ፡ & ወ3፡ ለጥቅምት፡ እምድሕረ፡ ተወፈየ፡ ኪዳነ፡ ምስለ፡ ደቂቁ፡ መነኮሳት...

Three and half folios later (verso 75) it says:

በስመ፡ ኣብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ኣሁዱ፡ ኣምላክ፡ ስምዑኪ፡ ፍቁራንዮ፡ ሕዝበ ክርስትያን፡ ንንግርክሙ፡ ተአሚሪሁ፡ ቀዳሚ፡ በምድረ፡ ጉሕ....

But in the manuscript of (Bt) it is not like that in Recto 108 of Bt it says:

... መሐለ፡ ሎቱ፡ ከመ፡ ኢይርአይ፡ ደይነ፡፡ በስመ፡ አብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ አሁዱ፡ አምላክ፡ ስምዑኬ፡ ፍቁራንዮ፡ ሕዝበ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ንግግርከመ፡ ተአሚራሁ፡ ቀዳሚ፡ በምድረ፡ ጉሕ...

This shows the copyist of manuscript (Bt) has inadvertently omitted three and half folios. Clearly this is because the identical phrase በስመ፡ አብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ occurs in two places. The copyist apparently skipped to the second one. Because of this confusion many important passages have been omitted in manuscript Bt.

There are also pages, which are damaged. More than thirty folios of manuscript Bt have been partly eaten by mice. There are holes in all the manuscripts. However, the parchment itself is wellpreserved, not fragile or brittle. But the condition of the manuscripts is not necessarily a good clue to their age. A manuscript may have deteriorated because of poor handling or bad conservation. And of course the manuscript is two things, the physical (parchment) and the message. Thus, the age of the parchment is not a good witness to the age of the text itself. The ink of most of the manuscripts is clearly legible, and logically the ink and the paleography are better clues to the date of actual writing than the parchment itself. The physical features of the manuscripts are summarized in the following table.

No	Ms	No. of folios				Total	No. of columns	Parch-ment (length x width in cm)	Cover
		written	unwritten						
			F	M	B				
1	A	1271/ 2	4	-	½	132	Two	35.6x15.9	cloth
2	BI1	95		-		95	Two	30.5x15.9	leather
3	BI2	85	2½		1½	89	Two	30.5x15.9	cloth
4	Br	78		-		78	Two	27.9x16.5	leather
5	Bt	129	1	-	-	130	Two	35.6x16.5	leather
6	G	80	1	-	2	83	Three	35.6x16.5	cloth
7	።	84½	2	-	½	87	Two	27.9x15.9	leather

8	K'	101	½	1	3½	106	Two	27.9x15.9	leather
9	M	96½	2	-	2½	101	Two	33.0x16.5	leather
10	Y	69	2	-	-	71	Two	27.9x15.9	leather

(In columns 4-6, F= front, M= middle, B= back pages)

As shown in the above table, the manuscripts have different numbers of folios (from a minimum of 71 up to a maximum of 132). Manuscripts A, Bt and G have the largest page size. All the manuscripts except G have only two columns. Manuscript K' is the only one, which has an unwritten folio in the middle; the blank folio comes after the introduction, which is not commonly found in the other manuscripts. Except for three manuscripts (A, G and B12), all the manuscripts are covered with leather. Note that manuscript A, the longest one, also contains another text (excerpts from the Miracles of Mary).

3. Some Internal Features of the Manuscripts

There are linguistic and internal philological differences among the manuscripts, including phonological, morphological, orthographical, and textual differences. That means there are common innovations/errors. Some of these are polygenetic and others are conjunctive (in my judgment). The conjunctive errors are used to make a stemma of the manuscripts.

