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Article

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The Ethio-Semitic Possessive Pronouns as Predicalizers in Historical Perspective

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To Thomas Kane whose Dictionaries rendered our task so much easier

Chapter I

1. In a few Tigrinya expressions the adnominal suffix pronouns, which usually serve to indicate the owner of what is designated by the substantive to which they are attached, have a more complex function. Let’s consider the following sentence: 

To send them home hungry, they would faint on the way.” It is clear that the combination of the noun together with the possessive suffix pronoun of the third person masculine plural doesn’t mean simply “their fast”, as may also be ascertained both from the English translation and the Greek original, which contain a circumstantial adverbial construction.

The exact function of the Tigrinya expression in this context may become clearer if we compare it with the Amharic version of the same verse from Mark 8:3. In Amharic the same substantive “fast” and the corresponding possessive pronoun are further completed by the accusative marker . The

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1 Whenever necessary the examples in Ethiopian script are preceded by the capital letters Amharic, Ge’ez and Tigrinya.
2 The Tigrinya Bible translation currently quoted is the one printed in Asmara in 1992. If another translation is used it will be specified.
3 For the English Bible translation cf the Bibliographical list at the end of the article. I’ve introduced some changes in the English translation to make it more conform to the Ethiopian text quoted.
4 Unless specified otherwise, the Amharic quotations from the Bible were copied from the edition printed in Addis Ababa in 1980 E.C., reprinted in 1994.
latter acts here as the adverbial accusative of state, or \( \text{ḥalak} \) according to the terminology of the Arab grammarians, and the whole combination exactly renders the spirit of the Greek original. Therefore, we may say that where Tigrinya has no explicit sign of adverbial subordination, Amharic has an adverbial accusative, very similar to the Ge'ez adverbial accusative (even though the short final vowel \( a \) was replaced by the accusative marker \( 法师职业 \)).

Surprisingly enough, Tigrinya, in spite of its reputation as being more conservative than Amharic, had discarded all the historical traces of the accusative, both in form and function, whereas Amharic still follows quite faithfully the Ge'ez usage. Even the Tigrinya prefixed case marker \( 法师职业 \) cannot be defined as an accusative marker because it also indicates the dative, similarly to the ancient preposition \( A \) from which it probably derives. It may only be defined as a neutralized sign of a verbal object which is never used in adverbial expressions\(^5\). As for the historical accusative \( a \) which was maintained unchanged in the Amharic gerund, e.g.:

\[ \text{әжәзьФзә} \text{әәгәзьФзә} \text{әәгәзьФзә} \text{әәгәзьФзә} \text{әәгәзьФзә} \]

Consequently, both \( A \text{әжәзьФзә} \) and \( T \text{әжәзьФзә} \) in the sentence quoted above could eventually be defined as an adverbial accusative, with the explicit accusative marker \( 法师职业 \) in Amharic and a zero accusative in Tigrinya. Without any doubt this would have been the opinion of Franz Praetorius, who uses the term “virtual accusative” in a similar context, had he been confronted with the contemporary expression \( T \text{әжәзьФзә} \) and not with yet another construction, to be

\(^5\) Whose use is limited to definite nouns. For the various uses of the Amharic accusative cf KAPELIUK (1979) and KAPELIUK (1973) where the basic bibliography on the subject is mentioned.


\(^7\) It is possible that in the particular variant of late Ge’ez, from which Tigrinya probably evolved, a short \( a \) at the end of nominals and in close juncture disappeared without leaving any traces. This could also explain why even in compounds with the construct state borrowed from Ge’ez Tigrinya drops more readily than Amharic the short vowel \( a \), e.g.:

\[ \text{әжәзьФзә} + \text{әәгәзьФзә} \]

versus

\[ T \text{әжәзьФзә} + \text{әәгәзьФзә} \] (Storia 28:13) “the Law of the Bible”.

On the other hand, the disappearance of the short vowel \( a \) of the accusative at a stage preceding the formation of Tigrinya as we know it, could account for the presence in that language of nouns ending in a short \( a \) [whatever its origin, cf PRAETORIUS (1871) 22 et passim; LESLAU (1941) 17] a phenomenon with no parallel either in Ge’ez or in Amharic.
discussed in Chapter I.2. However, the presence or absence of the accusative case is not essential for this construction, as will be shown below, in the chapter on Ge’ez. What makes the expression what it is, namely an adverbial circumstantial construction, is its relationship with the governing verb on the one hand, and the relationship between the nominal component and the suffixed pronoun, on the other.

