

Hiob Ludolf: The Man of Society and the Poet

We all know *Hiob Ludolf* (1624-1704) as the founder of Ethiopian studies in Germany, as an outstanding scholarly person, conversant with the field of diplomacy and well-versed in each domain by which a man of society was recognized. Tasks which required special diplomatic skill and knowledge were put in his hands¹. The European intellectual élite used to get in touch with him as exemplified by the preserved correspondence². *Hiob Ludolf's* academic work and his abilities are well-known, less his private life and amicable social relations with his contemporaries.

Therefore it seems advisable to give a short but by no means complete report on the intellectual and social scenery of that epoch. In baroque period the society had keen interest in strange and exotic things. As precursor *Rudolf II* (1552-1612) of Prag for instance made vigorous attempts at immense expenses to obtain an amply provided collection even supplied with abstruse objects. His collection though ransacked in the Thirty Year's War is still fabulous and many of the later rulers were jealously emulating him³. This spirit of time caused a ruler like the duke *Ernst of Saxon-Gotha-Altenburg* — apart from academic interest — to invite the Ethiopian *Gregorios* to stay at his court, which was initiated by *Ludolf*⁴. *Ludolf's* extraordinary interest in Ethiopia — up to that time there existed only diffuse ideas of a land of prester John — places him in a particular order within the 17th- and 18th-centuries's scholars.

A characteristic feature of that era has been extensive travelling, of course also in foreign countries. Back at home the exchange of ideas and the contact was maintained by means of lively correspondence. Besides imparting knowledge and exchange of thoughts which during student days, the so-called

1 FlemHLud I-II. *Ernst Hammerschmidt*, War Hiob Ludolf Reichshofrat? = Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte 104 (1987) 268-76. *Eike Haberland*, Hiob Ludolf, Father of Ethiopian Studies in Europe = Proceedings of the Third International Conference of Ethiopian Studies Addis Ababa 1966 (Addis Ababā 1969) 131-36.

2 FlemHLud I 558-60.

3 See: Das Kunstkammerinventar Kaiser Rudolfs II., 1607-1622. *Rotraud Bauer - Herbert Haupt* (Ed.) = Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien. Vol. 72 (1976) XII-XV, XXX f. and XXXIII f. *R. J. W. Evans*, Rudolf II. Ohnmacht und Einsamkeit (Graz 1980) 123-30.

4 UhlTheol A-B.

peregrinatio academica, was the main purpose there was another reason for travelling: the lack of public libraries. At that time scholars and men of science had to acquire manuscripts and books by their own expenditure and effort which in case of Greek, Latin, Arabic, Hebrew or Ethiopic texts meant for them to copy the manuscript by themselves. Those who could afford it employed copyists, who usually were their students and had been accommodated at the scholar's household⁵. The students also considered it as their duty to discover new sources of acquiring books or manuscripts, as a notice in a letter written by *Gabriel Reussel* (1651-84) to *Ludolf* which mentions a public auction may demonstrate⁶.

Several scribes were copying for *Ludolf*, among these was the well-known *Christoph Schlichting*⁷ or the notorious *Johann Michael Wansleben* (1635-79), who is said to have been: "Ein ungerathener Discipul des Herrn Ludolffs aus Erfurt"⁸. And even his son *Christian* was copying for him as proved by a remark in a manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale⁹. Less-known is *Gabriel Reussel* (see below).

For getting access to a great number of manuscripts and published books it was necessary for private collectors to give willingly way to each interested person. Famous and highly frequented had been the library of *Zacharias Konrad von Uffenbach* (1683-1734)¹⁰ or the one belonging to the theologian *Valentin Eduard Löscher* (1673-1749) whose library counted more than 50 000 volumes¹¹. Another characteristic attitude of that period had been composing poems, so-called Gelegenheitsgedichte¹² which were written on occasions of marriage, graduation, decease etc. Poetry had already been a separate subject in university curricula during Middle Ages because poetry was considered to

5 UhlTheol A 35. Cf. for example: *Gabriel Wilhelm Goette*, Das jetzt-lebende gelehrte Europa (Braunschweig 1735) 413: "...daß Hr. Ludolf sich deswegen glücklich schätzte, und nichts mehr wünschte, als ihn [i.e. *Johann Heinrich Michaelis* (1668-1738)] Lebenslang an statt seines Sohnes bey sich zu behalten".

