

Content Analysis of the Chronicle of Bäkaffa (1721-1730)

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Ethiopia is unique among sub-Saharan Africa in its ancient tradition of written culture and its own literary language, Ge'ez. Since the fourth century AD, numerous religious, and secular, texts have been translated into Ge'ez from Greek, Syriac, and Arabic. Many local works, including hagiographies, chronicles, and other texts, were also composed in Ge'ez. The chronicle of King Bäkaffa (r.1721-1730) is an important genre in Ethiopian historiography, which was composed by Azzaž Sinoda and Kenfä Michael in the 18th century. Guidi (1903) edited it in Latin and Ge'ez. Accordingly, the researcher accessed Ms-A, D' Abbadie Mss Collection (Eth.167) from France, Ms-NL, National Archive and Library Agency (NL.513) from Ethiopia, and Ms-B, Aeth. 32 Oxoniensis Mss Collection (Bodl. Aeth. 32) from England, through the digital camera. *The purpose of this paper is to analyze the content of the chronicle of Bäkaffa. The study has employed a qualitative research approach. Manuscripts' descriptions are made using philological tools. It discusses the history of the King, and his social, economic, religious and cultural contributions, including his military expedition against rebellious provinces. The content of the chronicle, the subject matter (historical, religious and judicial) of the chronicle, language use in the chronicle, intertextuality, linguistic problems, and some Amharic loanwords are also analyzed. Finally, the study concludes that chronicles are among the important literary genres for studying the philology, history, literature and culture of the past and that they need further research.*

Key words: Content analysis, chronicle, Bäkaffa

1. Introduction

Ethiopia is a country with an ancient written culture and its own literary language, which makes it unique among sub-Saharan African countries. This written language is the ancient Ge'ez language, which was spoken

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in the time of Aksum (Adamu and Belaynesh, 1970; Siranesh, 2016). In connection with the introduction of Christianity into Ethiopia during the reign of the Aksumite king Ezana, religious texts from Greek and Syriac were translated into Ge'ez (Mebratu, 2012). After the rise of the Solomonic Dynasty in the 13th century, many religious and secular texts were translated from Arabic into Ge'ez. A large number of indigenous works including the Ethiopian royal chronicles began to be written during the reign of Emperor Amdä Şəyon's (1307-1337). These royal chronicles are a significant part of Ethiopian literature and historiography in which important historical, religious, and socio-cultural events have been recorded (Pankhurst, 1967).² Most of the royal chronicles were produced by *Şāhāfe Tə'əzazat* (chroniclers) in the courts of the Emperors (Sergew, 1972). Almost all Ethiopian royal chronicles were composed in Gə'əz. However, from the 19th c. to 20th c. few chronicles were composed in Amharic.

The Ethiopian emperors' chronicles including hagiographies have been edited since the establishment of Ethiopian studies in the 17th c. by Hiob Ludolf and later in the 19th c. in Europe by many prominent western Ethiopists such as Basset (1882), Perruchon (1893), Pereira (1892), Conti Rosini (1907), Guidi (1903), Budge (1928), and others.

The chronicle of Bäkaffa was composed in the 18th century during the reign of Bäkaffa, namely by *Şāhāfe Tə'əzazat* Sinoda and Kənfä Micha'el. Then Guidi (1903) published it in Gə'əz and Latin. Also, Bruce summarized the Ethiopian royal chronicles together with Bäkaffa's chronicle in his book titled *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile*, in the years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773 Vol. II (3rd ed.) in English. Bruce has briefly discussed the reign of Bäkaffa and the general circumstances of his time in his work. Similarly, Budge published the history of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian Emperors under the title *History of Ethiopia: Nubia and Abyssinia, Vol. II*. In his work, Budge presented a summary of the chronicle of Bäkaffa based on royal and abridged chronicles in English (Budge, 1928). He gives an overall description drawn from the chronicle. Additionally, Pankhurst has presented a summary of the chronicles of Ethiopian monarchs entitled "The Ethiopian Royal Chronicles" including Bäkaffa's chronicle in English

² The Axumite kings appear to have developed a sense of history in the 4th c. Several of the emperors recorded their victories by means of inscriptions using Sabeian, Gə'əz and Greek languages; stone inscription of Axumite period may be considered to be the forerunners of later chronicles; since the 13th century up to Emperor Hailä Şəllase.

(Pankhurst, 1967). The work simply describes the main events of the time in a much summarized manner.

Historical works were also produced in Amharic based on the chronicles of Bäkaffa. Täklä Sadak Mäkuria published history of Ethiopian Emperors entitled የኢትዮጵያ ታሪክ ከአፄ ልብነ ድንግል እስከ ዐፄ ቴዎድሮስ (*The History of Ethiopia from Emperor Lébnä Dénégél to Emperor Tewodros*), including the history of Bäkaffa in Amharic. The major part of the text's discussion is the reign of Bäkaffa and his social activities including the contemporary political milieu of the Christian kingdom. Recently, Alemu (2014) translated and published the chronicle of Bäkaffa in Amharic and Ge'ez.

The above-mentioned works show that the content of the chronicle of Bäkaffa was not studied in detail. Those previous studies simply used the chronicle as the source for late medieval Ethiopian history. The chronicle of Bäkaffa gives an understanding of the classical literary tradition of the country including cultural and historical events of the time. However, this text has not yet been well studied using content analysis. I found it worth examining this text from the point of view of content analysis. Thus, the study attempted to address the following questions: Who is King Bäkaffa? What kind of the language is used in the chronicle? What topics or issues does the Chronicle embody? What are the contents of texts?

