Morphosyntactic Features of the Wəllo Variety of Amharic[1]

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Abstract: This paper is an attempt towards a morphosyntactic description of the Wəllo variety of Amharic. The description focuses on aspects of derivational and inflectional affixes, and on restructuring of phrases to serve as lexical expressions of manner of events and/or actions. The description of the facts show that the variety deviates from the 'standard variety' in the derivation of active, passive and middle voice stems of what are traditionally known as type A, B and C verbs. The variety geminates the penultimate radical of a root to derive both perfective and imperfective stems whereas the standard variety geminates the same radical to derive only perfective stems. Furthermore, the Wəllo variety uses different forms for passive and middle voices whereas the standard variety uses the same form for both the middle and the passive. Ditransitive verbs show agreement affixes for both the direct and indirect objects in the Wəllo variety whereas the same type of verbs show affixes for only direct object in the standard variety. The Wəllo variety also differs in the form and use of honorific, endearing and pleading terms, and in the choice of goal and source adpositions. The overall description shows that the Wəllo variety has a more complex morphology than the standard variety, which calls for a more elaborate comparative description.

Key terms: affix, middle, passive, voice, radical, stem, root, perfective, aspect, endearment, honorificity.

Introduction

Ethiopian linguistics had been historical-comparative in its method and classificatory in its objective. Based on lexicostatistics, the languages of the country were divided into sub-genetic groups within Afro-Asiatic and Nilo-Saharan. One such group within Afro-Asiatic is Semitic, which consists of about 16 languages and/or dialects that are further grouped into North and South Ethiopian Semitic, (Hetzron, 1972). Since the 70's, a lot of descriptive work has been done on the phonology and morphology of many of the languages or dialects, as a result of which, there has been a shift from lexicostatistics of cognates to phonological and morpholexical comparisons of the languages, and that this has, in turn, led to revisions of earlier classifications by Leslau (1969), and more recently by Hetzron (1977), whose version has been revisited by Hudson, (2013), which dispensed with south Ethiopian Semitic as a sub - genetic group.

Until recently, the focus of the comparative research has been on the genetic positioning of the major languages with little or no attention given to their internal constituents, and cross-regional variations. The few that have been attempted include (Amsalu and Habtemariam, 1973; Getachew, Hailu, and Cowley, 1976; Hailu and Fesseha, 1976; Getahun, 1983; Zelealem, 2007; Mengistu, 2019) on Amharic; (Heine, 1980; Kebede, 2009; Feda 2015) on Oromo, and, (Voigt, 2006, 2009) on Tigrigna. These are three of five major languages recently recognized as Federal working languages, along with Somali and Afar (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2020). Of these, Amharic has been relatively well described and the comparative evidence shows that it has five regional varieties. These are Shewa, Goǧam, Gondər, Wəllo, and Addis Ababa, the last of which, serves as a 'standard' vehicle of communication in

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formal domains such as education, the media, and the bureaucracy. In comparison to the others, the Wəllo variety has been described at the lexical level by Amsalu (1991), Amsalu and Habtemariam (1973), and Getahun (1983). Their reports show that the presence of Arabic and Oromo lexical influence in this more than in any of the other varieties.

This is not without reason; the Wəllo region has been known for its longstanding ethnic and religious interactions and its centers of both Christian and Islamic teachings (Pankhurst, 1994; Hussien, 2001). One result of this process is the emergence of a variety known as Muslim Amharic (Rukia, 2013) with a tradition of writing Amharic in Arabic script (Wetter, 2002). The writings, known as Ajami, show a large number of Arabic words, which inflect like the rest of the native vocabulary. But as yet, there has been no exhaustive description of either the written or the spoken variety. The only attempt in this regard is Baye (2016), which is only a phonological account of the south Wəllo variety. The present study is a follow-up of this with a focus on the morphosyntactic aspects, which characterize the variety distinct.

The study is based on data drawn from narratives of stories by elementary school teachers doing a summer course at Wəllo University in 2009 and from introspection, as I am a native speaker of the variety[2]. The approach is descriptive with little or no theoretical construct presupposed or rigorously followed. The description takes the Addis Ababa variety as a contrastive backdrop for the morphosyntactic features attested in the Wəllo variety, which I assume derives its peculiar features from an underlying representation, which is common to all the varieties.

With this in mind, the study is organized into five sections, the first of which is this brief introduction, followed by section two that deals with a set of verbal stem derivations of the variety in question. Section three considers some inflectional and derivational features of a set of substantives, and verbals whereas section four treats some variations in the choice of prepositional phrases of source and goal of motion events. Finally, section five wraps up the description with a summary.

Verbal Stem Derivation

In this section, I describe a set of verbs whose derivations deviate from the general pattern of stem formation reported in such works as (Leslau, 1995; Hartmann, 1980; Cowley, 1969), for example, where the verbs of the language fall into three major types, namely type 'A', 'B', and 'C'. Those which fall in type 'A' geminate their penult radical in the derivation of their perfective stems, whereas those which fall in type B geminate the same radical in both the perfective and imperfective stems, and those in type C insert /a/ in the position immediately after the initial radical of the root. The following are examples of such derived stems of each type.

(1)

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[2] The students may not all be from Wəllo but the facts used for the present study were drawn from stories by those who claim to be native to the region. The selected facts were read by one such student and recorded simultaneously for use in this study.