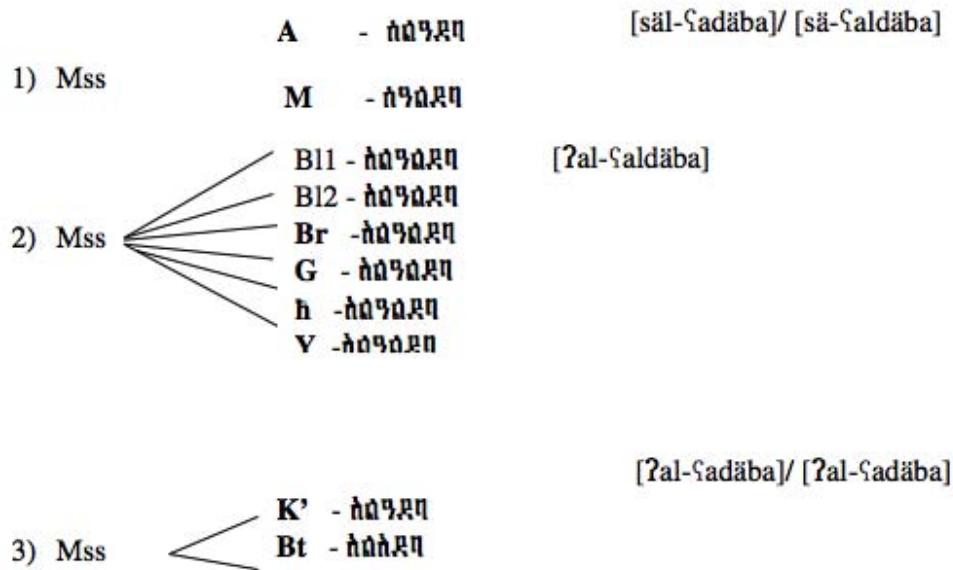
3.1. Family tree / Stemma of the manuscripts

There are many criteria to reconstruct a family tree of manuscripts. The criterion of the *codex optimus* (the best codex) is a very old criterion: one manuscript, which appears to show the most correct and the smoothest text, is chosen, and it is printed in all the editions. Another method is the *codices plurimi* ("the most codices"): the reading found in the majority of the manuscripts is to be preferred. The third one, which is accepted by most scholars, is the Lachmannian method. In this method there are two important points: *recentiores non-deteriores* ("the more recent manuscripts are not the worst") and *lectio difficilior* (the most difficult reading is most probably of an older time). I have used this method. There are shared innovations, both conjunctive as well as polygenetic, in the manuscripts. The manuscripts thus can be tentatively grouped into three families based on common innovations of the conjunctive type. The following points are key criteria.

1) In all the manuscripts, the Nine Saints came to Aksum in the time of king "Θlla-Ameda" [i.e. the historical king Θllä-ʿAmida known from the Aksumite inscriptions, cp. Fiaccadori 2005]; Θlla-Ameda's father is named in all the manuscripts, but in different forms:

MsA:	አልዓሜዳ ወልዱ ሰልዓደባ	[sä-Ṣadäba]
MSB1:	አልዓሜዳ ወልዱ አልዓልደባ	[ʔal-Ṣaldäba]
MSB12:	አልዓሜዳ ወልዱ አልዓልደባ	[ʔal-Ṣaldäba]
MsBr:	አልዓሜዳ ወልደ አልዓልደባ	[ʔal-Ṣaldäba]
MsBt:	አልዓሜዳ ወልዱ አልአደባ	[ʔal-ʔadäba]
MsG:	አልዓሜዳ ወልደ አልዓልደባ	[ʔal-Ṣaldäba]
Msḥ:	አልዓሜዳ ወልዱ አልዓልደባ	[ʔal-Ṣaldäba]
MsKʔ:	አልዓሜዳ ወልዱ አልዓደባ	[ʔa-Ṣadäba]
MsM:	አልዓሜዳ ወልዱ ሰዓልደባ	[sä-Ṣaldäba]
MsY:	አልዓሜዳ ወልዱ አልዓልደባ	[ʔal-Ṣaldäba]

Based just on this reading the manuscripts fall into the following groups: [sä-Ṣadäba]/ [sä-Ṣaldäba]



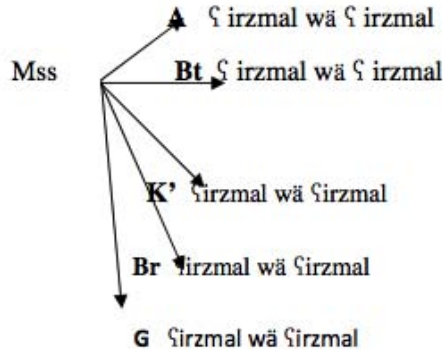
In Group 1 (Mss A, M) there is an initial [s] that is not present in the other Mss. Group 3 and Ms A omit the second [l]; Ms M apparently omits the first [-l]. The difference between A and M could be the result of graphic metathesis, a reversal of the letters ሳ and ለ.