Unlike ordinary adverbs and other adverbial constructions, A ḕǝ.getOrElse(14) and T ḕǝ.getOrElse(14) don’t provide any specification of the action of the governing verb itself. What they specify is the state of the subject or of the object of the verb during the occurrence of the action, and they stand in appositional relationship to the pronouns included in the governing verb. Hence we may say, that in functional terms they correspond to subordinate circumstantial clauses accompanying the governing verb. And, as a matter of fact, in another Amharic translation of the Gospels the expression ḕǝ.getOrElse(14) in an almost identical verse is rendered by A ḕǝ.getOrElse(14) (Matthew 15:32). "I am not willing to send them away when they are hungry" (Tigrinya maintains also in this verse the form ḕǝ.getOrElse(14)). Also the verse from Mark 8:3 quoted above, contains in the Amharic version of the Gospels a gerund, which is the perfect means for rendering a subordinate circumstantial clause: A ḕǝ.getOrElse(14) which means more or less literally “if I send them away they [being] hungry”.

The possibility of replacing the nominal construction A ḕǝ.getOrElse(14) (and, by extrapolation, T ḕǝ.getOrElse(14)) by a fully predicative (albeit subordinate) sentence composed of a verb inflected for its subject, allows us to place the two constructions on an equal footing, and suggest that in the nominal combination there exists also a predicative link (or nexus, according to O. Jerspersen’s terminology) between the noun A ḕǝ.getOrElse(14) which acts as the predicate and the “possessive” pronoun suffixed to it, which functions as its subject. Predicative link implies the explicit or implicit presence of the verb “to be”, therefore we may reconstruct A ḕǝ.getOrElse(14) as “they [being] on fast”. In the corresponding

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8 PRÆTORIUS (1871) 313. The use of adjectives and substantives as adverbs with no external sign of adverbial subordination is normal in Tigrinya. This applies to adjectives in particular, e.g. T ḕǝ.printStackTrace(14) ḕǝ.printStackTrace(14) (MAR 1:19) “was heavily damaged”, but also to substantives serving as adverbs of time and place, e.g. T ḕǝ.printStackTrace(14) ḕǝ.printStackTrace(14) (id 7:20) “the whole night she was coming and going”.

9 The four Gospels in Ge’ez with Amharic translation and ḕǝ.printStackTrace(14). This translation is more idiomatic than the one from 1986 which probably is based on some more ancient translation of the Bible Society.

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Tigrinya expression, in the absence of a formal sign of adverbial subordination, it is the relationship between the nominal construction and the main verb and the suffixation of the pronoun which produce the predicalizing effect. That's why the term “predicalizers” has been introduced in this article. As for the implied presence of the verb “to be”, in the modern languages it sometimes becomes explicit, as may be seen in the following example; \textit{remain unwed in your father’s house”;}\ A \textit{remain in your father’s home being unwed”}; \textit{Adam and his wife were both naked and they felt no shame}; \textit{a youth, covering his nakedness with a linen cloth ... left the cloth and fled naked}; \textit{and he lay uncovered in his tent ... then Ham saw his father’s nakedness”}. For “empty

\textsuperscript{10} The predicalizing effect of the adnominal pronouns is quite normal if we refer to abstract deverbal nouns such as the infinitive or the noun of action.

\textsuperscript{11} For Ge’ez I’ve used both E.Littmann’s and A.Dillmann’s editions of parts of the Old Testament. There are some discrepancies in the counting of verses between the two texts; the translations to the modern Ethiopian languages match Littmann’s edition. For the Ge’ez New Testament I’ve been currently using the edition of the Bible Society published for the first time in Leipzig in 1898 and reprinted in Great Britain in 1957, but also the Gospels in Ge’ez with Amharic translation and commentary are often referred to.