Method and Data collection techniques

Content analysis was employed to analyze the existing manuscripts or chronicles. Content analysis is a qualitative research tool or technique widely used to analyze content and its features. The analysis of the chronicles was done based on the content analysis approach. The data were mainly obtained from the two data sources: primary and secondary sources. Primary sources (the earlier copies of the chronicles) are collected from the following three existing Mss Copies found from foreign and domestic libraries through digital camera: (1) Ms-A, Antoine d Abbadie Mss Collection Eth. 167 (Histore de Bakeff): from the *Bibliothèque Nationale* de France (Paris); (2) Ms-B, from the Bodleian Library, London; Bodl. Aeth.32 (Histore de Bäkaffa) (from England); (3) Ms-NL, from the National Archive and Library Agency (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia). Then I described and collated the content of each text by means of philological tools. Finally, I have done content analysis.

2. Biography of King Bäkaffa

Early life of King Bäkaffa

Bäkaffa, known in his throne name as *Mäsih Sägäd* (meaning ‘to whom the anointed bows’) was king of Ethiopia from 1721 to 1730. He was the son of Emperor Iyasu I (1682-1707) and Queen Maréyamawit. The name Bäkaffa was derived from Oromiffa which means ‘inexorable.’ Bäkaffa spent his childhood confined to *Wähni Amba*, Gondärine royal prison (Wähni is found to the northeast of እንፍራዝ Īnfəraz). The chronicle says: ‘ወእምዛ፡ እስከ፡ ይበጽሕ፡ ጊዜ፡ መንግሥቱ፡ አዕረግዎ፡ ለዝንቱ፡ ሕጻን፡ በካፋ፡ ውስተ፡ ደብረ፡ ወሀኒ፡፡’ (‘And then until his [Bäkaffa’s] kingship period came to true, they took this boy Bäkaffa upon Mount Wähni’) (Guidi, 1903, p.273). In his early life, Bäkaffa studied the scriptures, military tactics, and horse riding there which were the customary practices for kings’ sons. During the last disturbances of the reign of King Yosṭos (1711-1716), Bäkaffa escaped from *Wähni Amba* and fled to the nearby Oromo community and sought refuge with Amizo, the leader of the Yägṅu Oromo. This chief welcomed him and gave him a nickname *Bäkaffa* (“the inexorable”). If the name Bäkaffa was given by the chief as a nickname, what was the given (birth) name of the king *Bäkaffa*? After staying for a short time with them, Bäkaffa made his way to Bägemdär; however, he was recaptured and imprisoned at Wähni Amba by his brother King Dawit III (1716-1721) (Pankhurst, 1997; Dessie, 2007). Consequently, he spent his time at Wähni in prison until he came to power in 1721.

Kingship of Bäkaffa

In 1721 Dawit III (1716-1721) died and Bäkaffa was elected to succeed him. Then, Bäkaffa came down from Wähni and went to Gondär accompanied by the troops and they enthroned him. The chronicle reads: ‘አመ፡ ፲ወ፰፡ ለግንቦት፡ በጽሐ፡ ውስተ፡ ትዕይንት፡ ጐንደር፡...ወአንገሥዎ፡ ህየ፡ ካህናት፡ ወመኳንንት፡፡ ወቀብዕዎ፡ ቅብዕ መንግሥት፡፡’ (‘On the 18th of May, he arrived at Gondär town...The clergy and the dignitaries enthroned and anointed him the unction of reign there’) (Guidi, 1903, p. 275). Bäkaffa was twenty-seven when he ascended to the throne. He began his reign and planned the authoritative arrangements for his administration. When he was at Wähni, he might have been disheartened by the contemporary circumstances of the kingdom which experienced the absence of stability. He dismissed or sacked several dignitaries who were appointed by his predecessors, and promoted numerous new dignitaries.

Bäkaffa got married to Awalödä Nigəst in the order of the church and crowned her. However, after taking part in the meal, she suddenly got ill and died at midnight (Basset, 1882; Guidi, 1903). In 1722/3, Məntəwab (1722-1769) had joined the court as his concubine and gave birth to Iyasu

II, who was destined to succeed Bäkaffa (Berry, 1994; Chernetsov, 1991). She was well known as an influential woman in Ethiopian history.

Contributions of King Bäkaffa

Social contribution

Bäkaffa had a good personality, and he offered gifts to the poor and the church as stated in these sentences: ‘ወአልበሰ: ኩሎ: ዕሩቃነ:...ካዕበኒ: ዘረወ: ብዙኅ: ወርቀ: ... ለኩሎን: አብያተ: ክርስቲያናት: እለ: ሀለዋ: በመዲና:’ (‘And he clothed all the poor... He also distributed much gold ... to all churches found in the city’) (Guidi, 1903, p. 294, 306). Moreover, Bäkaffa gave (allotted) landholdings to the monastery and churches (Wäybla Maryam, Maḥdärä Maryam). Bäkaffa banished the *Wällağoč* (*Wällağoč* refers to offspring of one’s grandchildren, purchased offspring of slaves) and those who killed a man for the sake of a loaf of bread, and took a woman while her husband was standing there; for they were not compassionate when they did these abominable acts. Their cruelty was known throughout the whole country. For this reason, all the people in his kingdom praised him.

On the contrary, some sources noted: ‘አፃ: በካፋ: በዘመኑ: ከክፉ: ሥራ: በቀር: በጎነት: አልሠራም:: ያን ጊዜ: ተዋነይ: የሚባል: የጎንጅ: ደብተራ: ጠንቋይ: ነበረው:: ሙያውም ክርሱ: ጋር: ነበር::’ (‘King Bäkaffa did not do good things in his reign except the evil deeds. At that time, he had a magician called Tāwanäy³, Däbtära of Gongi. Bäkaffa had spent much of his time with him’) (Girma, 2009, p.139). According to Bruce’s account, Bäkaffa was silent and secretive in his designs, surrounded by guards, those who were his own slaves and by new men of his own creation; he removed those tyrants who opposed their sovereign upon the smallest provocation (Bruce, 1913). Many people, including his sisters were killed and their dead bodies were given to wild animals (Dessie, 2007; Guidi, 1903).