The six manuscripts of the second group have identical readings. Based on the criterion of codices plurimi (the most codices), this group might be taken as representing the original reading. The third group consists of the two manuscripts (Kʔ and Bt), which have very similar readings, except for the difference in the sounds of [-Ṣ] and [-ʔ]. Manuscript Kʔ is more similar to the other manuscripts than manuscript Bt is. There is another feature common to group one and three: these groups have five, not six, characters, as they only have one [l] sound.

However, we cannot fairly judge the archetypes and sub-archetypes only from this single example. Rather, additional readings must be considered.

II. According to Gädlä YəmṬata the angel Gabriel called YəmṬata using an (allegedly) Hebrew word, Ṣirzmal (ḥCḥʾṣṬ) with the meaning “who has won over the demon?” (Actually this and the phrases in III and IV show no resemblance to Hebrew; Orin Gensler, p.c.). In all the manuscripts, this word is written in different forms. These can also be grouped into three families.

1.



2. Mss A, Bl1 & 2, Y Ṣirzmal, Ṣirzmal

3. MsM Ṣirzmal, Ṣirzmal, Ṣirzmal

In the first group, the conjunction *wä*- “and” is added. The second and third groups do not have the conjunction. In the third group, consisting only of a single manuscript, the word *Ṣirzmal* is written three times. This third repetition may be unconscious, or it may be connected with the theological concept of the Trinity.

III. An angel also greeted St. YəmṬata, again allegedly in Hebrew. The following phrase occurs in each of manuscripts, meaning ‘How do you do and did you come well?’ Based on this phrase, the manuscripts can be grouped into three families.

1. Mss A, M: məṢarfäs wägadis wäṢalis

2. Mss G, Br, Y, Bl1&2: məṢarfäs wägadis wäʔalis

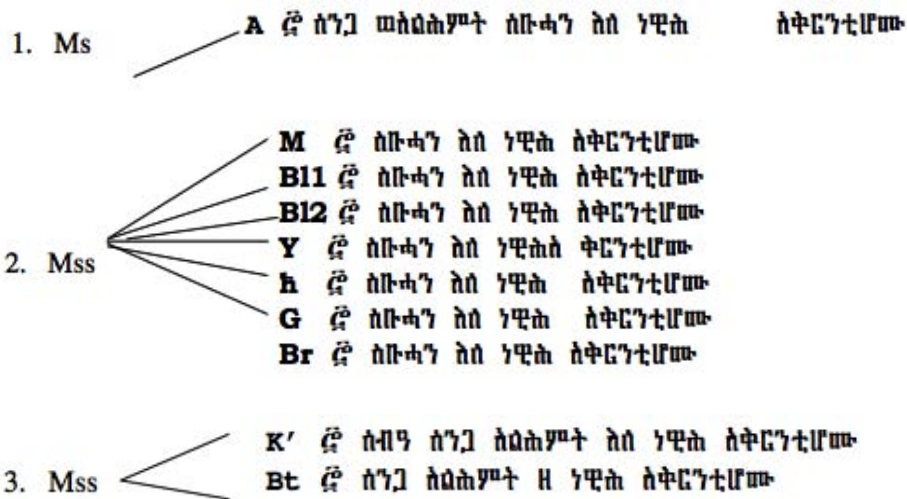
3. Mss Bt, Kʔ: məṢarfäsä wägadisä wäṢalisä

The two manuscripts of the first group are different from the other groups because they have the pharyngeal [Ṣ] instead of [ʔ]. The pharyngeal sound was

still pronounced in ancient Geez. Thus in the other manuscripts, this pharyngeal sound might have been lost. In the second group of manuscripts, the readings are identical.

The third group is again different: at the end of every word, there is an [ä] sound, which is not found in the other manuscripts. This may perhaps be the influence of ṢAfar. In ṢAfar to say, ‘good morning, how are you’ etc. they say “*nagasä wargasä*”. These two manuscripts K’ and Bt are found in Wäjjärat (bordered by ṢAfar to the east); and in Wäjjärat it is common to use some ṢAfar words. So, the pattern sä, sä or ä, ä may be due to that influence. Plausibly, if the copyist knew ṢAfar or some ṢAfar words, this might have led to the corruption.