	Root	**Perfective**	**Imperfective**[3]
Type A	s-b-r	səbbər-	səbr-
Type B	f-l-g	fəlləg-	fəll-g- [fəllɨg-]
Type C	m-r-k	marrək-	marr-k- [marrɨk-]

Whereas this is the general pattern of root representation and stem derivation in the language, the WV variety deviates from it concerning a set of roots that includes the following:

(2)

Root			WV	SV
k'-t'-r- 'employ'	Perfective		k'ət't'ər-ə	k'ət't'ər-ə
	Imperfective	M	y-k'ət't'-r- [yɨk'ət't'ɨr-][4]	y-k'ət'r- [yɨk'ət'r-]
		F	t- k'ət't'-r- [tɨk'ət't'ɨr-]	t-k'ət'r- [tɨk'ət'r-]
	Gerundive	M	k'ət't'-r-o [k'ət't'iro]	k'ət'r-o
		F	k'ət't'-r-a] [k'ət't'ira]	k' ət'r-a
	Imperative	M	k'ət't'-r [k'ət't'ir]	[k'ɨt'ər]
		F	k'ət't'-r- [k'ət't'iri]	[k'ɨt'əri]
		PL	k'ət't'-r-u [k'ət't'iru]	[k'ɨt'əru]
	Jussive	M	y-k' -t't'-r [yɨk'ɨt't'ər-]	[yɨk't'ər]
		F	t-k'-t't'-r [tɨk'ɨt't'ər]	[tɨk't'ər]
ʔ-y- 'see'		PL	y-k'-t't'- r [yɨk'ət't'iru]	[yɨk't'əru]
	Optative		l-k'ət't'-r [lɨk'ət't'ir]	[lɨk't'ər]
		PL	ʔ-nn-k'ət't'-r	[ʔinnɨk't'ər]
	Perfective.		[ʔinnɨk'ət't'ir]	ʔayy-ə
	Imperfective	M	ʔayy-ə	[yay-]
		F	y-ʔay- [yay-]	[tay]
	Gerundive	M	t-ʔay- [tay-]	ʔayt-o
		F	ʔayt-o	ʔayt-a
	Imperative	M	ʔayt-a	[ʔɨyəw]
		F	ʔ-yy-ə-u [ʔɨyyəw]	[ʔɨyiw]

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[3] Note the following abbreviations:

ACC	Accusative	APL	Applicative	AUX	Auxiliary	CMPL	Completive
CS	Causative	DEF	Definite	DIM	Diminutive	F	Feminine
FOC	Focus	GEN	Genitive	HON	Honorific	IPF	Imperfective
M	Masculine	MD	Middle	Per	Perfective	PL	Plural
PRTV	Partitive	PS	Passive	POS	Possessive	PRS	Present
SG	Singular	PST	Past	TOP	Topic	RM	Relative
marker	VOC	Vocative					

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[4] Amharic allows no word-initial cluster of consonants and no cluster of more than two members in other positions. The general syllabic structure is (C)V(C)(C) and the high central vowel [ɨ] serves as an epenthesis in contexts of impermissible clusters.

	Jussive	M	ʔ-yy-i-u	[ʔɨyyiw]	[yɨyəw]
		F	y-yyə-u	[yɨyyəw]	[tɨyəw]
k'-w-t'-r	Optative		t-yy-ə-u	tɨyyəw]	[lɨyəu]
'put in'		PL	l-yy- ə-u	[lɨyyəw]	[ʔɨnnɨyəw]
	Perfective	M	ʔ-nn-yyə-u	[ʔɨnnɨyyəw]	-
	Imperfective	M	<u>k'əwət't'ər- ə</u> [k'wət't ərə] [5]	-
		F	y-k'w ət't'-r-	[yɨkʼʷət't'ɨr-]	-
	Gerundive	M	t-k'w ət't'-r	[tɨkʼʷət't'ɨr-]	-
		F	k'wət't'-r-o	[kʼʷət't'ɨro]	-
	Imperative	M	k'wət't'-r-a	[kʼʷət't'ira]	-
		F	k'wət't'-r	[kʼʷət't'ɨr]	-
	Jussive	M	k'wət't'-r-i	[kʼʷət't'ɨri]	-
		F	y- k'wət't'-r	[yɨkʼʷət't'ɨr]	-
	Optative		t-k'-wət't'-r	[tɨkʼʷət't'ɨr]	-
			l-k'-wət't'-r-a	[lɨkʼʷət't'ɨr]	-

The stems under the WV show that the penult radical is geminate unlike their counterparts in the SV, considered here for comparative purposes. The difference between the two varieties is in the choice of the feature [±LONG], for which only the WV is positive. In both varieties, the imperfective, the jussive, and the optative are prefixing whereas the perfective and gerundive are suffixing of person. The segment [t] preceding the suffix –o in the gerundive form /ʔay-t-o/ '(he) having seen', is a placeholder for a historically lost root-final guttural consonant. In both varieties, there is a homophonous root kʼ-w-t'-r- 'count' from which the following type 'A' stems are derived as expressions of the action of counting objects.

			S/WV		
(3)	k'-w-t'-r	Perfective	k'w ət't'ər-ə	[kʼʷət'tərə]	'count'
		Imperfective	y-k'wət'r-	[yɨkʼʷət'r-]	
		Gerundive M	k'wət'r-o		
		F	k'w ət'r-a		
		Imperative M	k'w -t'ər-	[kʼʷ ɨt'ər]	
		F	k'w -t'ər-i	[kʼʷ ɨt'əri]	
		Jussive M	y- k'w -t'ər	[yɨkʼʷ t'ər]	
		F	t- k'w -t'ər	[tɨkʼʷ t'ər]	
		Optative	l-k'w t'ər	[lɨkʼʷ t'ər]	

The other peculiar feature of the WV variety relates to voice, of which there are three types, each represented by different stems derived from a common root. The following are paradigms of the three voices for the gerundive and imperative functions.

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[5] Amharic allows no word-initial cluster of consonants and no cluster of more than two members in other positions. The general syllabic structure is (C)V(C)(C) and the high central vowel [ɨ] serves as an epenthesis in contexts of impermissible clusters.

Root   r-g-t' ' kick'/ 'step on'

(4)

Stem	WV			SV	
	Active:	**Passive**	**Middle**	**Active**	**Middle/Passive**
Gerundive	rəgt'-o	tə-rəgt'-o	tə-rəggit'-o	rəgt'- o	tə-rəgt'-o
	ʰaving kicked-3SGM	PS-kicked-3SGM	MD-kicked-3SGM	Having kicked-3SGM	PS-kicked-3SGM
	rəgt'-a	tə-rəgt'-a	tə-rəggit'-a	rəgt'-a	tə-rəgt'-a
	Having kicked-3SGF	PS-kicked-3SGF	MD-kicked-3SGF	Having kicked-3SGF	PS-kicked-3SGF
Imperative	r-gət'-[irgət']	tə-rəgət'	tə-rəggət'	r-gət'-[irgət']	tə-rəgət'
	r-gət'-i	tə-rəgət'-i	tə-rəggət'-i	r-gət'-i	tə-rəgət'-i
	step:on-2SGF	PS-kicked-2SGF	MD-kicked-2SGF	MD-kicked-2SGF	MD-kicked-2SGF
	[irgəč']	[tə-rəgəč']	[tə-rəggəč']	[rigəč']	[tərəgəč']

As can be observed, the WV has different forms for the expression of the three voices, contra the SV, which has only two, one for the active, and another for both the passive and the middle. In other words, the SV uses the same form for both passive and middle voices. Consider the following examples from the WV:

(5)
Active: (a)   Kasa dingay **rəgt'** -o   wənz-u-n
    K.   stone   step:CMPL-3SGM   river-DEF-FOC
tə-šaggər-ə
MD-cross:PF-3SGM
Lit. 'K. having stepped on stone crossed the river'.
'K. crossed the river having stepped on stone.'