Socio-economic Contribution

³ Some scholars argue that there were two persons by the name Tāwanäny who lived in different periods. Scholars called them Tāwanäny I and Tāwanäny II. Tāwanäny I was the founder of the school of Qəne) at Gongi. It is believed that Tāwanäny I lived between 15th to 16th c. (from the reign of Ěskəndər to Gälawdewos); whereas Tāwanäny II lived in the 18th c. during the time of Bäkaffa. He was well-known in his Qene and wisdom in general (Semachew, 2008:122-128). On the other hand, there are also numerous oral stories around Tāwanäny, but each story does not match with Tāwanäny’s time, his education and his personality.

The reign of Bäkaffa was a significant epoch for economic and cultural development once more in the kingdom. The king built two buildings in the capital city, Gondär, at the royal palace compound. These are ሐዳስ፡ ሻሸና (Hadas Šašəna), which was adorned with paintings inside and out, and it was completed around 1725. The second new building was አዳራሽ፡ ሰቀላ (*Adaraš-Säqala*), and the building was completed in 1726. It is close to the *Rasge* apparently the long castle commonly called after Bäkaffa which lies at the edge of the royal quarter on its Northeastern side or near to Məntəwwab's castle. *Adaraš-Säqala* was used to receive the chief dignitaries of the state and common governors who brought tributes. The *Adaraš* and the *Rasge Bet* were used for feasts held once in a while. Also, the *Mədr Gəmb* was used to serve for a social gathering for judges. Bakaffa built the u-shaped castle which is found in the Northwest of the compound of the royal palace (this hall has 50 meters long and 8 meters width. It had used to accommodate nearly 300 people in one time (Ghiorghis, 1969).

Bäkaffa had also contributed to the construction of a new kind of boat on Lake Ṭana in 1726 by two foreigners who came from Egypt called Dəmetros and Giyorgis. These foreigners had helped in the manual work by Esat Wəllaḡ and Anḋaç' Mamo, unlike the traditional ones built from reeds. The chronicle noted: 'ኦ ጎይል፡ ዘተገብረ፡ ለንጉሥነ፡ በካፋ፡ ዘኢተገበረ፡ ለአብዊሁ፡ ነገሥት፡ እስመ፡ ተገብረ፡ ሎቲ፡ መርከብ፡ ወዶሮ፡ ማየ፡ ዓና፡ ለመርከብ፡፡' ('O power that was bestowed upon our king Bäkaffa, which had not been conferred on kings his forefathers, for the boat was made for him; and the water of Ṭana carried a ship') (Guidi, 1903). On the other hand, the author of the chronicle, as quoted here, stated the desire of the kings of his forefathers that they were interested to construct the boat. It showed the vision Ethiopian kings had for their country to be as modern as other countries.

Further, the time of Bäkäffa comparatively was peaceful that became very favorable for development of agriculture and trade during the period. According to the chronicle, everyone can get what he wants from Gondär: 'ጐንደር፡ ርእሰ፡ አህጉራት፡ ዘኢይትኃጣእ፡ ባቲ፡ ኩሉ፡ መፍቅድ፡፡' ('Gondär, the head of states, was the center of all accesses) (Guidi, 1903, p.296). The statement shows the contemporary circumstances of economic activity and trade in the city as well as in the kingdom. Commonly, Bäkaffa supported the economic and cultural development of the country, at large.

Religious and cultural contribution

Bäkaffa acted to shore up the Alexandrian (Orthodox Tewaḥədo) party. He built several churches inside and outside of Gondär in his time (e.g. Däfäč'a Kidanä Məḥrät (Around Gondär), Wäybla Maryam (West Bäläsa), Qalamuḡ Kidanä Məḥät, The Chapel of St. Mary (a rebuilt church), Tahətay Michael Church (a rebuilt church), Abäzaz Giyorgis, Monastery of Bərgida Maryam and (North Shore of Lake Ṭana)). The Church of St. Ruphael was his great work. However, it was destroyed during the reign of Iyasu II (1730-1755), who was the successor to him (Guidi, 1903; 1910). Bäkaffa also played a major role in the cultural development of the kingdom. The newly established manuscript workshops in and around the city of Gondär produced numerous beautifully illustrated manuscripts (Pankhurst, 1998). Literature and painting were particularly encouraged by the king. He donated several religious texts to churches and monasteries (e.g., to the Monastery of Män Edabba Mädhane' Aläm). Additionally, he decorated the walls of some churches with sacred paintings, for example, Zuramba Maryam (which is founded by King Gäbrä Mäskäl in the 5th century and the monastery located in south Gondär Zone) and others were painted by his order.

Military Expeditions of Bäkaffa

Bäkaffa faced several revolts in the period of his reign, and he rapidly squashed them. Principally, the rebellion of Ğawi Oromo and Lasta's rebellion are given emphasis in the chronicle. Of course, other revolts also are given attention in the text. As recorded in the chronicle, in the 2nd year of Bäkaffa's reign, the Ğawi Oromo (a branch of the Boräna Oromo migrated during the 16th c., from southern Ethiopia through old Damot to the southern bank of river Abby. During 17th and 18th c. they were converted to Christianity), who came from Gibe (it is used to indicate a historic region in modern southwestern Ethiopia, to the west of the Gibe and Omo Rivers, and north of the Goḡäb) during the time of Iyasu I who were living on the boarder along the Abbay river refused the payment of tribute to the king. The king made a military expedition against Ğawi crossing the Abbay (Nile) river. Finally, the Ğawi submitted and asked the king for pity.

In 1725, another rebellion broke out from Lasta, which was led by Gubäla, the lord of Lasta. Subsequently, Bäkaffa marched against Lasta and crossed the Täkäze River and waged a war. Following this, Gubala, the lord of Lasta, asked the king for mercy. At last, he came to Gondär (Guidi, 1903). In the meantime, Elfəyos of Lasta, who was against the

king, was captured and hanged in Gondär before the arrival of Gubala (Tekle Tsadik, 2000).