6 = h^o599 StuUB Frankfurt: ...licitum est per Ampliss(ium) Senatam Accademicum auctionem librorum compactorum hic loci facere. Adducebat Candatissimus Vir civem Norimbergensem qui hasta libros compactos....

7 UhlTheol A 76, Anm. 54.

8 *Johannes Heinrich Michaelis* (Ed.), Sonderbarer Lebenslauff Herrn Peter Heylings aus Lübec und dessen Reise nach Ethiopien (Halle 1724) 99. See also UhlTheol A 42, Anm. 28; FlemHLud I 548 f.

9 See for example: Éth 133 = *Henri Zotenberg*, Catalogue des manuscrits éthiopiens (gheez et amharique) de la Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris 1877) 267a-b (nr. 169).

10 *Johann Georg Hermann*, Leben Herrn Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach (1753) 78-94, 172-74.

11 *Emil Reicke*, Der Gelehrte in der deutschen Vergangenheit (Reprint from the edition: 1924) 136 and FlemHLud I 554 f.: *Ludolf* was not allowed to take a copy of the mss. belonging to the library of the 'Chancélier Séguier'.

12 *Gunter E. Grimm*, Literatur und Gelehrtentum in Deutschland = Studien zur deutschen Literatur vol. 75 (1983) 273-313.

be learnable. Composing verses on the occasion of marriage etc. gave a poorly payed schoolmaster the chance to improve his modest livelihood¹³. Therefore in baroque period when odd and exotic things were highly appreciated, composing in Arabic or Hebrew language for instance expresses high honour and mark of respect always depending on the scholarship and knowledge of the author or addressee. Exchanging poems on these occasions was part of a social ritual and *Ludolf* had been familiar with this type of manner as receiver as well as sender — as we will see later.

A at a first glimpse trivial notice in Zedler's *Universallexikon* illustrates *Ludolf* as man with chivalrous manners. This encyclopedia in 64 volumes and 4 supplements in which each personality of rank and importance up to the year 1750 is registered, devotes *Ludolf* an article of 6 columns¹⁴. This notice reports for the year 1673: "...besuchte er zu Hamburg den bekannten Esdra Ezardi und wolte zu Altona mit der Mademoiselle Schurmann sprechen, die ihn aber nicht für sich ließ"¹⁵. *Anna Maria Schurmann* (1607-78) has been one of the few 17th-centuries' erudite women. She dedicated her entire life to scholarship; still a child she had to promise her father never to get married. Her interest in oriental languages and her renown in scholarly circles were the reason for the acquaintance with *Ludolf* when he passed on his way to Utrecht in 1647. She stood in correspondence with a great number of leading figures of that epoch and they complimented her poems even in Arabic and Hebrew¹⁶. The reason why she did not want to see *Ludolf* again in 1673 could have been quite trivial; on the other hand she possibly wanted to avoid any disturbance of her religious ardour which in later years was inducing her life and led her to Altona¹⁷. Anyway *Zedler* and *Ludolf's* biographer *Christian Juncker* considered the episode noteworthy¹⁸.

This event is an evidence that *Ludolf* was not only engaged in scientific work but also had the leisure to keep social intercourse with his contemporaries. In addition to that he was very interested in his students' welfare and success.

13 Reicke, *Gelehrte* ... 107.

14 *Johann Heinrich Zedler*, *Großes Vollständiges Universal-Lexikon* (Halle-Leipzig 1732-1750) vol. 18 (1738) 991-96.

15 See also below note 27.

16 Zedler vol. 18, 99. *FlemHLud* I 542.

17 *Barbara Becker-Cantarius*, *Die "gelehrte Frau" und die Institutionen und Organisationsformen der Gelehrsamkeit am Beispiel der Anna Maria van Schurmann (1607-1678) = Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung* vol. 14 (Wiesbaden 1987): *Res Publica Litteraria* II 559-76.