\textsuperscript{12} A \textit{may also be used in the adverbial construction, e.g.}: \textit{in KANE, Amharic.}
Amharic uses a predicalized definite adjective or its combination with a substantive indicating a part of the body, e.g.: እሸ ሃንፋ እፋ (Mark 12:3) “they sent them away empty handed”; እሸ ሃንፋ እፋ (Genesis 31:42) “you could have dismissed me empty handed”; እሸ ሃንፋ እፋ እፋ (Isaiah 20:2) “he went naked and barefoot” for Ge’ez ትንሽን እንዳ (Genesis 31:42) “you could have dismissed me empty handed”; እሸ ሃንፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ ኦር (Isaiah 20:2) “he went naked and barefoot” for Ge’ez ትንሽን እንዳ. Another, somewhat similar construction, is to be found in the expression for “being lonely”: እሸ ሃንፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ እፋ ካ እንዳ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንدا እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንዳ ካ እንVertexArray

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13 In historical terms also እሸ ወጣ እንዳ belongs to the category described here. It goes back to Ge’ez እሸ ወጣ እንዳ composed of the abstract noun እሸ ወጣ እንዳ (DILLMANN (1865) 1148b) in the accusative plus the suffix pronoun, but both in Ge’ez and Amharic it became a regular adverb.

14 I have borrowed these definitions from Th. Kane’s manuscript of his forthcoming Tigrinya Dictionary which he has kindly put at my disposition.

15 Also the nominal pattern እሸ እት እንዳ points out to its being an adjective to be compared with እሸ እት እንዳ and እሸ ኢስ እንዳ.

16 PRAETORIUS (1871) 313. This verse was quoted by Praetorius from a manuscript of the translation of the Gospels by debtera Matteos done in 1836–37 and revised by Isenberg (id. p. 10).

17 id, from the same translation, edited by J.L. Krapf and printed at Chrischona in 1866 (PRAETORIUS (1871) 10 note 2).
adnominal pronoun is definitely exceptional and is the cause of the predicalization (see also Chapter II). At any rate, Tigrinya also uses another, perhaps more literary expression for “naked”, in which the predicative link is rendered explicit by the use of the gerund of the verb “to be”, e.g.: T ḫחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְחְ chai

2. Beside the Tigrinya expressions with no explicit mark of external subordination just examined, there also exists a somewhat more frequent combination with the preposition T ḫ in, by with a similar function

This brings us back to the verses from Mark 8:3 and Matthew 15:32 examined above. Whereas in the modern translation they contain the combination ṭ in Tigrinya and Ԭ in Amharic, in the manuscript of the Gospels quoted by F. Praetorius in his Tigrinya Grammar (p 313) the verse from Mark sounds: T Ḭ呼和浩 downgrade “if I send them away hungry”, or, literally “in/by hungered–their”, where the predicalizing pronoun is suffixed to a historical passive participle and the whole subordinated to the governing verb by the preposition ḫ.

Thanks to the presence of the preposition ḫ the function of the expression in question, as an adverbial specification of state of the subject or object of the accompanying verb, became explicit and more evident. Tigrinya ḫ corresponds to ḫ in Geʿez and Amharic, but whereas in the latter two languages it means both “in” and “by”, in Tigrinya its use is almost exclusively restricted to marking the instrument while location is indicated by the preposition ӫ. The presence of the preposition “in/by” in expressions corresponding to subordinate circumstantial clauses is by no means restricted to the Ethiopian branch of the Semitic language family. Together with the infinitive it provides the equivalent of a gerund in classical and modern literary Hebrew as well as in Neo–Syriac. In Geʿez the combination of ḫ with a noun of action and a predicalizing pronoun sometimes also serves as a gerund, e.g.: ӫ with a noun of action and a predicalizing pronoun sometimes also serves as a gerund, e.g.: G ḫ in (Mark 11:2) “and upon their return at dawn they saw the fig tree withered from its root”. In present day Amharic the infinitive preceded by ḫ

18 cf LESLAI (1941) 44.
often replaces the historical gerund in rendering a concomitant action\(^{20}\).

Also in Tigrinya, in the combination ӿԈӈӤ (ӿԈӎԧ in the feminine) a deverbal nominal form follows the preposition, but it is not an abstract noun, like the infinitive or the noun of action, but rather a historical passive participle.