Death of Bäkaffa

The official chronicle of Bäkaffa did not record Bäkaffa's death; however, it was recorded in the chronicle of Iyasu II (1730-1755) as described below:

...አዕረፈ፡ አመ፡ ፲፱፩፡ ለመስከረም፡ በዕለተ፡ ሰሉስ፡ ወምተ፡ በክብር፡፡
 ... ወአብእዎ፡ ውስተ፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ዘአቡነ፡ ተክለ፡ ሃይማኖት፡
 ወፈጸሙ፡ ከሎ፡ ሕገ፡ ፍትሐት፡ ዘተጽሕፈ፡ በመጽሐፈ፡ ግንዘት፡፡
 ...ወቀበርዎ፡ ህየ፡ በአንብዕ፡ ወበብካይ፡፡

...He died on the 11th of Mäskäräm on Thursday, and passed away in honor... And they took him (the body of the king) into the Church of Abunä Täklä Haymanot. They accomplished all rite of the absolution that was written in the book of Funeral Ritual (Mäṣḥafä Gənzät). ...And they buried him there with tears and weeping.

(Guidi, 1910, p.26)

As mentioned earlier, Bäkaffa died in 1730 having served for nine years as a king. His eight year old son Iyasu II (1730-1755) ascended to the throne under the regency of his mother Məntəwwab. Məntəwwab wielded significant power throughout the reign of her son Iyasu II, and well into the reign of her grandson Iyo'as (1755-1769) too.

The Author of the Chronicle

The Ethiopian royal chronicles were composed by chroniclers who had advanced knowledge of traditional church education including the language of Ge'ez. The authors of the chronicles were known as *Ṣāḥāfe Tə'əzazat* and were appointed by the emperors in the court and regularly recorded the events that had been performed by the kings (Chernetsov, 1988; Sergew, 1972). Sinoda, the chronicler of Bakaffa, wrote the first and the second parts of the chronicle as indicated in the text. The chronicle reads: 'ዝ፡ ውእቱ፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ታሪክ፡ ዘእጽሕፎ፡ እምአመ፡ ኣብጽሐኒ፡ ጠቢብ፡ ወማዕምረ፡ ልብ፡ ንጉሥ፡ በካፋ፡ እስከዝ፡ መዓርገ፡ ሢመት፡፡ ዘውእቱ፡ ጸሐፊ፡ ትእዛዝ፡ እንበለ፡ ድልወትዮ፡' ('This is the book of history which I will write since the wise and intelligent king Bäkaffa brought me up to this position that is Ṣāḥāftä Tə'əzaz which I didn't deserve') (Guidi, 1903, p.291).

It is apparent that based on the above passage, it is possible to understand that Sinoda was the author of the chronicle of Bäkaffa. Sinoda was a

great scholar of the EOTC. He was the leader of the church of Däbrä Bərhan Šəllase and later Aṭaṭami St. Micha'el church in Gondär. Sinoda was also a teacher, judge and author of several texts in Gə'əz (Mähafä Säwasəw (the book of grammar), Tə'yntä Gondär (the city of Gondär), Mängəstä Iyasu Wä-Bäkaffa (History of the reign of Iyasu and Bäkaffa), Psalm of Emperor Iyasu the martyr, Nägärä Məṣ'at (The Last Day), Märsə'e Həzän (The Forget of Sadness), etc.). Kənfä Michael also contributed to the chronicle of Bäkaffa after the death of *Azzaž* Sinoda. The text also noted that: 'ወእምዝ: ጸሐፊ: ወልዱ: ከንፈ: ማካኤል::' ('Then his son Kənfä Michael wrote') (Guidi, 1903, p.314). He was *Šəhəfe Tə'əzaz* and called himself the son of Sinoda. Most probably, *Azzaž* Sinoda was not his biological father. The medieval Ethiopian scholars had a common tradition for calling their teachers as father. Chernetsov (1989: 348) suggests that Kənfä Michael may have been a disciple of Sinoda. On the contrary, Kropp ('Hypothesis', p. 363) noted that during the Gondarine era the post of royal historiographer was inherited by a biological son. As a result, Kənfä Michael was Sinoda's son, rather than being his disciple (Chernetsov, 1989), noted that Kənfä Micha'el wrote the last part of the chronicle after the death of Sinoda, he calling himself son of Sinoda. The word "son" could be utilized here in its border meaning "pupil "or "associate"). Kənfä Michael wrote the last part, i.e., fourteen chapters of the chronicle, recording events from 10 August 1726 to 18 January 1727. His composition focused on the construction of the ship (boat) and the litigation between *Bašša* Rətu and *Dägğazmač* Täklä Haymanot. Kənfä Michael's early life is not known except his name that renders him as the son of Sinoda, in the chronicle of Bäkaffa.

3. Manuscript description

Physical and content description of chronicles

The researcher collected three copies of the chronicles of Bäkaffa, which are available in the National Archive and Library Agency (NALA), Bodleian Library (Aeth. 32 Oxoniensis Mss Collection) and *Bibliothèque Nationale* de France. The sigla of the manuscripts and their identification is described as follows.

Physical Description

1) [Ms-A] Antoine d Abbadie Mss Collection Eth. 167 (Histore de Bakeoff): from *Bibliothèque Nationale* de France (Paris) = **Folia:** 27(from 136r-162r); **Size of the Ms:** 23 x16 c; **Writing material:** paper; **Language:** Gə'əz; **Column:** two; 19th Century A.D; covered with

wooden boards and leaser; It was catalogued by Antoine d Abbadie in 1859.