18 [*Christianus Juncker*.] *Commentarius de vita, scriptisque ac meritis illustris viri Iobi Ludolfi, consilarii quondam Serenissimorum Saxoniae Ducum intimi, viri per eruditum orbem celeberrimi, auctore Christiano Junckero*, *Dresd. Historiographo Ducali Saxo-Hennebergico*, in appendice adjectae sunt tum epistolae aliquot clarorum virorum, tum etiam specimen linguae Hottentotticae nunquam alias ad notitiam Germanorum perlatae (Lipsiae et Francofurti 1710) 94f.

One of his students had been the already mentioned *Gabriel Reussel* (1651-84)¹⁹ originating from Mecklenburg, who was a student for oriental languages at the Universities of Jena and Leipzig and later on continued his studies at the faculty of medicine. Temporarily he seemed to be employed with *Ludolf* as copyist as it can be seen from a marginal note written by *Ludolf* himself in Cod.orient.276 (Hamburg)²⁰: “Ista est manus Gabrielis Reusselii, amanuensis mei et studiosi Linguae Aethiopicae, postea Candidati Medicinae, Lipsiae defuncti”. In the “Ludolf-Nachlaß” in Frankfurt there are six letters directed to *Ludolf*²¹, at that time residing at the court in Altenburg. *Reussel* wrote them during his stay in Jena and they are dated from october 1676 till march 1678. In that same year 1678 *Ludolf* retired from his duties at the court and moved to Frankfurt, according to *Zedler*²²: “welche Stadt ihm der Correspondenz und anderer Ursachen wegen am bequemsten schiene ...”. Three letters are written in German the other ones in Latin; *Reussel* signed the first two letters with either “Gabriel Reusselius, Philos.(ophiae) et LL. (= linguarum) orient.(alium) stud.(iosus)” or “jederzeit gehorsamster Diener Gabriel Reusselius”. Starting with the letter which is dated “26.majus 1677” he signed with M. (= Magister) Gabriel Reusselius, that means he must have achieved the grade of Magister in the time between the beginning of march and may 1677. In this letter which *Reussel* begins with سلام عليك he expresses his gratitude for “Carmen Aethiopicum a Te elaboratum atqu(e) mihi transmissum ... tibi gratias ago” and sends in return a poem in Hebrew addressed to אדוני ואלופי איוב לודאלפי²³. *Ludolf*’s poem is to be found in Cod.orient. 272 (fol. 21v) of the Hamburg library with a Latin version and in MS. Eb. 415 (fol. 162r) of the Sächsische Landesbibliothek Dresden which offers only the Ge’ez text²⁴. *Ludolf* composed on the occasion of the Magister five verses for *Reussel* each ending with the forth vowel order

19 Zedler vol. 31, 968. Jöcher 2034.

20 Cf. BroHam 185: Cod.orient.276.

21 = h^o599-604: StuUB Frankfurt.

22 Zedler vol. 18, 995 and FlemHLud I 551.

23 = h^o601: StuUB Frankfurt. See BroHam 120 (nr. 231): *Reussel* is also the author of a poem in Syriac. The other letters are concerned with the purchase of books (already referred to before) or with disputations of Hebraica: for example N^o 604 reports on the discussion with *Johann Frischmuth* (1619-87) from Jena (for his personal dates see Zedler vol. 8, 2139) and to this letter *Reussel* added the Hebrew text which they were discussing.

24 Cf. BroHam 179: fol. 21v. Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland vol. XX 6 (being prepared). There is another poem for the decease of *Samuel Morland*’s wife. This poem is carved on her tombstone in Westminster (*Edward Ullendorff* is working on this subject). These manuscripts are copies, by whom they were written can’t be said. It seems that Cod.orient.272 is older, Eb 415 could be done by a 18th-centuries-scribe.

ā²⁵. He uses only simple words and constructions but refers to already known *Salām* and poetry, mainly the *Argānona weddāsē*.