The adjectival deverbal form ӿӊӖԬԧ (ӿӊӖԈԑ in the feminine) is passive only if derived from a transitive verb, but active otherwise, which is most often the case. The combination of this participle/adjective with a suffix pronoun produces the predicative link, which corresponds to the verb “to be” in deep structure. This construction is found both in more ancient sources and in contemporary texts, e.g.: T ӈӅԇӈӇԈ: ӊӖڔӈӅԧ - ӝԈӇԈ (John 18:24) “then Annas sent Him bound to the high priest Caiaphas”, both in the manuscript quoted by Praetorius and in the modern translation. The same applies to the following verse: T ӈӇԈ ngOnDestroy: ӈӁӇԈ (John 11:44) “the dead [man] stepped out wrapped in a shroud”. With a feminine suffix pronoun the participle/adjective stands in the feminine, e.g.: T ӈԈӈԈӇӫ: ӈӖԎӅԧ: ӈӖԈӅԧ (II Samuel 13:20) “but Tamar remained unwed in her brother Absalom’s house”. A few adjectives with the predicating pronoun and в became regular adverbs, e.g.: T ӈԈӈԈӇѽ: ڛԈӖԈԈ: ӈӖԈԈԈ (Storia 53:4) “he came after us in person”\(^{21}\); T ӈӖӖԈӵ: ӈ���ӵ: ӈӖӞҤ (YGYM 26:16) “all the monks (literally the monks in their full) loved him”; T ӈԈӊԈӵ: ӈӖӍڒӇ (YGYM 17:3) “explaining extensively”, and T ӈӅӊ��: ӈӖ��: ӈӖ�� (Luke 15:27) “because he found him safe”\(^{22}\) as against A ӈӖӖԈӵ: ӈӖӖӖӵ or G ӈӖӖԇ (Exodus 4:18) without a suffix pronoun.

In contemporary Tigrinya the predicalized construction may be replaced by a gerund, or an equivalent verbal construction, of the corresponding verb, e.g.: T ӈԓԓ��ԓ: ӈӖӖԇӵ: ӈӖӖӖӵ (Matthew 22:41) “while the Pharisees [were] gathered he interrogated them”, quoted by Praetorius, as against T ӈӖӖԈӵ: ӈӖӖӖӵ: ... ӈӖӖӖӵ in the modern version. When the participle/adjective cannot automatically be transformed into the corresponding verb the gerund of “to be” has to be introduced, e.g.: T ӈӖӊ��ӵ: ӈӖӞ��: ӈӖӖӖӵ: ӈӖӖԈӵ: ӈӖӖӖӵ (John 9:1 and 9:19, 9:29, 9:32) “he saw a man who was born blind”, and in verse 2: T ӈӖӈ��ӵ: ӈӖӖӵ: ӈӖӖӖӵ, “and that he be born (being) blind”; both elements may also stand side by side, e.g.: T ӈӖӖӵ: ӈӖߖ��: ӈӖӖӵ

\(^{20}\) cf KAPELIUK (1988a) 54–55.

\(^{21}\) KANE, Tigrinya: ӈӖӖӖӵ “he himself”, “in person”.

\(^{22}\) Also ӈӖӖӖӵ “safely” according to KANE, Tigrinya.
he let himself be lifted by her easily, being asleep”. In Amharic, on the other hand, there is no construction with a predicalized adjective or historical participle and a gerund is used, thus for Matthew 22:41 A լալարոջուր լաս որոնում, for John 9:1 A ձանակ : ձուսամստեության որոնում, and for John 9:2: A ձանակ : ձուսամստեության որոնում. One Tigrinya example among those quoted by Praetorius (313–314) contains the preposition Տ:Տ որոնում “from”; Տ որոնում (Mark 9:21) “since his childhood (literally since his little)”. In the recent Tigrinya translation the adjective is replaced by an abstract noun: Տ որոնում “from his childhood”, similarly to Amharic: հավատօրեր որոնում և Գեզ: արտատորեր որոնում. I have shown elsewhere, in respect to Amharic, that abstract nouns should be analyzed as transformation of underlying copula sentences 23, hence Տ որոնում and Տ որոնում may both be reconstructed as “from his [being] little”.