2) [Ms-B] a ms from Bodleian Library, London Bodl. Aeth.32 (Histore de Bäkaffa)=**Folios:** 27(from ff.1-ff.27); **Writing material:** parchment; **Language:** Gə'əz; **Column:** three; 18th Century A.D; covered with wooden boards and leaser; It was catalogued by August Dellmman in 1848.

3) [Ms-NL] a Ms from National Archive and Library Agency (Addis Ababa) -NL.513= **Folios:** 17 (from ff.61r-78v); **Size of the Ms:** 31x21c.m; **Writing material:** paper; **Language:** Gə'əz; **Column:** three; 18th Century A.D; covered with wooden boards and leaser; It was catalogued by NALA in 2000 A.D.

Content Description

Like most of the Ethiopian royal chronicles, the chronicle of Bäkaffa is mainly focused on the life of the Emperor, his education, coronation, military expedition against Ğawi and Lasta, endowing of the church, appointment and dismissal of his officials and deliberating on religious issues. The text is divided into three sections and it has sixty eight chapters.

- a) From ff. (A152v^a), (B1a) & (NL61r) - ff.(A162v^a), (B10b) &(NL67V): Section one has 26 chapters. Each chapter has been organized by themes. The introductory part of the text begins by giving praise to God just like the Ethiopian imperial chronographical tradition. The section mainly focuses on early life of the king, and military expedition of King Bäkaffa against Ğawi Oromo and his victory.
- b) From ff. (A162v^a), (B10b) & (NL67V) - ff.(A148v^b) (B23a) (NL76r): Section two has 28 chapters. The section chiefly deals with the military activity of the king in Lasta, and the death of Sinoda who was the author of this text.
- c) From ff. (A148v^b), (B23a) & (NL76r) - ff.(NL78v),(B27a)& (A152r^b): Section three has 14 chapters. It focuses on the construction of a new kind of “ship” (boat) and the court case of Bätre, *Bašša Rətu* and *Dägğazmač* Täklä Haymanote.

This chronicle is the main source for king Bäkäffa activities, but Kənfä Michael, the author of the last part of the chronicle didn't say anything after the month of January 18, 1727 about the king until the king died in

1730. Certainly, the funeral ceremony and dirge of the king was composed in the chronicle of Iyasu II, though the chronicler of Iyasu II didn't say anything about the last three years of Bäkaffa and his chronicle. Besides, the chronicle has no colophon that supplies information about the work or the use of the volume.

Subject Matter Analysis of the Chronicle

Historical Subject Matter

The historical subject matters of this chronicle are one of the vital sources of history of Ethiopia. Particularly, the chronicle gives information about the time of king Susənyos (1606-1632), saying: ‘ተከፍላት፡ ሀገር፡ በዘመን፡ ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ሥልጣን፡ ሰገድ፡፡’ (‘The country was divided at the time of the king of kings *Səltan Sägäd*’) (Guidi, 1903,p.304). In 1626, King Susənyos declared Catholicism to be the national religion, and war and rebellion were provoked in Lasta (under the leadership of Mälkä’ Kərstos) and other parts of Ethiopia as stated in the chronicle (Alemu, 2007). The text also mentioned the historical journeys of Iyasu and Bäkaffa: ‘ወአመ፡ ሖረ፡ አቡሁ፡ ኢያሱ፡ ምድረ፡ ጊቤ፡ ወእናርያ፡ ኦትለዎ፡ ድኅሬሁ፡ ...እንዘ፡ ወልደ፡ ፲፡ዓመት፡፡’ (‘When his father Iyasu went to the land of Gibe and Ənnarya, he took him [Bäkaffa] behind him [Iyasu] ...when he was 10 years old’) (Guidi, 1903, p.271). In 1704, when Emperor Iyasu the Great campaigned to the south of the Abbay River, and reached Gongga, the strong hold of Ənnarya on the Gibe River, he was met by two rival leaders of the crumbling kingdom. His abridged chronicle noted: ‘ወበርቢሮ፡ ከሎ፡ አህጉራተ፡ ጊቤ፡ ወጥቁር፡ ምድር፡፡ ወበጸሆ፡ እስከ፡ እናርያ፡ ወርእዮ፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ እናርያ፡ ወምስያጠ፡ ወተመጢዎ፡ እምነ፡ ንጉሠ፡ እናርያ፡ አምኃሁ፡ ግስላ፡ ወፈረስ፡ ተመደጠ፡ ንጉሥነ፡ ኢያሱ፡፡’ (‘And he searched all countries of Gibe and the land of the black; and when he came up to Ənnarya, he saw Ənnarya's Church and the market’). He received gifts from the king of Ənnarya (Ənnarya was an important kingdom in area of the later Gibe state. In 1704 Emperor Iyasu the great campaigned to Ənnarya where he saw Ənnarya's Church and the market), which include a panther and horse,[and] our king Iyasu returned(Dessie, 2007,p. 447). In the years following, the Emperor's expedition to Ənnarya, the warring potentates gradually fled south to the kingdom of Käffa. Historical people and place names, incidents and many useful things are also mentioned in the text.