Middle: (b)   Kasa dingay tə-**rəggit**'   -o   wənz-u- n
    K.   stone   MD-step:CMPL-3SGM   river-DEF-FOC
tə-šaggər-ə
MD-cross:PF-3SGM
Lit. 'K. having gotten stepped on stone crossed the river'
'K. crossed the river having gotten stepped on a stone.'

Passive: (c)   Kasa tinant bə-polis   tə-rəgt'-o   nəbbər
    K. yesterday by-police   PS-kick:PF-3SGM   be:PST
'K. was kicked by (a) policeman yesterday'

In (a) the verb rəgt'-o is active gerundive and it expresses the manner of how Kasa crossed the river. In (b) it is in the middle gerundive indicated by the prefix tə - and the gemination of the penult radical of the root, thus forming a stem, which belongs to type B. In (c), the passive

gerundive tə-rəgt'-o which corresponds to the active counterpart rəgt'-o in example (a), expresses the event of Kasa being kicked.

Consider the following imperatives in the three voices of the WV:

(6)   Active: (a)   dingay rəgt'-əh   wirəd
                          stone step:on-2SGM   descend
                           Lit. 'Having stepped on stone (you) descend'

         Middle: (b)   dingay tə-rə**ggi**t'-əh [tərəggit'əh]   wirəd
                          stone PS-step:MD-2SGM   descend
                          'Having gotten stepped on stone descend'

         Passive: (c)   tə-rəgət' inna wirəd
                           PS-step:on and descend
                           'Be stepped on /get kicked and descend'

In (a,) dingay 'stone' is syntactically an object and semantically a patient of the active gerundive rəgt'-əh '(you) having stepped on'. In (b), it (stone) is semantically instrumental for the action of the middle gerundive tərəggit'əh '(you) having got stepped on'. In (c) the passive gerundive tə-rəgət 'be stepped on/gets kicked' has a phonetically null subject which is semantically a patient and syntactically an object. Middle forms such as tə-rəggət' of the WV are either unknown or rarely used outside the region. Speakers outside the area express the middle by the passive form tə-rəgət' 'be stepped on or get kicked', whose reading may be negative to a hearer from another variety thus leading to misunderstanding[6].

Root r-k-b 'receive'
This is a root from which only the form for the middle voice is derived, with the prefix tə- and the gemination of the penult radical in the WV, and without these applying to its counterpart in the SV. The form in the WV behaves like type 'B' verbs whereas its counterpart in the SV goes like type 'A'. Consider the following gerundive and imperative forms in the middle voice of both varieties.

(7)   WV   SV
         Gerundive: tə-rə**kk**-b-o [tərə**kk**ibo]   tə-rəkb-o
                                 MD-receive-3SGM   MD-receive-3SGM
                                 '(He) having gotten received'

                          F   tə-rə**kk**-b - a [tərə**kk**iba]   tə-rəkb-a
                                 MD-receive-3SGF   MD-receive-3SGF
                                 '(She) having gotten received'

         Imperative: tə-rə**kk**əb-   tə-rəkəb-
                                 MD-receive   MD-receive
                                 '(You) get received'

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[6] This often happens between my wife who speaks the SV and I the WV. I use the middle form tə-rəggət'č', to mean 'get stepped on (something)' but she decodes it as tə-rəgə'č 'be stepped on' or 'get kicked', which is the passive counterpart rendering a negative reading.

	F	tə-**rəkk**əb-i	tə-rəkəb-i
		MD-receive-3SGF	MD-receive-3SGF
		'(You) get received'	

The contrast in gemination between the forms in the two varieties is neutralized in the causative, which is derived from the basic stem with the prefix as- and the gemination of the penult radical.

(8)

		WV		SV	
Active		as- rəkkəb-ə		as- rəkkəb-ə	
		CS-receive:PF-3SGM		CS-receive:PF-3SGM	
			'(He) caused receive'		
Gerundive		as- rəkk-b-o	[asrəkkɨbo]	as- rəkk-b -o	[asrəkkɨbo]
		CS-receive:CMPL-3SGM		CS-receive:CMPL-3SGM	
			'(He) having caused receive'		
Imperative		as-rəkk-b	[asrəkkɨb]	as-rəkk-b	[asrəkkɨb]
		CS-receive		CS-receive	
			'(You) cause receive'		

The basic stem -rəkkəb-, is bound, and it does not select any complement noun to project a VP. To project a VP, it has to turn itself into a causative/transitive stem with the prefix as- as shown above or derive an intransitive counterpart with the medio-passive prefix tə- as shown below:

(9) (a) WV Aster gənzəb kə-Kasa tə- rəkkəb -əč > [əy]
              A.   money from-K.   MD-receive: PF-3SGF
              Lit. 'A. money from K. get-received'   'A. received money from K.'
     (b) SV   Kasa gənzəb lə Aster as- rəkkəb -ə
              K.   money to A.   CS-receive:PF-3SGM
              Lit. 'K. caused-receive money to Aster'

Note that, here again the derived stems are identical in both varieties; except the weakening of the palatal affricate /č/ to [y] in the WV, which will be considered later along with other morpho-phonological processes.

Root k'-r-b 'bring near to'
Another peculiarity concerns the root k'-r-b 'get near' or 'bring near' from which, the following stems are derived.