Gabrieli Reusselio, quondam ejus amanuensi cum magister crearetur hoc pacto J. Ludolfus gratulatus ē [= est]

ሰላም : ለከ : ሬውሰል : ምሉአ : ትምህርት : ወልቡና :
 ብእሲ : ጊር : [!] ጥቀ : ምሁር : በፍልስፍና :
 ሠናዩ : ግዕዝ : ወጽኖዩ : ሕሊና :
 ናሁ : ትትወከፍ : ዘይደሉ : ለከ : ምዝጋና :
 ዝውእቱ : በኅበ : መፍቀርያነ : ጥበብ : ክብር : ዘሊቅና " = "

Salve Reusseli (qui es) preditus [for: praeditus] doctrina et intelligentia^a
 Vir bonus, valde eruditus in Philosophia
 Bonus indole^b et sincerus animo^c
 Ecce accipis^d, quod te decet praemium^e
 Quod ē [= est] apud amatores sapientie [for: sapientiae] (i.-e. Philosophus)
 honor Magisterii^f.

[Those words in () are already put in () in the manuscript]

^a cf. ChR nr. 53 and 76. Also the *Salām* to the martyrs for the 19th Ḥamlē: ሰላም : ለከሙ : ምሉአነ : ጥበብ : ወሕሊና : ...

^b cf. LuLex 404.

^c cf. LuLex 436: lectionary for monday in the *Argānona weddāsē*.

^d cf. LuLex 321: *Argānona weddāsē*.

^e cf. LuLex 80: *Argānona weddāsē*.

^f cf. LuLex 11: Doctoralis dignitas.

A second poem also held in a simple style *Ludolf* composed for another student, i.e. *Laurentz Odhel* (1660-91) from Swedish origin. His father was engaged as professor for theology and oriental languages at the University of Uppsala (they are both registered in *Zedler's* *Universalexikon* but only with a short note)²⁶. *Odhel's* peregrinatio academica first led him to Hamburg to the already mentioned *Esra Ezardi* (1629-1708)²⁷, whose reputation as teacher for oriental languages (mainly Hebrew) was widespread and who gave most readily access to his library beeing a rich mine of oriental texts²⁸. *Odhel*

25 See for example: Ignazio Guidi, La raccolta di Qenē nel MS. d'Abbadie = RRAL 16 ser. V (1907) 529-69. Anton Schall, Zur äthiopischen Verskunst (Wiesbaden 1961). Marius Chaîne, La poésie chez les éthiopiens = Revue de l'Orient chrétien 22 (1920-21) 306-26, 401-25. Sylvain Grébaut, Note sur la poésie éthiopienne = Revue de l'Orient chrétien 14 (1909) 90-98.

26 Zedler vol. 25, 486 f. Jöcher 1022.

27 Georg Behrmann, Hamburgs Orientalisten (Hamburg 1902) 41-46. Zedler vol. 8, 278 f.

28 Behrmann 45; BroHam 182; FlemHLud I 564.

continued his peregrinatio academica to several German universities (according to Jöcher). And via France, Holland and England he in 1687 arrived at Gießen where he intended to graduate. He was still young for such academic honours as the average age at that time had been 35 years²⁹. In 1691 however he died in Frankfurt before completing his studies, and that may also explain the great sorrow which affected the scholarly world. He seemed to have been very talented and was everywhere warmly welcomed. The “Ludolf-Nachlaß” contains three letters in Latin written in the winter 1688-89 in Gießen, directed to *Ludolf* residing in Frankfurt³⁰ and a forth Latin letter dated from the year 1689, written in Frankfurt³¹ and addressed to *Johann Heinrich Maius* (1653-1719), professor for theology in Gießen³². *Odhel*’s letters are written with great care in contrast to *Reussel*’s letters which are sometimes nearly illegible and as it is remarked written hastily³³. Especially *Odhel*’s letters addressed to *Ludolf* witness the heartily contact. Besides the academic discussion he reports on personal events and when *Odhel*’s brother died by an accident³⁴ *Odhel* fell in deep depression. *Ludolf*’s compassion and sympathy is mentioned gratefully several times by *Odhel* in these letters. When *Odhel* died of consumption on april 3rd, 1691 it seemed that the scholars really were deploring his sudden death³⁵. On that event *Ludolf* composed the following poem in which he points at the bad health and his excellent character and attitude³⁶. This poem has also five verses each ending with the forth vowel order ā like the poem for *Reussel*.

In mortem Laurentii ODHELII Sueci, qui Francofurti Phthisi obiit.