Court Subject Matters

The other subject matter of the chronicle is the process of the court judgment of the time and the *Nägärä Wäg’ə* (the rule of the court) of the state. The chronicler described the *Nägärä wägə* referring to the history

of Iyasu I: ‘ለዝኒ፡ ነገረ፡ ወግዕ፡ ወረከብዎ፡ ማእከለ፡ ራብዓዊ፡ ጥራዝ፡ ውስተ፡ ታሪክ፡ መንግሥቱ፡ ለመፍቀሬ፡ አምላክ፡...ኢያሱ፡፡’ (‘I found this Nāgārā wägə’ in the middle of the fourth book (volume) of the history of the reign of the lover of God...Iyasu’) (Guidi, 1903, p.292). Historically, the theme is important to understand the judicial process of the time. The chronicle of Bākaffa also gave further information and noted: ‘መግርገ፡ ፍትሕለ፡ ወምክር፡ ዝ፡ ውእቱ፡ ዘጸሐፎ፡ አዛዥ፡ ወልደ፡ ትንሣኤ ጠቢብ ወማዕምረ፡ ነገረ፡ ወግዕ፡ ርእዮ፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ታሪክ፡ ወክብረ፡ ነገሥት፡ ወዘጸሐፉ፡ አበው፡ ቀደምት፡ እለ፡ ነበሩ፡ አመ፡ ዘመነ፡ ሐዘ፡ መለክ፡ ሰገድ፡፡’ (‘However, this is the level of the judgment and advice that have been written by Azzaž Wäldä Tənsa’e, who is wise, and knowledgeable of the law of courtiers. He wrote Nāgārā Wägə after he had consulted the Book of History and the Kəbrä Nāgäst that the forefathers who lived at the time of Aše Mäläk Sägäd had written’) (Guidi,1903, p.293). It also indicates that the state used the book of *Fəṯha Nāgäst* and other court written documents for recording social events and other court activities. The chronicle describes court procedures and judicial decisions regarding the case of Natnael, the dispute between Däḡḡazmač Täklä Hamanot and *Bašša Rtu’ə* in the court (Guidi, 1903).

Religious Issues

The text discusses the coming of monks from Waldəbba to meet the Krustodolu, the bishop, to discuss religious issues, particularly the religious ideology and the characteristics of Qəbat-Tāwəḥədo teaching (in part two from Chapters 16-19) (Guidi,1903).The bishop said: ‘ለዘተወልደ፡ እምእግዚአብሔር፡ እምቅድመ፡ ዓለም፡ ወለደቶ፡ ቅድስት፡ ድንግል፡ ማርያም፡ ቦሥጋ፡ ልደተ፡ ባሕርያዌ፡ በደኃሪ፡ መዋዕል፡፡’ (‘The Holy Virgin Mary has given birth to the flesh of a natural birth, in the last days, the one who was born of Lord before the ages’). Moreover, በተዋሕዶ፡ ወልድ፡ ዋሕድ፡ ውእቱ፡፡ ወበቅብዓት፡ ኮነ፡ መሢሐ፡፡’ (‘He is the only son by union⁴ and Christ by anointing’) (Guidi, 1903, p.308). The Qəbat teaches ‘Christ was honored by unction,’ against the teaching of Tāwəḥədo ‘Christ was honored by union’ (Tedros, 2010). The book of Haymanotä Abāw noted: “We believe in the son of the Lord who was begotten from the Father before the creation of the world by (essence of) divinity, whose birth date

⁴The term is used to stat the union of the divinity with humanity after the incarnation i.e. Miaphyistes. Oriental Orthodox Churches (non- Chalcedonies Church) are describe their Christology as Miahyphyte (meaning one united nature of Christ), in reference to Christ; the translation of the word Tāwəḥədo. Recently, they were called Monopolists (particularly by Chalcedonies. Monophysite means one single nature of Christ.

isn't bound by time. And he was also born to holy Virgin Mary at a later time" (Atenatewos, 23,p.2). But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law (Galatians, 4:4). The book also describes that: ‘ንሕነሰ፡ ነአምን፡ ከመ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ሐመ፡ በሥጋ፡ ከመ፡ ሰብእ፡ ወኢሐመ፡ በመለኮቱ፤ጥእመ፡ ሞተ፡ በሥጋ፡ ወኢሞተ፡ በመለኮቱ፡፡’ (‘We, however, believe that Christ the Lord suffered physically as a human, but not in his spirit; He died physically, but not in his spirit’)(Agnatewos, 11: 10). He (Christ) was put to death in the body, but made alive by the Spirit (1 Peter, 3:18).

As mentioned in the chronicle of Bäkaffa, Waldəbba’s monks went to Krəstodolu in order to ratify the bishop’s belief. Because, when the bishop arrived in Gondär in the 1720s, religious controversy arose between Qəbat and Təwaḥədo factions during the reign of Dawit III. Initially, the bishop was not aware of the problem at that time; however, he gave a cautious response, and said that his faith was the same as that of Abba Markos and Sinoda, his predecessors. Following this, Bitwäddäd Giyorgis declared Krstodolu in a fever of Qbat faction that was supported by the imperial authority on April 8, 1721. When the faction of Təwaḥədo asked the bishop of Qəbat –Təwaḥədo doctrine on 19 April 21, he described it as follows: "By union He stays the only son, and by the unction He becomes Christ." Then the supporters of Təwaḥədo proclaimed their victory over Qəbat, but the king sent his soldiers (Ĝawi) and killed over 100 monks (Basset, 1882), and then he ordered Krəstodolu to go to the top of the tower to proclaim the teaching of Qəbat. It was considered to be the victory of Qəbat faction (Chernetsov, 2007).

4. Literary Features of the Chronicle

Intertextuality

This section deals with the relation of the chronicle of Bäkaffa with other texts. The chronicle of Bäkaffa is mainly interrelated with the Bible, patristic works, and canonical religious texts including Court accounts. Some examples are presented hereunder.