(10)

	SV	SV	WV
	Intransitive	Causative/Transitive	Passive
Perfective	k'ərrəb-	a- k'ərrəb-	tə-k'ərrəb-
	'got:near'	CS-get:near	PS-get:near
		'Brought near'	'Was brought near'
Imperfective	yi-k'ərb-	yi-a-k'ərb- [yak'ərb]	yi-t-k'ərb- [yɨk'k'ərrəb-]
	3SG-get:near	3SGM-CS-get:near	3SGM-PS-get:near
		'He brings near'	'It gets brought near'

'It gets near'[7]

Gerundive: M.	k'ərb-o	a-k'r-b-o [ak'rɨbo]	tə-k'ərb-o
	get:near-3SGM	CS-get:near-3SGM	PS-get:near-3SGM
	'Having gotten near'	'Having brought near'	'Having been brought near'
Gerundive F.	k'ərb-a	a-k'r-b-i [ak'rɨbi]	
	get:near-3SGF	CS- get:near-2SGF	
	'She having gotten near'	'You bring near'	
Jussive M.	yi-k'rəb [yɨk'rəb]	yi-a-kr-b [yak'rɨb]	yi-t- k'rəb [yɨk'k'ərəb]
	3SGM-get:near	3SGM-CS-get:near	3SGM-PS-get:near
	'let he get near'	'let he bring near'	'Let it be brought near'
Jussive F.	t-k'rəb [tɨk'rəb]	t- a-kr-b [tak'rɨb]	
	3SGF-get:near	3SGF-CS-get:near	
	'let she get near'	'let she bring near'	

The imperfective, gerundive and jussive passive forms are not attested in the SV, where, instead, the active forms are used as in (a'), (b'), and (c') below.

(11)   WV   (a)   mɨsa tə-k'ərrəb   -ə   -ll- - ət
                                    lunch PS-bring:near:PF-3SGM -APL -3SGMO
                                    Lit. 'Lunch was/gotten near for him'

              SV   (a')   mɨsa k'ərrəb -ə-   -ll- - ət
                                    lunch bring-near:PF –APL- 3SGMO
                                     Lit. 'Lunch got near for him'

              WV   (b)   mɨsa tə-k'ərb   -o-   ll -ət
                                    lunch PS- bring:near-3SGM-APL-3SGMO
                                    Lit. 'Lunch having been gotten/brought near for him'

              SV   (b')   mɨsa k'ərb   -o   -ll - ət
                                    lunch bring:near-3SGM-APL-3SGMO
                                    Lit. 'Lunch having gotten near for him'

              WV   (c)   mɨsa y-t- k'rəb   -ll -ət   [yɨk'k'ərəbɨllət]
                                    lunch 3SG-PS-bring:near-APL-3SGMO
                                    Lit. 'Let lunch be gotten/brought near for him'

              SV   (c')   mɨsa   y-k'rəb   -ll -ət   [yɨk'rəbɨllət]
                                    lunch   3SG-bring:near -APL-3SGMO
                                    Lit. 'Let lunch get near for him'

These are active and passive gerundives; the difference between the two varieties is on the choice of voice. The WV prefers the passive but does not exclude the active, whereas the SV prefers the active to the exclusion of the passive. In both structures, the subject, *mɨsa*, 'lunch' is a theme, and the beneficiary is a goal, which is phonetically null occupying a topic position. When it (the goal) is overt, the structure in 11(c) looks like the following:

(12)   [Kasa [mɨsa   yi -t- k'rəb   -ll -ət]]   [yɨk'k'ərəbɨllət]
                    K.   lunch 3SG-PS-bring: near   -APL-3SGMO
                    Lit. 'Kasa, lunch let it be gotten/brought near for him'

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[7] The expletive reading comes from the prefix yi- '3SG' since the language does not have an overt expletive pronoun of the type 'it' or 'there' in English.

Kasa is identified by the object pronominal suffix[8] -ət '3SGMO' as a goal topic whereas *misa* 'lunch' is identified as a theme subject of the passive predicate by the subject pronominal prefix yi- '3SG'. That this is so is evident from the following structure where the noun Aster is in a topic position identified by the object suffix *-at* '3SGFO'.

(13)   [Aster [misa   y-t-k'rəb   -ll   -at]]   [yik'k'ərəbillat]

          A.   lunch 3SG-bring:near -APL-3SGFO
          Lit. 'Aster, lunch let it be gotten near for her'

That Aster is a beneficiary (goal) topic is clear from the structure below where it occurs as an object of the preposition *lə* 'for' within the VP from which it is fronted to the left-end position of the clause.

(14)   (a)   [misa [lə-Aster] yi -t -k'rəb   -ll   -at]   [yik'k'ərəbillat]
                         lunch for-A.   3SG-PS-bring:near   -APL-3SGFO
                         Lit. 'Let lunch for Aster be gotten/brought near to her'
              (b)   [(lə)-Aster] [misa   yi -t -k'rəb   -ll   -at]   [yik'k'ərəbillat]
                          For-A   lunch 3SG-PS-bring:near -APL -3SGFO
                          For A. 'Let lunch be gotten near to her'

From the structures observed so far, it is possible to conclude that the WV prefers the impersonal passive whereas the SV favors the impersonal active voice.

Inflections

In the preceding section, derivations of some types of verbal stems peculiar to the WV have been considered. In this section, pronominal, nominal, and verbal inflections will be described.

Honorifics

Here, two types of honorific pronouns attested in the WV will be presented. The first type is based on the second person masculine singular, and the second on the third person masculine singular form. Both types are shown below:

(15)   Singular Honorific
                2SGM   Ɂant-ə   Ɂant-u   'you'
     Proximal 3SGM   Ɂirs-u   Ɂirs-wə [Ɂirso]   Lit. 'He/she'/'You'
               Distal   Ɂirsaččəu [Ɂirsaččəw] 'He/she over
                                                        there/before'

Consider now the following copular structures:

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[8] Some claim that such affixes are clitics (cf. Kramer,) contra Baye (1996) who argues that these are inflectional pronominal object agreement affixes.

(16)   (a)   Ɂant-ə[9]   nə-h   Ɂant-u   nə-h-u
                    you-3SGM   be-2SGM   you2-PL   be-2-PL
                    Lit. 'It is you'   Lit. 'It is you (Hon.)'