በፍጻሜ ፡ አዕረፈ ፡ ብእሴ ፡ ጥበብ ፡ ወልቡና ፡
 ሐሚሞ ፡ ብዙኅ ፡ ጊዜ ፡ እንበለ ፡ ጥፃና ፡
 ለዝንቱ ፡ ጠቢብ ፡ ጥቀ ፡ ምሁር ፡ ለቴዎሎግና ፡
 ሠናየ ፡ ግእዝ ፡ ሀሩሀ ፡ ነፍስ ፡ ወሕሊና ፡
 እግዚአብሔር ፡ ወሀበ ፡ አካሊለ ፡ ምዝጋና ።

In Vollendung starb^a ein Mensch der Weisheit und Einsicht

Oftmals leidend ohne Heilung^b

Diesem in der Theologie^c sehr gelehrten Weisen

29 Reicke, Gelehrte 35.

30 = h°519-521: StuUB Frankfurt.

31 = Supp.ep.4°15, 237-238: SuUB Hamburg. I am very grateful to Dr. Eva Horváth of the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg for giving me the valuable hint to the letters belonging to the SuUB Hamburg which led to further discoveries.

32 Zedler vol. 19, 657-59. FlemHLud I 551.

33 Cf. h°602 or N°604: StuUB Frankfurt.

34 Cf. h°519 and h°520: StuUB Frankfurt.

35 Zedler vol. 25, 487.

36 = Eb 415 fol. 162r: Sächsische Landesbibliothek Dresden; only the Ge'ez text.

Von vornehmem Verhalten^d, auserwählt^e an Seele und Geisteshaltung
Hat Gott die Krone des Lohnes^f gegeben.

^a cf. LuLex 335: Argōnona weddāsē.

^b corrupt for: ጥፂኛ ; cf. DL 1244 f. and LuLex 423.

^c It should be noted that ቴውሎግያ is a construction analog to ፍልስፍና ; it is not registered in the dictionaries.

^d cf. LuLex 404.

^e corrupt for: ገሩየ (?) .

^f cf. LuLex 80.

The third poem³⁷ composed by *Ludolf* is devoted to *Heinrich Opitz's* (1642-1712)³⁸ graduation for doctor theologiae in june 1689. He also had been a student with interest in Hebrew and attended the lectures with *Esra Ezardi*. Later he became famous for his edition of the Old Testament in Hebrew³⁹. In his preserved letters dated from 1710 he recommends this edition several times⁴⁰. There is — for the purpose concerned in this paper — a more important letter written 1687 in Kiel addressed to *Maius* (later *Odhef's* teacher in Gießen) where he refers to the intended graduation and complains about the lack of means and the “scriptura desperata corruptionis”⁴¹. On occasion of his graduation *Ludolf* composed a poem consisting of two times five verses each ending with the first vowel order a. The poem has more complicated constructions as it can be seen despite the corrupt copy which we have in both manuscripts. But it is also a witness of how familiar *Ludolf* had been with some Ethiopic texts as demonstrated below.

Maxime Reverendo atq[ue] Excellentissimo Viro Domino HENRICO OPITIO
antehac lingg. Orient. et. Philol. S.Profess. P.[ublico.] cum Doctor Theologiae
crearetur et Prof. Publ. ei demandaret[ur] sic gratulabor mense Junico ao
1689. Kiloni in Holsatia

መገሉተ : ድርሰት :

ሰለም : ለከ : እግዚእ : አጲጽ : ጥቀ : ክቡር :

ብእሲ : ጌር : ምቅሕ : ወጸቢት : ምሁር :

አክሊለ : ቴውሎግያ : ምኑይ : ወጽጉይ : በእንተ : መጠንከ : በዐቢይ : ክብር :

37 Cod.orient.272 fol. 23v; cf. BroHam 179 and Eb 415 fol. 162r: Sächsische Landesbibliothek Dresden: both mss. the Ge'ez text; Cod.orient.272 with a Latin version.

38 Professoren und Dozenten der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel 1665 bis 1933 (Kiel 1934) 2 and 157. Jöcher 1080 f. Zedler vol. 25, 1652-55.