Section	Reading text	Number of chapters
(NL61r) (A153rb), (B1b)	ታዓብዮ፡ ነፍስዮ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ ዘርእዮ፡ ትህትናሃ፡ ለአመቱ፡ እምደእዜሰ፡ ያስተበጽኡኒ፡ ኩሉ፡ ትውልድ፡ እስመ፡ ገብረ፡ ሊተ፡ ኃይለ፡ ዓቢይተ፡፡ (‘My soul doses magnify the Lord. For he has	Luke 1:47-49

	regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he has done to me great things’).	
(A153vb), (NL61v), (B2a)	ከመ፡ ያፈቅር፡ ኅየል፡ ኅበ፡ አንቅዕተ፡ ማያት፡ ከማሁ፡ ታፈቅር፡ ነፍሰ፡ ኩሉ፡ ኅበ፡ መንግሥቱ፡፡ (‘As the deer pants for streams of water, so all soul pants for his kingdom’).	Psalm 41:1
(B11a),(A136va),(NL68r)	ወባርከነ፡ በእዴኪ፡ ከመ፡ ባረኪዮ፡ ለኤፍሬም፡ ዘወደሰኪ፡ ውዳሴ፡ በኅልቄ፡ ዕለታት፡ ፯፡ (‘And you bless me with your hand as you blessed Ephrem who praised you with the praise of the number of the seven days’).	The commentary of Praise of Mary of Monday p.14-15.
(NL67V)’ (A136va),(B11a)	አ፡ ልሀኩት፡ ንጽሕት፡ ኩብረ፡ ኩሉ፡ ዓለም፡ ብርሃን፡ ዘኢትጠፍኢ፡ መቅደስ፡ ዘኢትትካሠቲ፡ በትረ፡ ሃይማኖት፡ ዘኢትጸንኒ፡፡ (‘O! Fashioned, pure, the glory of the world, the light does not go off, sanctuary which is not damaged, glue of the faith which is not?! Check it’).	The Praise of Mary of Saturday).
(A156ra), (NL63r), (B4b)	ዘበኅይለ፡ ነአስ፡ ተወልደ፡፡ ወካልአ፡ ዘተወልደ፡ በማሕፀነ፡ ርስዕ፡፡ ወለሊክ፡ ተአምር፡ ባሕቱ፡ ከመ፡ ታውኅዳ፡ ኅይለ፡ እምቀደምትክሙ፡ አንትሙ፡፡ እለሂ፡ እምድኅሬክሙ፡ ያውኅዳ፡ እምኔክሙ፡፡ ‘The son who was born from the young (woman) and the other who was born from the aged womb (woman), you know yourself (the status of the son). However, you may strengthen a power than your former (generation). And those who will come after you will strengthen a power than you’)	Ezera Sətuəl, 3:51-55.

Allusion metaphor

Allusion metaphor is a type of metaphor that refers to the events or actions of famous people in literature. There are a number of allusion metaphors in the chronicle of Bäkaffa. Some examples are provided below.

Mss	Reading text	Gloss
A153v), (B1a), (NL61r)	ወደይ፡ ውስተ፡ አፉዮ፡ አፍሐመ፡ እሳት፡ ዘወደይከ፡ ውስተ፡ አፉሁ፡ ለኢሳይያስ፡፡	Put in my mouth the embers of fire that you had put in the mouth of Isaiah. ⁵
(B1a), (A153ra), (NL61r)	ወተረግዘ፡ በኩናት፡ ከመ፡ ገላውዴዎስ፡፡	And he was transpired as Gäladewos. ⁶
(B15a), (A140v ^a), (NL70v)	ወሶበ፡ መልዓ፡ ድንጋጌ፡ ወፍርሃተ፡ ናባል፡ ውስተ፡ ልቡ፡ ጎዮ፡፡	When the fright and the shock of Nabal (Cf.1Samuel, 25:2-38) fill in his heart, he fled

Similes

Simile is a figure of speech which explicitly compares two different things by using the words “like” or “as.” There are many verses from the chronicle, which rely on similes. Some are listed below.

Mss	Reading text	Gloss
(B3b), (A155v ^a) (NL63r)	...እስመ፡ ተመሰለ፡ ንጉሥ፡ በካፋ፡ መልአከ፡ ሰማይ፡	... King Bäkaffa resembled an angel of the heaven..
(A157r ^b) (NL64r) (B5b)	ወአውሐዘ፡ አንብዓ፡ ከመ፡ ማየ፡ ከረፖት፡	And he cried with plentiful tears as the waters of the rainy season.
(B24a),(A150r ^a), (NL77r)	ወከሳዳ፡ ይመስል፡ ከመ፡ ከሳደ፡ ገመል፡፡	And its neck looks like a neck of camel.

Metaphor

⁵ Isaiah was the son of Amoz (Isaiah 1:1; 2:1), who was was living in B.C. 700. His book consists of prophecies and covers a lengthy period of about two hundred years.

⁶ Gälawdewos (Claudius) was a roman saint and martyr during the Diocletian persecution (3rd-4th c.).

Metaphor is a figure of speech that makes an implied comparison between two different or unlike phenomena or things, which share some common points or features. In this chronicle there are several metaphorical speeches (employed by the author to convey the meanings and significance of events). Some examples are presented as follow:

Mss	Reading text	Gloss
(NL65v) (A159vb) (B8a)	ወምዕራፈ፡ ነዳያን፡	‘the rest of the poor.
(A140ra),(B15a) (NL70v)	ወልዱ፡ ለሰይጣን	‘Son of satan’
(A148ra) (NL75v) (B22b)	ማኅተመ፡ ሰይጣን	‘Seal of satan’.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a type of figurative language in which we express ideas by using letters, words, phrases, and sentences that can attract the attention of the audience as well as the listener to highlight the acceptability of things. Let us read examples of hyperbole as presented below.

Mss	Reading text	Gloss
(B13b) (A138v ^b) (NL69v)	ሶበ፡ ይጸዓን፡ ዲበ፡ ፈረሰ፡ ኢይመስል፡ ዘይረውጽ፡ በፈረሰ፡፡ ዳእመ፡ ይመስል፡ ዘይሰርር፡ በአከኖ፡፡	When he mounts his horse, he seems to be flying on wings, not running.
(B16a) (A141r ^b) (NL71r)	በከመ፡ ኢይትኃለቀ፡፡ ከዋክብተ፡ ሰማይ፡ ውኖ፡ ባሕር፡ ከማሁ፡ ኢይትኃለቀ፡፡ ሠራዊቱ፡ ለኃያል፡ ንጉሥ፡ በካፋ፡፡	Just as the stars in the sky and the sand in the sea are not counted, neither are the mighty king's armies.
(B5b) (A157r ^b) (NL64r)	በጽሐ፡ ንጉሥ፡ ፍጹብድኝ፡ እንዘ፡ ያድለቀልቃ፡ ለምድር፡፡	The king reached to Fesebegn (The place called Fesebegn is located in the West Goğgam administrative zone, Däga Damot district) shaking the earth.