          (b)   Ɂɨrs-u   nə-u [nəw]   Ɂɨrs-o [Ɂɨrso]   nə- wə(t) [not]
                    he-3SGM   be-3SGM   he-HON.   be- HON.
                    'It is he'   'It is you' HON.

          (c)   Ɂɨrs-aččəu   nə-aččəu [naččəw]
                    he-PL (HON.)   be-PL (HON.)
                        'It is he (HON.)'

In the SV, Ɂɨrs-wə [Ɂɨrso] serves as a second person honorific and *Ɂant-u* as a second person vocative
honorific only.
        Compare now the following imperatives:

(17)   (a)   Ɂan-t-u   n-u
                    you-2-PL   come-PL   'You HON. come'

          (b)   Ɂɨrs-wə [Ɂɨrso]   yɨ-mt'-u
                    he-Hon.   3-come-PL   Lit. 'You (3rd person) come'

The form *Ɂant-u* is a second person honorific pronoun directly referring to the addressee whereas *Ɂɨrs-
wə* [Ɂɨrso] is a third-person honorific pronoun referring to an indirect second person honorific addressee
in a context of discourse where both addressees are physically or psychologically present (Hoben,1976).
In the SV, only Ɂɨrs-wə [Ɂɨrso] is used for a direct second person honorific addressee. Hence, the contrast
between the forms of the verbs in the following structures:

(18)   (a)   Ɂan-t-u   n-u
                    You-2-PL   come-PL   'You HON. come'

          (b)   Ɂɨrs-wə [Ɂɨrso]   yɨ-mt'-u
                    he-Hon.   3-come-PL   'You HON. come'

In short, the WV uses *ant-u* and *Ɂɨrs-aččəw* for second and third person direct and indirect honorific
reference respectively, and Ɂɨrso for a third person direct honorific reference whereas the SV uses *ant-*

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[9] I assume -ə to be a third-person marker referring to a phonetically null-head noun for which the pronoun
   serves as a specifier in phrases like the following where the head noun is overt and the pronoun agrees with it
   in person:
(a)   Ɂant-ə   liğ   you-
   3SGM   child (boy)
(b)   Ɂant-i   >   [anči]   liğ
                     you-3SGF   child (girl)
The pronominal specifiers agree in person in (a) and in gender in (b) with the head noun *liğ* 'child' (cf Baye,
   forthcoming for details).

u for a second person vocative honorific reference and Ɂɨrso for a second person non-vocative honorific reference[10].

Nominal Affixes

In the general literature on Amharic number, (Leslau, 1995; Kramer, 2009) the specific plural marker is /-oč/, attested in the SV. In the WV, it occurs as [-oy], with the alveo-palatal affricate /č/ weakened to [y] in word-final context (Baye, 2016) as in the following examples

(19)

		WV	SV	
bəg	'sheep'	bəg-oy	bəg-oč	'sheep'
səw	'man'	səw-oy	səw-oč	men/persons'
bəre	'ox'	bəre-oy [bəroy]	bər-oč	'oxen'
t'ɨǧǧa	'calf'	t'ɨǧǧa-oy [t'ɨǧǧoy]	t'ɨǧǧa-oč [t'ɨǧǧ-oč]	'calves'

This is in simple plural; in partitive genitives, the *suffix - ačč* is used with the cardinal numeral *and* 'one' or with its ordinal counterpart *andəňňa* 'first' in the SV whereas in the WV the suffix is attached to a non-specific form *andač* 'any'.

(20)

		SV	WV
1PL	*and-ačč-in*	and-əňňa- *ačč-in*	*andač-ačč-in*
	one-of-1PL	one-ord-of-1PL	one-any-of-1PL
	'one of us'	'the first of us'	'any one of us'
2PL	and-*ačč-hu*	and- əňňa -*ačč-hu*	*andač-ačč-hu*
	one-of-2PL	one-ord-of-2PL	*one-any-of-2PL*
	'one of you'	*'the first of you*	*'any one of you'*
	and-*ačč-əu*	' and- əňňa -*ačč-əu*	*andač-ačč- əu*
3PL	one-of-3PL	one-ord -of -3PL	one-any-of-3PL
	'one of them'	'the first of them'	'any one of them'

The ordinal partitive refers to any first mentioned or noticed member of a definite group of people. In the WV, the base is anda*č,* 'any' derived from the indefinite *and* 'one'/ 'some' with the suffix –a*č, (see*

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[10] Communication problems may arise from the use of Ɂɨrso, which has an indirect reference to a second person in the WV and to a third person in the SV. Consider the following question about a certain person, X, and the response.
Question: SV How is X doing health wise?
Response: WV Ɂɨrso-mma   mot-u
                            he -TOP   die:PF-PL (HON.) '   'As for X, he (HON) died.
 For the SV speaker, the reading of this response is 'you died' contrary to the expected reading 'he died'. The problem would not arise if the WV respondent used Ɂɨrsaččəw, which is the form for a third person distal honorific reference, instead of Ɂɨrso, which, for the SV speaker, refers to an (indirect) second person addressee, like the questioner.

below) which I assume to be a negative operator and is different from the partitive plural marker *-ačč,* which occurs in genitives like in (a) and its paraphrase in (b) below:

(21)   (a)   liğ-oč-*ačč -in*
                             child-PL-PART-1PL
                             'children of us/ours'

                  (b)   yə -iňňa yə- iyyə and and -ačč-in   liğ-oč > [y]
                             Of-we   of-each one one- PART-1PL child-PL
                              Lit.   'Children of each each one of we'
                             'children of each one of us/ours'

The above is about forms of nominal affixes for general, and partitive plural number. In what follows, some inflectional affixations of verbs will be presented.