This brings us to the last and perhaps the most extravagant combination with Տ:Տ may also be preposed to a noun, followed by a predicalizing suffix pronoun. If the noun is an abstract one, the combination seems almost natural, e.g.: Տ որոնում: որոնում (Joshua 8:23) “they captured the king of Ai alive (literally in his life)”; Տ որոնում: որոնում (Storia 146:5) “while their master was still alive”24 and so too in the following, somewhat poetic expression: Տ որոնում: որոնում: որոնում (Storia 144:5) translated by the editor “mori ad Hararge prematuramente”; Տ որոնում: որոնում: որոնում (Job 36:14) “they die in youth”; according to KANE, Tigrinya որոնում means “ear of corn, grain, pod (of peas, beans etc.) still green but ripe enough to eat”. In a few other cases the noun is a concrete one and the expression, if literally translated, sounds real strange. This happens in specification of a period of time, when a substantive referring to a human being at a certain age is used where we would expect an abstract noun, e.g.: Տ որոնում: որոնում (YGYM 4:15) “when He was young (literally: when He was in His young man)”; Տ որոնում: որոնում (YGYM 18:19) “while he was a baby (literally in his baby)”; Տ որոնում: որոնում (Ezekiel 23:3) “they prostituted themselves as young girls (literally: in their young girls)”. Here the predicalizing pronoun not only creates the predicative link between the pronominal subject and the concrete noun which provides the predicate, but also leads to a deeper analysis of the latter. Տ որոնում: որոնում: որոնում in this syntactical context equal “youth of man”, “childhood”, “youth of

23 Cf KAPELIUK (1988b) 74–77.
24 Տ որոնում according to Kane, Tigrinya means “existence”, “presence”.

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woman”, and since abstracts are transformed copula sentences, they are to be interpreted as “being a young man”, “being a child” and “being young girls”.

Chapter II

We shall turn now to the Ge’ez parallels of the predicalized expressions of state described in Chapter I in respect to Tigrinya and Amharic. Whenever a direct comparison between the modern languages and the old one is possible25 one construction consistently emerges in Ge’ez. This construction usually contains either a participle/adjective of the form የጭጭ or an adjective of the form የጭጭ followed by an adnominal suffix pronoun, accorded either to the subject or to the object of the governing verb. The adjectival component generally stands in the nominative when it specifies the state of the subject of the governing verb and in the accusative when it refers to its object. Thus for ት>&ጭ and ወ>&ጭ we may quote from Mark 8:3 ይፋጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ : የጭጭ. Parallel to Tigrinya ወ with the participle/adjective and suffix pronoun Ge’ez lacks the preposition but the rest is identical, whereas Amharic has no corresponding adjectival construction. Thus ትጭ in John 18:24 renders ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ : ያጭ. Since this construction is well known to those familiar with Ge’ez, the purpose of what follows is limited to providing a few clarifications based on extensive reading of Ge’ez texts. A. Dillmann described the construction in his Grammar but it is evident that he was confused as to its syntactical standing. He deals with identical examples under two different headings, once referring to suffixes in apposition and once in the paragraph on adjectives in apposition. Moreover, he is not explicit as to what these pronouns or adjectives are apposed to. M. Chaïne is more accurate when he states that the “qualificatif” refers to a pronoun, either subject or object and hints at the connection with the gerund26, though without establishing a clear analogy between the two.

25 The Amharic translations of the Scriptures used in this article were done, without any doubt, from the Ge’ez text. As for the Tigrinya modern translation, I was sometimes under the impression that it followed more faithfully the Amharic translation than the Ge’ez basic text.

26 DILLMANN (1907) 360, 482; CHAÎNE (1938) 195, 161.

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I had, in the past, the opportunity of demonstrating how the combination of the participle/adjective with a suffix pronoun in Ge'ez created a predicative link between the two, transforming at the same time the combination into an adverbial specification of state. It should be stressed that in Semitic suffixing a pronoun to an adjective (unless substantivized), even with possessive meaning, is most unusual while a pronoun suffixed to a participle may only indicate its object. Therefore the sole fact of combining a participle/adjective or a regular adjective with a pronoun produced a unique adverbial construction in which the former constitutes the predicate and the latter the subject with an underlying verb "to be". I had also pointed out to the affinity between the predicalized participle/adjective and the gerund both in terms of function and suffixation of a "possessive" pronoun as subject. In certain cases they even are interchangeable, as in Matthew 25:39 "when did we see you — Ḡִּדֵי כָּהָנִי − imprisoned" and id 44 Ḡִּדֵי כָּהָנִי "having been imprisoned", or Matthew 8:13 G כֹּכַּהֲנִי : Ḡִּדֵי כָּהָנִי "he found his son in good health", but in the translation of the Gospels the same verse has Ḡִּדֵי כָּהָנִי "having been healed".