IV. The people of Wäjjärat and GäṢalta paid cattle as a tax to the church. This is recorded in different forms in the different manuscripts. The meaning of the phrase is: ‘seventy fat (cattle) with long horns’.



In this context, manuscript A does not agree fully with any other manuscript. The two Wäjjärat manuscripts K’ and Bt are similar but not identical. In manuscript K’, the copyist has written the number 70 twice (as a Geez symbol and spelled out as a word). Manuscript Bt also uses H [zä] instead of ስሰ [ʔəlä].

V. The angel Gabriel also speaks to YəməṢata, again allegedly in Hebrew. The meaning of the phrase is not explained in the manuscripts, but is written as follows:

1. Mss A, M: nafamin wäʔarfamin wätiman wämäṢarsyon
2. Mss B11 & B12, Y, G, h, Br: nafamin wäʔarfamin wätiman wämäṢarseyon
3. Mss K’:
Bt Omitted: bafamin watiman wämäṢarsyon

Manuscripts M and A have the same reading. All the other manuscripts are the same, except (again) for the two manuscripts K' and Bt. On the basis of these five criteria, we can tentatively set up the stemma tree given below. It is clear that K' and Bt form a group. These two manuscripts, and no others, share the following features:

- a) ʔal-ʔadäba/ʔal-ʕadäba (one l, no s)
- b) added –ä in the angel’s greeting to Yəməʕata.

There are two other features which K' and Bt share only with A; these will be discussed below. Still focusing only on K' and Bt, it is also clear that K' is the prototype for Bt, and that Bt is a corruption, for several reasons:

- a) Bt omits 3 1/2 pages
- b) Bt omits Gabriel’s greeting to Yəməʕata.
- c) Bt’s reading ʔገር is clearly corrupt, and only makes sense if it is derived from K’s reading ገር
- d) Only Bt names the father of Əlla-Ameda as -አደባ (with አ not 0)
- e) Only Bt has zä instead of ʔəllä, and zä can be considered “simpler” Geez.
- f) Bt is the only ms to have the *correct* spelling of Wäjjärat. But this too could be an innovation; Bt comes from Wäjjärat, and the copyist could easily have corrected the wrong spellings of his own home region. This argues for a substructure that looks like this:



As noted above, K' and Bt also have features which they share with A:

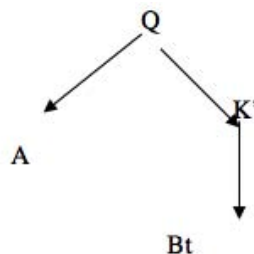
- a) Sänga (wä-) ʔalhəmt
- b) K'ust'ənt'ənya

This suggests that K', Bt' and A might make a subfamily. But are the shared features really shared *innovations*? Shared retentions would be useless for sub-grouping. As for K'ust'ənt'ənya, this is very likely to be a shared retention. The only plausible source for this woman’s name is something like “Constantin(i)a”, with the sequence t-n-t-n; and K', Bt, and A all preserve this reading (in the form t'-n-t'-n). On the other hand, the phrase *Sänga (wä)-ʔalhəmt* is very likely an innovation. The scribe surely was thinking of the Biblical passage where Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dream (Gen 41: 2):

säbʕatu ʔalhəmt sännay raʔəyomu wä səbuħan səgahomu

Literally translated: ‘Seven cows beautiful their appearance and fat their flesh’

The passage in *Gädlä YəmṢata* uses the same syntactic construction and some of the same words, and is describing cattle. But there is no reason to repeat the word “cows”, which is what we find in K', Bt and A. In fact, *sänga* is a Cushitic word (e.g. Oromo) for “ox” and is thus clearly an addition. Hence K', Bt and A show a shared innovation of a very specific nature—thus a conjunctive innovation, and a good argument for sub grouping them together. This gives us a substructure:

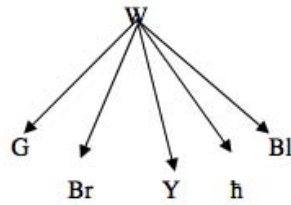


Here Q indicates an older intermediate ancestor manuscript which is presumably lost. We turn now to the remaining manuscripts. M will be discussed separately below. All the other manuscripts (G, Br, Y, Bl, ḥ) share several features in common:

- a) The name of Əlla-Ameda’s father is given as ʔal-Ṣaldäba
 - b) The angel’s greeting to YəmṢata has ḥ not 0.
 - c) The angel Gabriel’s greeting to YəmṢata has *-seyon* instead of *-əyən* or *-sayən*
- They also share two features with Ms M:
- d) The description of the 70 cows does not contain any explicit word for “cow” (neither *ʔalhəmt* nor *sänga*).
 - e) The woman’s name does not have the sequence t’-n-t’-n, but only 3 letters (t’-n-t’ or t’-t’-n), a case of haplology.