Verbal Affixes

One form of verbal inflection is the third person feminine marker /-əč/ (Leslau 1995, Harmann 1980, Baye 2016), which occurs as /-əy/ in word-final or intervocalic position in the WV as in paradigms like the following:

(22)   WV   SV
                  səbbər-əy   'she broke'   səbbər- əč
                  mət'a-əy [mət't'ay]   'she came'   mət't'a- əč   [mət't'ač]
                  gəbba-əy [gəbbay   'she entered'   gəbba- əč   [gəbbač]
                  ʔazzən- əy   'she got sad'   ʔazzən- əč
                  tə-kəzz-əy   'she got melancholic' tə-kəzz- əč

These are perfective forms where the suffix -əy refers to a third person feminine subject. When an object marker is attached to the stem, the paradigm looks like the following:

(23)   WV   SV
                  səbbər-əy-u> [w]   'she broke it/him'   səbbər- əči-u >[w]
                  sət't'-əy-u > [w]   'she gave it/him'   sət't'-əči-u >[w]
                  wəssəd- əy-u > [w]   'she took it/him'   wəssəd-əči-u> [w]

This is in simple transitive; in relative transitive verbs, the subject suffix can be followed by a diminutive marker and a definite suffix in that order, in the WV, as in the example in (a), but not in (a') in the SV, where the diminutive marker is excluded.

(24)   WV   (a)   yə-səbbər -əy -it -u   SV (a')   yə-səbbər -əči -u >[w]
                       RM-break:PF-3SGF-DIM-DEF   RM-break:PF-3SGF-DEF
                       'The little one who broke…'   'The one who broke…'

       (b)   yə-mət't'   -u -t[11]   -u   (b')   yə-mət't'   -u -t
                  RM-come:PF-3PL DEF- one   RM-come:PF-3PL -DEF
                  'The ones who came…'   'Those who came…'

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[11] The definite marker –u changes to –t after a back vowel.

In (a), the relative verb stem is followed by the subject suffix, the diminutive, and the definite marker in that order. The occurrence of the diminutive marker depends on the presence of the definite marker -u as in (a), but not vice versa as in (a'). In (b), the diminutive is missing because it is not allowed in the context of a plural marker. The ordering of the affixes in (b) is thus: subject - definiteness - pronominal affix –u, which refers to a null plural head noun, which the relative clause modifies. When the head noun is overt, the structure 24(b) looks like the following:

(25)   WV   (a)   [[yə-mət't'   -u   -t -u]   lɨǧ-oy]
                                         RM-come:PF-3PL-DEF-ones   child-PL
                                         'The children the ones (that) came'

               SV   (b)   [[yə-mət't'   -u   -t]   lɨǧ-oč]
                                         RM-come:PF-3PL-DEF   child-PL
                                         'The children who came'

The subject agreement suffix is obligatory whereas the definite marker and the pronominal object affix (-u) which refers to the head noun, are optional in both varieties.

In ditransitives, the subject affix is followed by the indirect object marker; hence, the following:

(26)   sɨt' **-i** [sɨc'**i**]   (- **ňň**)   [sɨč'ɨňň]
               give-2SGF   -1SGO
                'You give me'

The verb *sɨt'*- 'give' is followed by the subject suffix -i '2SGF' and the first person (indirect) object affix - **ňň**. Whereas this is the general morpheme ordering in the language, the verb in the WV allows both the indirect and the direct object affixes in that order as in the following example:

(27)   t'ɨǧǧa –it -u -n   sɨt' -i   -ňň   **-at**   [sɨč'ɨňňat]
               Calf -DIM-DEF-ACC   give-2SGF -1SGO   -3SGFO
                Lit. 'You give the calf me'   'You give the calf to me'

Such structures are polite imperative/request forms used by a speaker addressing a second person hearer so that he gives a small object like a calf to him (the speaker) to own it because the object is to his (speaker's) liking. The object noun in the above example is feminine, diminutive, and adorable, from which one may predict the same verb to show a direct object affix that refers to a noun whose referent is masculine and augmentative to be excluded:

(28)   ? t'əbənǧa-u-n   sɨt' -ə   -ňň   **-əu**   [sɨtəňňəw]
               gun-DEF-ACC   give-3SGM -1SGO   -3SGMO
               (You) give me the gun'

Such structures would be acceptable if the indirect object suffix -əu '3SGMO' were not to appear.

The passive counterparts of the above structures show a theme and a goal subject and that the verb carries only the indirect object affix as in 29(a).

(29) WV   (a)   t'ɨǧǧa –it -u   lə-ʔine   tə-sət't' -əy -ňň   [təsət't'əyɨňň]
                        calf -DIM-DEF   to I   PS-give:PF-3SGF-1SGO
                        'The (baby) calf was given to me'

              (b)   ɨne t'ɨǧǧa -it -u -n[12]   tə-sət't'-əhu
                        I   calf -DIM-DEF-FOC   PS-give:PF-1SG
                        'I was given the (baby) calf'

The above was by way of showing nominal and verbal inflections that are characteristic of the WV. In what follows, I present some phrasal categories which also seem to be unique to the variety.

Phrases

In this section, some nominal, verbal, and prepositional phrases are described.

Noun Phrase

The noun phrase to be considered here has the generic noun *nəgər* 'thing' as its head, and the (in)definite numeral quantifier *and* 'one, some, any' as a specifier whose scope ranges over any one member of a set of objects represented by the head noun as in the following example.

(30) WV/SV   (a)   and   nəgər
                  {one, some, any}   thing
       WV   (b)   and-ač > ([y])   nəgər
                            one-NEG   thing

In (a), the noun *nəgər* refers to any one thing or some specific thing of an open set of objects or events as in the following imperative structures where the head noun nəgər 'thing' refers to any one of a set of purchasable things one is ordered or requested to buy.

(31) (a)   [and nəgər] gɨza
                one thing buy:2SGM
                '(You) buy one/ any/some/ thing of a set.'
       (b)   * and- ač >[y] nəgər   gɨza
                one-NEG   thing   buy
                '(You) not {one/any/some} thing buy.' / 'You buy not anything.'

In the direct imperative structure in (a), *and* 'one' suggests that there are a set of objects for sale from which one can buy any one member. In (b), *and-ač*, which is a derivative of *and* 'one', serves as an indefinite negative quantifier that picks no one member of the set of the available objects. The negative reading of the quantifier *and-ač* comes from the suffix – *ač,* which corresponds to the verbal negative operator *al-* in VP structures like (32) below:

(32)   and- ač >[y] nəgər   ɨndə al- -t-   gəza
           one-NEG   thing   comp. NEG -2SGM-buy:IMPF
           'That you do not buy not {one/some} thing of a set'

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[12] I assume that -n is a focus marker here; it cannot be an accusative case marker since the position is not where an accusative case is assigned given the verb is passive.