Theoretically any predicalized participle or adjective in Ge'ez may be transformed into the gerund of the corresponding verb or, in the impossibility of forming the latter, by the gerund of the verb Ḡִּדֵי כָּהָנִי. This also was the regular historical evolution in Amharic and Tigrinya, except for the few special cases examined in Chapter I. But the reversal of this process isn't automatically possible. Not every Ge'ez gerund may be transformed into a predicalized participle/adjective. This possibility is almost exclusively limited to the specification of the physical and psychological state of human beings, e.g.: G כֹּכַּהֲנִי : Ḡִּדֵי כָּהָנִי. (Joshua 10:26) "and they remained hanging" (A כֹּכַּהֲנִי, T כֹּכַּהֲנִי); G כֹּכַּהֲנִי : Ḡִּדֵי כָּהָנִי : כֹּכַּהֲנִי (Exodus 17:12) "and the hands of Moses remaînd stretched"; G כֹּכַּהֲנִי : כֹּכַּהֲנִי : כֹּכַּהֲנִי : כֹּכַּהֲנִי (II Samuel 16:4) "and the king and all the people arrived there exhausted"; G כֹּכַּהֲנִי : כֹּכַּהֲנִי : כֹּכַּהֲנִי (Acts 2:6) "and they all gathered, confused". I have found three examples only of

28 I can quote only one example in Hebrew, from a love song " modelAndView of a distant [one]".
29 cf GAI (1983). The term "embedded non-sentence nexuses" he uses is the most accurate for this combination but I refrained from borrowing it here because not everybody is familiar with this terminology.
30 Speakers of Ethiopian languages are very much aware of the special status of human beings and use several linguistic means to express it, cf KAPELIUK (1973).
the predicalized construction not with human beings: \( G \, ӹӼӼӼӼӼӼӼ \): \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (John 20:1) “and she found the stone removed from the opening of the grave”; \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (Matthew 9:16) “no one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old coat because it will tear the coat alive”; \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (GTH 17:51–52) “and none of the house vessels was found empty”, and in the Amharic translation \( A \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) “Zebulun, [being] little, dwells by the seashore”.

The semantic limitations on the use of the predicalized construction distinguish it from the gerund which is freely used in any context and regularly derived from all the verbal roots. Moreover, the deverbal base of the gerund is always the same (and in the accusative) and has no independent existence in the language, whereas the predicalized construction has no uniform base and both the participle/adjective and the adjectives may also be used outside the construction. In the case of \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) its meaning is passive if the verb from which it derives is transitive, and active otherwise, e.g.: \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (Judges 18:11) “six hundred men who, girdled, carry their weapons”; \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (Genesis 49:13) “Zebulun, [being] little, dwells by the seashore”. Unlike the gerund base, the participle is accorded in gender and number to the pronoun it specifies, e.g.: \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (Luke 24:17) “when you go worried”; \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (I Petros 3:19) “and he went to those whose soul remains imprisoned” and \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (DILLMANN (1866) 37:11) “he looked at her, standing, while she was adorned”, where we find side by side the unchanging base of the gerund and the participle accorded in the feminine.

Among the adjectives constituting the predicate the most frequently used are \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) “alive” and \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) “naked” and “empty handed”. \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) is accorded to its subject both in gender and number, e.g.: \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (Acts 9:41) “and he delivered her to her alive”; \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (AMS 389:3–4) “shall I bury them alive in the ground?” \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) is never used without a suffix pronoun and has no feminine form, e.g.: \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) (Ruth 1:21) “I went amply supplied and God brought me back empty handed”. Whereas \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) is freely used as an adjective \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \) may only be used in the predicalized construction, otherwise it is replaced by \( \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \), e.g.: \( G \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \, \lambda \).
The Ethio-Semitic Possessive Pronouns as Predicalizers in Historical Perspective

ъ ֓ ӺяѧӜӇ (Revelation 3:17) “and you know yourself that you are poor and miserable and you are naked and blind”. Very few other adjectives referring to bodily state are employed, e.g.:  Kills: ֓ ӿѧҢ ֓ чԟӺҧ (Matthew 18:8-9) “it is better for you to enter life lame ... it is better for you to enter life one-eyed”. Also we should add to the list two substantives: Kills: ӽԬח: ԹקԥӚ (Matthew 25:38) “when did we see you a stranger and we accepted you”; and Kills: ֓ ڰӈ (Genesis 38:11) “remain a spinster”.