39 Jöcher 1081. Zedler vol. 25, 1654.

40 = Supp.ep.4^o44, 191, Supp.ep.4^o15, 239 f. Supp.ep.119, 281-284: SuUB Hamburg; especially: Supp.ep.4^o44, 191.

41 Cf. Supp.ep.4^o15, 239-240.

ዘአልዐሉክ : መድበለ : ማኅበር : ሣፁነ : ዘምሉእ : እምወርቅ : ወእ[ም]ብሩር :
እንዘ : ይትሚነዩ : ወለመርዐ : ክብርክ : ክብካብ : ይትገበር ። = ።

ሰላም : አነ : እብል : ለክ : መምህረነ :
ወእትሚኔይ : [!] አፈ : መንፈስን : [!]
ከመ : ናጠብብ : ዘልፈ : በትምህርትክ : አሚነ :
ጽሒፎሙ : ሐዋርያት : እንተ : ጎደጉ : ለነ :
ወብዙኃን : ለዘንቱ : ሊቅነ : ዘአምሳሉ : አእግዚአብሔር : ፈኖነ ። = ።

Carmen^a rhythmicum^b

Salve Excellentissime Domine Opiti

Vir nobilissime et Doctissime^c

Corona Theologia exoptata et florens^d. Ob dignitatem tuam^e cum honore
magno

Quem exaltarunt coetus Congregationis^f: Scrinium^g plenum auro et argento
Optantes^h et nuptiisⁱ honorum tuor[um] epulum apparantes^j.

Gratulor tibi doctori nostro

et spiritus sancti^l Gratiam opto^k

ut omnibus sapientia praeceptis doctrina tua optima [...]m

Qua Apostoli nobis scripta reli[n]querent

Et mu[l]tos doctori nostro similes Deus O.[ptime] M.[axime] nobis mitte.

^a corrupt for: ማኅሌት :

^b cf. LuLex 374.

^c The Latin version is very short. Moreover it seems that the copy is corrupt: ምቅሕ : for ምክሕ : [?]; cf. LuLex 74 and a poem for king Kalēb in: LuHist II c4 and ደቢት : , i.e. he is familiar with scholarship like a swimming fish the element of which is water.

^d cf. LuLex 448: Argānōna weddāsē.

^e cf. DL 221 f.: ... አልዐሉክ : መጠንዩ : ...

^f cf. DL 1101: መድበለ : ማኅበር :: Canticum Canticorum.

^g cf. DL 270 f. with reference to *Ludolf*.

^h cf. LuLex 71; DL 194.

ⁱ cf. LuLex 300: Argānōna weddāsē = Lea 'AU 150, l. 17. DL 301.

^j cf. Reicke, *Gelehrte* 35-37: This passage describes the at that time usual ritual which accompanied the act of graduation lasting several days and involving all the members of the university. Finally the candidate had to give an invitation for a banquet and because this was a very expensive affair only few and wealthy persons could afford it. This is what Ludolf expresses by ክብካብ : ይትገበር ።

^k corrupt for: ወእትሚኔይ :

^l cf. Eb 415, fol. 162r (= Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland XX 6; being prepared). *A. Dillmann*, *Codices Aethiopici* = *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum bibliotheca Bodleianae Oxoniensis VII* (Oxonii 1848) 32a: os mentis meae for: አፈ : ልቡናዩ : . Or it should be: እመንፈስ : . Anyway the copy seems to be defective.

^m cf. DL 1228. The Latin translation for ናጠብብ : < አጥበበ : is illegible; may be: that we always will get wisdom ...

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Allgemeine deutsche Biographie (reprint of the edition 1875: Berlin 1967).
BroHam	<i>Carl Brockelmann</i> , Katalog der orientalischen Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek zu Hamburg mit Ausschluß der hebräischen. Teil I = Katalog der Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek zu Hamburg. Band III. Orientalische Handschriften mit Ausschluß der Hebräischen (Hamburg 1908).
ChR	<i>Marius Chaîne</i> , Repertoire des Salam et Malke'e contenus dans les manuscrits éthiopiens des bibliothèques d'Europe = Revue de l'Orient chrétien (Paris) 18 (1913) 183-203, 337-57.
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