Qəne is a philosophical and poetic secret that has a *wax and gold*. The chronicler of Bäkaffa sang Šəllase Qəne (Trinity poem is a type of Qəne-poem having three or six lines. It has two subtypes: long or short. Šəllase as its name indicates is meant to celebrate the glory of the Holy Trinity)

in the church of St. Ruphael, which was built by king Bäkaffa. This is provided as follows.

<p>(A145v^a) (B20a) (NL74r)</p>	<p>ፋፋኤል፡ በቤትክ፡ ኅብስተ፡ ርሀብን፡ አመ፡ በላዕክ፡ ኢተረክበ፡ ኃይል፡ ዘይቤ፡ እምኡብያጺክ፡ ኃይላት፤ ሐሜት፡ ዝንቱ፡ ወዝንቱ፡ ኅፍረት፤ እመሰ፡ ላዕሌክ፡ ኢሀሎ፡ በዘከመዝ፡ ሐሜት፤ አንፃረ፡ በካፋ፡ በተረ፡ ነገሥት፤ ድግምኬ፡ በሊዓ፡ ኅብስት፡ ውስተ፡ ዛቲ፡ ቤትክ፡ እምርት፡፡</p>	<p>Rupha'el, when you have eaten the bread of the starved in your house, the angel is not found.</p> <p>Forces of your colleagues angels such, has not said: "It is contempt and a shame".</p> <p>If a shame has not weighed on you, like Bäkaffa the leader of the Kings.</p> <p>You shall eat once more the bread in your house, this is known.</p>
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Poetic wax of the above quotation: If a person is found to have acted out of human character, he will be subjected to criticism and gossip. However, if the community is silent, he will do it again and again.

Poetic gold of the above quotation: It is not their nature to feed the angels. But Rupha'el was spotted eating in the house of Tobit, where his eyes were healed. But the angels did not blame him for his actions. So the poet asked to repeat that action in his church, which is built by Bäkaffa.

5. Linguistic features

Omission

Omission might occur by several reasons: may be the writers or copyist unintentionally skip a passage or words and it also may happen because the manuscript that is being copied is damaged – a part of the text, etc. There are several omissions of words in the chronicle of Bäkaffa. Some of these are described below.

1) Ms (A155v^b) ወበዕለተ፡ ረቡዕ፡[.....]ኅደረ፡ ገንታ፡፡

Mss (B4a) and (NL63r): ወበዕለተ፡ ረቡዕ፡ ኅደረ፡ በቅሎ፡ ፍላጋ፡፡ ወበዕለተ፡ ሐሙስ፡ ኅደረ፡ ገንታ፡፡ The underline sentences and phrases were omitted in Ms (A155v^b).

2) Ms (B7a) ወሶበ፡ ንኑልቀ፡ ዕለተ፡ እምዕለት፡ ዘተንሥኦ፡ ቦቱ፡ እምግንደር፡ [...] ኮነ፡ ፸፡ዕለተ፤

Mss (A159r^a) and (NL65r): ወሶበ፡ ንኑልቀ፡ ዕለተ፡ እምዕለት፡ ዘተንሥኦ፡ ቦቱ፡ እምግንደር፡ እስከ፡ ዕለት፡ ዘገባዕነ፡ ቦቱ፡ ግንደር፡ ኮነ፡ ፸፡ ዕለተ፡፡ *The underline phrases were omitted in Ms (B7a).*

Amharic loanwords

All languages have borrowed words at one time or another, to various degrees. In Gondäriane period, some Gə'əz literatures have many Amharic (Amharic was the official language of the country until 1991 and is now the recognized working language) loanwords (it is a word adopted from one language (the donor language) and incorporated into another language without translation) Leslau (1991) noted that “owing to the contact with Amharic at certain time in its linguistic history Gə'əz borrowed Amharic lexemes. The chronicle of Bäkaffa has some Amharic loanwords, which are discussed as follow:

No.	Mss	Amharic lexemes (loanwords)	The equivalent Gə'əz word	Gloss
1	(A150vb), (B25b), (NL7v)	ጥቁር፡	ጸሊም፡	'Black'
2	(A137rb),(A137va), (B12a)	ዳኛ፡	ፈታሒ፡	'Judge'
3	(A149vb), (B24a), (NL7r)	ጭድ፡	ኅሰረ መናሒ	'Chaff of ጥፎ'
4	(A137r ^b), (A137v ^a), (B12a)	ከሳሶች፡	ሰካዪያን	'Accusers'
5	(A150rb), (NL7r), (B24b)	ሚርተኛ፡፡	መሠርዬ፡	'Magician'
6	(B24a), (A150ra), (NL7r)	ሉብረቱ፡ ፪፻፡ ማረሻ፡	ሉብርቱ፡ ፪፻፡ ማሕረስ	'Ploughshare'

Conclusion

The main purpose of this article is to analyze the content of Bäkaffa's chronicle. In the study, Bäkaffa's social, economic, religious, and cultural contributions were discussed. The literary value of the chronicle, the

historical, religious, and court subject matters, as well as language use in the chronicle, intertextuality, linguistic problems, and some Amharic loanwords are also analyzed, with some examples.

In general, the chronicle is one of the most important literary genres in post-medieval Ethiopia, and its historical, social, cultural, and literary values are embodied in the text. Thus, it is good to pay attention to this important evidence and information, and I recommend that the historical document be studied with due attention.

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