The gerund and the predicalized participle/adjective further differ on two important points: the case and the presence or absence of the suffix pronoun. The accusative case of the deverbal base which produces the adverbial subordination of state (ϝΎΣ) is inherent in the form of the gerund. In the predicalized construction, basically the case is in agreement with the pronominal component of the governing verb which it specifies, i.e. nominative for the subject, e.g.: Kills: ӺӖӖԧTho: ӿӅӚ (DILLMANN (1866) 64:5) “you boast, staying at home.”

As for the suffix pronoun, its presence with the gerund is absolutely mandatory, whereas the participle/adjective may equally be used bare, i.e. without the predicalizing pronoun (with the exception of ֓ ӽԇӻҤ). It is not clear why one form is chosen and not the other and they often alternate, in the same text or in different versions of the same verse. Thus for specifying the state of the subject: Kills: ӽӅԈ: ӽԈ: [DILLMANN (1866) 61:9] “let him go home

31 In more than forty years of reading Ge’ez texts I haven’t seen a single example of something to which Correll’s term “unsuffigiertes Gerund” could be applied (op. cit. 259).
In the daytime they spend the day fasting with the brothers; as long as a strong man guards his field armed with weapons where the translation of the Gospels has; and Tamar remained unwed in her father’s home against Genesis 38:11 with the same meaning. Referring to the object of the governing verb, the participle, both bare and with a suffix pronoun, normally stands in the accusative, e.g.: (Acts 25:27) “we shouldn’t send him to the king in chains”; (Matthew 15:32) “I don’t want to send them away fasting” where the translation of the Gospels has; (John 20:1) “and she found the stone removed from the opening of the grave” while in the translation of the Gospels we find.

In the absence of the predicalizing pronoun the participle/adjective should stand in the accusative when it qualifies the object, and so it does in most cases, as may be seen from the examples in the preceding paragraph. However, the marking of the accusative in Ethiopian manuscripts and books is often confused, especially with the predicative complement and in specification of state. In the Scriptures the variants are numerous and shouldn’t be accorded too much importance, e.g.: (Mark 11:20) “they found the fig tree withered from its root” versus the translation of the Gospels. Inconsistencies also exist in specification of the state of the subject of the accompanying verb by a bare participle/adjective, but in this case one variant is significant. The bare participle/adjective may stand in the nominative on the one hand, e.g.: (Exodus 5:8) “because they shouted, unemployed”, but the interesting cases are when it qualifies the subject and nevertheless stands in the accusative, e.g.: (Matthew 20:3) “while they stand in the market unemployed”; (GTH 72:8) “because her husband came home safe”; (John 20:19) “where his disciples were found, assembled” in the translation of the Gospels, against the edition of the Bible Society.

In terms of comparative semitics the use of the bare participle/adjective (or substantive) in the accusative case for specifying the state of both the object
and the subject of the governing verb seems to represent the original construction. This may be deduced from the usage in classical Arabic where the \( \omega \) stands invariably in the accusative and never carries a suffix pronoun with the status of subject. Suffixation of a predicalizing “possessive” pronoun with the function of subject to non-abstract deverbal nouns, such as participles and adjectives, seems to be a particular Ethiopian feature. Perhaps it was the presence in Ge’ez of the gerund as a deverbal noun (though abstract) in the accusative with an adnominal suffix pronoun as its subject, which brought to a similar combination between the “possessive” pronoun with predicalizing function and certain participles and adjectives. But, given the semantic limitations on this construction, as specification of bodily or spiritual state of human beings, it was probably abandoned in favour of the gerund during the period of evolution from Ge’ez into Tigrinya and Amharic, leaving behind only a few residues, which have been described in Chapter I.

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*_embedded_nexus* : የታጋ ኣ ... የጋም ኣ : ቀርበም ኣ : ኣም, 1959 E.C.

GTH
*embedded_nexus* : የታጋ ኣ : ቀርበም ኣ : ኣም, 1973 E.C.

KANE, Amharic

KANE, Tigrinya

KAPELIUK (1973)

KAPELIUK (1979)

KAPELIUK (1988a)

KAPELIUK (1988b)

KAPELIUK (1989)

KAPELIUK (1992)

LESLAU (1941)
WOLF LESLAU, *Documents Tigrinya*, Paris 1941

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