This would suggest that G, Br, Y, Bl, and ḥ form a subfamily of their own. But again we must ask: are there shared innovations? With the two pseudo-Hebrew greetings, it is impossible to know what the “correct” original version was. But the name *ʔal-Ṣaldäba* very likely is a shared innovation. The reason is that the variant *säl-Ṣadäba/säṢaldäba* (found in A and M) is also found in other sources outside the direct YəmṢata tradition. *Gädlä Arägawi*, *Gädlä P’ünt’älenon*, and the Ethiopian Synaxarium (as well as the historian Həruy Wäldəsəllase) all give the name with initial *sä-*. This argues strongly that the archetype for *Gädlä YəmṢata* also had *sä-*. If so, the variants in initial *a-* represent a shared innovation, plausibly a conjunctive innovation. We symbolize the hypothetical intermediate ancestor of this group as W. The substructure is then:

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A few minor notes. “Bl” indicates two manuscripts, not one; but they are from the same church and are identical in all the above respects. Second, Y shows two small innovations: the woman’s name is spelled t’- t’- n (plausibly a metathesis from t’- n- t’), and the word for “moan” is spelled ገአር with አ. Third, Br and G use the phrase wäldä ገal-ገaldäba, which is correct Geez (construct of *wäld*), whereas all the other manuscripts (Y, h, Bl, but also A, M, K’, and Bt) have the version *wäldu*, which is not good Geez. It is hard to know whether Br and G represent an innovation or a retention in this case.

Based strictly on text-internal evidence, the identity of the hypothetical Ms W is unknown. However, it may be that W is actually G. This is due to external evidence. Ms G is the only one found in Yəmገata’s own church of Guḥ; moreover, the priests assert that all the other manuscripts were copied from G. On the other hand, G is the only manuscript written in three columns, which seems unlikely if it is to be the ancestor of two-column manuscripts.

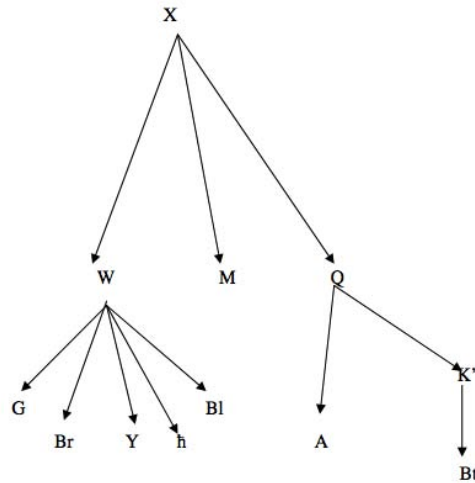
Manuscript M is the most challenging. It shows similarities with A, but also with group W. The similarities with A are as follows:

- a) Only A, M give the name of ፀlla-Ameda’s father beginning with sä-. This is probably a shared retention.
- b) In two of the Pseudo-Hebrew greetings to Yəmገata, A, M differ from group W:

A, M: ገalis W: ገalis
 A, M: mäገarsyon W: mäገarseyon

It is unclear which variant here is an innovation, since the “original” of this nonsense-Hebrew is unknown. The similarities with group W are these:

- c) The description of the 70 cows is identical. It is unclear if this version is a retention or an innovation.
- d) The woman’s name is K’ust’ənt’ya, with the sequence t’-n-t’. This is very likely to represent a shared innovation, since the original was probably t’-n-t’-n. It is hard to make any strong argument on the basis of this data. Perhaps M should be grouped with W; but it seems safest to present M as a separate group of its own. Putting all the above premises, the following stemma codicum/family tree is the conclusion.



The nodes X, W, and Q are hypothetical; X is the ancestor of the whole manuscript family.

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