The numeral quantifier *and 'one, some or any' can be* followed by any noun, whereas its negative counterpart *anday,* can be followed by only the noun *nəgər* 'thing', which represents an object that has a negative value. Compare the following:

(33)   (a)   and [t'ɨru nəgər]
                      any one good thing
           (b)   *and-ay   [t'ɨru   nəgər]
                      one -NEG   good thing   'Not any one good thing'
           (c)   and-ay   [mə t'fo nəgər]
                      any-NEG bad   thing   'Any one bad thing'

From these examples, one can conjecture that *nəgər* 'thing' which represents an object or event, call it, X that has a [±] feature of some semantic/pragmatic value, which determines the choice of the quantifiers *and* or *anda*č > [*y*]. The WV opts for the latter. Compare the following VPS:

(34)   (a) SV   Kasa [and nəgər hon   -o   -al]
                      K.   one thing   happen-3SGM-PRS
                      K.   something has become of him'

           (b)   WV   Kasa and-ay   nəgər   hon -o   -al
                      K.   one-NEG thing   happen-3SGM-PRS
                      Lit. 'K. any one (bad) thing has become of him'

Both structures show that Kasa has gone through some bad (negative) experience, which triggers him to show some strange negative behavior.

(35)   WV   Kasa [ras -u   -n[13]   ammo   -t   -al]
                 K.   Head-3SGM-LOC   get:sick:PF-3SGM -PRS
                 Lit. 'K. his head   has gotten sick'   'K. has had a headache'

 The quantifier phrase *and-ay nəgər* (X), where X refers to the unpleasant experience of having a headache, which is the cause of his (Kasa's) strange behavior. If he shows an unusually pleasant behavior, resulting from a pay rise, for example, both the WV and the SV would use the phrase *and nəgər* 'something'(X) in structures like the following:

(36)   Kasa and   nəgər   ag-ňt   -o   -al   [agɨňtʷal]
                 K.   One/some/ thing   find/get:COMPL -   3SGM
                 'K. has gotten something'

In this structure, *and nəgər (X)*, where *X,* refers to an event of 'pay rise', which is positive in value, and hence leads to K.'s showing a pleasant behavior. From this, one can conclude that the WV uses *anday nəgər* (X) for something negative in value whereas the SV uses *and nəgər* (X) for something which is positive in value and that this is determined by context, structural, or contextual (pragmatic).

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[13] I take -n to be a focus marker of a locative noun. The structure has /ras -u lay/ 'on his head' as a paraphrase, referring to the locus of the pain.

Prepositional Phrases

Another area of difference between the two varieties relates to the choice of prepositional phrases of adverbial functions in motion events. Such functions include the source and goal of motion, which is expressed by the prepositions *kə* 'from' and *wədə 'to/ toward'*) as in the following examples:

(37)   (a)   Kasa kə- gondər wədə-Addis Ababa   mət't' -a
                     K.   From-G   to- A.A   come:PF-3SGM
                     'K. came to A.A. from Gondər'
         (b)   Kasa wədə gəbəya hed   -ə
                     K.   to   market go: PF -3SGM
                     'K. went to market'

In these examples, the source and the goal prepositions, *kə* 'from' and *wədə* 'to' take specific and indefinite nouns of spatial location as a complement. When the goal of the motion event is a specific and/or definite figure, possessed by the self-agent mover, with the noun that refers to the ground elided as in the following:

 (38) (a) WV   Kasa   [kə-ʔabbat-u/ʔɨnnat-u/ ʔɨht-u]   (bet/hagər...)
                     K.   from-father-3SGMPOS/mother-3OSGMPOS   house /country
                              hed-o-al
                              go:CMPL-3SGM-PRS
                     Lit. K. went to his father/mother/sister house'

        (b) SV   Kasa   [**wədə** abbat-u ....]   hed   -o   -al
                     K.   to father-3SGMPOS   go:CMPL-3SGM-PRS
                     'K. went to his father'

The WV uses *kə*, supposedly a source preposition according to the literature, with nouns that are [+DEF}. The structure in (a) would be out (excluded) if *kə,* but not *wədə* 'to' were to occur with a locative noun, which is [-DEF] as in the following:

(39)   WV   Kasa **wədə** / ***kə** sɨra   hed   -o   -al
                       K.   to / from   work   go:CMPL-3SGM-PRS
                        'K. has gone to work'

Both varieties use **wədə** 'to' with indefinite goal nouns; thus, differing only in the use of **kə** which the WV selects only when the complement noun is [+DEF]. In other words, the WV uses *wədə* 'to' or 'towards' with nouns that are [± DEF], and **kə** with nouns that are only [+DEF]. That this is case, gets support from the following:

(40)   WV (a)   Kasa (wədə) sɨra(-u)   hed-   o   -al
                               K.   (to)   work-DEF go:CMPL-3SGM -PRS
                               K. has gone to the /his work'
                     (b)   Kasa kə -sɨra-u   hed   -o   -al
                               K.   from-work-DEF   go:CMPL-3SGM-PRS
                               'K. has gone to the work'
                     (c)   *Kasa   kə-sɨra   hed   -o   -al
                               K.   from work   go: CMPL-3SGM- PRS
                               'K. has gone work'

(40c) is marked because the complement noun is [-DEF], a context from which *kə* is excluded.

Manner Adverbs

Amharic does not have a productive system that derives lexical adverbs of manner. The few adverbs available are derived from wh-words and adjectives like the following:

(41) WV: mɨn-ɨňňa   SV: ɨndet   < ɨndə yet

                what-like   'how'   how   like-where

                kɨfu-ɨňňa   bət'am 'seriously'

                cruel-like   'severely'

                ǧil-ɨňňa

                awkward-like 'awkwardly'

                gɨm- ɨňňa

                stink-like   'putridly like'

The WV forms are based on the question words *mɨn* 'what' and *yet* 'where' and on the adjectives *kɨfu* 'cruel', *ǧil* 'fool' and *gɨm* 'stink. Such derived forms are either unknown or rarely used outside the region. Consider the following structures of the manner of events or states:

(42) WV   (a)   mɨnɨňňa   t'əgb -o   -al   [t'əgbʷal]

                      how   haughty-3SGM-PRS

                      'How haughty (he) having become!'/ 'How haughty he has become'

      (b)   mɨn-ɨňňa hon   -o   -al

                      what-like having:become-3SGM-PRS

                      Lit. 'How he having become!' 'How has he become…'

Such structures are used about one who shows a haughty behavior towards others who are admittedly superior to him. In such a context of differential power relations, the SV uses *ɨndet lit.* 'like where', to mean ' how', whereas the WV uses mɨnɨňňa 'lit. 'like what' to show such differential status.

Tense Auxiliaries

There are two existential verbs in the language that serve as expression of the two tenses, past and non-past. These are *all-* 'there is' and *nəbbər* 'there was', both reduced from the existential verbs *allə* 'there is' and *nəbbərə* 'there was'. In the WV, the past tense is expressed by *k'oyyə* 'stayed/waited/existed' often reduced to [k'o'ə] as in the following examples:

(43) WV/SV (a)   Ɂɨ-səbr-   all   - hu [alləhu]

                  1SG-break: IMPF-AUX:PRS   -1SG

                  'I break/will break'

      WV   (b)   Ɂɨ-səbr-   k'oyyə   /k'oɁə

                  1SG-break:IMPF   stay:PF

                  'I was breaking/used to break'

      (c)   səbrr   -e   [səbɨrre]   k'oyyə / k'oɁə

                  break:CMPL-1SG.GEN   wait/stay:PF

                  Lit. 'I having broken stayed'/ 'I was breaking '

In (b) and (c), the SV uses the form *nəbbər* 'was' and not *k'oyyə* for the past tense. For the non-past, both varieties use –*all,* which inflects for person, number, or gender in agreement with a subject as in example (a). *k'oyyə* does not inflect for person, number or gender when it serves as an expression of tense; it shows such inflections when it occurs as a main predicate in structures like the following:

(44)   (a)   ʔine   tɨnant   ɨzzih   k'oyyə -hu
                  I   yesterday   here   stay:PF-1SG
                  'I stayed/waited here yesterday'
        (b)   ʔantə tɨnant   ɨzzih   k'oyyə -h
                  you   yesterday here   stay:PF-2SGM
                   'You stayed/waited here yesterday

In such contexts, the predicates are followed by the tense auxiliaries -*all* for the non-past, and *nəbbər* for the past as in the following:

(45)   (a)   ʔ-k'oyy-*all*   -*əhu*   [ʔik'oyy*alləhu]*
                  1SG-stay-AUX:PRS-1SG   'I stay'/'will stay'
        b)   ʔ-k'oyy [ʔik'oyy] *nəbbər*
                  1SG-stay:IMPF   be:PST   'I used to stay'/ I was staying'

Summary

The purpose of this study was to describe the morpho-syntactic features of the Wəllo variety of Amharic. The database is textual and introspective and the method is a general formal description with little or no theoretical presupposition. The categories described are aspect, voice, and tense in verbs, and number, gender, definiteness, and honorificity in nouns and pronouns. As regards aspect, verbs are divided into type A, B, and C in general, based on their aspectual forms. Type A-verbs geminate their penult radical in the perfective but type B verbs geminate the same radical in both the perfective and imperfective aspects. The WV deviates from this general pattern by deriving type B verbs from roots which should, otherwise, lead to type A-verbs like *k'ət'r* in the SV, and *k'ət't'ir,* 'employ' in the WV. The feature of gemination cuts across categories such as voice and mood but this variation is neutralized in the causative where both varieties geminate the penult radical as in *as- k'ət't'ir* 'make/cause employ'. The past tense is indicated by the existential verb k'oyyə occurring with a main verb in the completive aspect as in: *k'ət't'iro k'oyyə* (WV) and *k'ətro nəbbər* (SV) 'he had employed'. Both k'oyyə and *nəbbər* do not show agreement inflections as auxiliaries, but they do show such inflections when they occur as main predicates where, for example, the third person feminine suffix comes as[-əy] in word-final or inter-vocalic position in the WV as in *nəbbər - əy* or *k'oyy- əy* 'she was'. The same holds for number agreement in nouns where the regular plural marker -oč is weakened to [-oy] in the WV as in səw-oy 'men' and in indefinite negative quantifiers as in *and-ay* <-ačč 'not anyone'.

In pronominals, the WV makes a three-way distinction for honorificity. The first is ʔantu which is used when an addressee is a second person, and the speech act is directive. The second is *ʔɨrsəwo* [ʔɨrso] which is used when the addressee is a second person and the speech act is a (pleading) request. The third is *ʔɨrsaččəw* which is employed when the addressee is a distal third person to the addresser. This contrasts with the SV which makes only a two-way distinction with only *ʔantu* and *ʔɨrsəwo (ʔɨrso)* used for second and third person addressees in a speech act which is directive and pleading, respectively.

Concerning case marking, ditransitive verbs in the WV show both a direct object and indirect object pronominal affixes, contrary to the SV where such verbs show affixes for only indirect objects. In other words, the verb in the WV carries three affixes instead of two. This is also the case with relative transitive verbs which in the WV allow three suffixes in the order of subject, diminutive and definite marking as in yə-səbbər-**əy-it-u** 'the little one that broke it' **or** yə-səbbər-**ku-t-u lit.** 'The I one who

broke it' whereas the SV allows only subject and definite marking suffixes. Such facts indicate the degree of morphological complexity the WV shows.

The study has also shown variations in the choice of prepositional phrases of adverbial functions of source and goal of motion. The WV uses the source preposition **kə** with a figure-ground that is definite, whereas the SV prefers the preposition **wədə** 'to/towards' for either a definite or indefinite figure-ground. The variation extends to adverbs of manner, for which, the WV has forms that are derived from the question word *mɨn* 'what', and a few substantives like ǧɨl 'fool - a possibility not well attested in the SV where there is a compound form reduced from the wh-word *yet* 'where'. and from the comparative preposition, ɨndə 'like/as' as in ɨndə + yet > [ɨndʸet] 'like what'/ 'how'. Lexicalization of phrases through reduction and restructuring of constituents of prepositional phrases seems to be a common phenomenon in the WV, an area which I leave for future comparative description.

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