Sara Petrollino: A grammar of Hamar. A South Omotic language of Ethiopia. (Cushitic and Omotic Studies, 6). Köln: Rüdiger Köppe, 2016. 342pp. 69.80 EUR.

The book under review is the first attempt at a large-scale examination of the sound and grammatical systems of Hamar (a South Omotic language) and, as such, meets a dire need for detailed documentation and description within this most under-described corner of Afroasiatic (cf. Hayward 2000). The grammar is based primarily on ten months of fieldwork (spanning 2013 and 2014) and includes a corpus of 40 annotated texts as well as informal conversations and targeted elicitation (p.7). The scope of this review includes a catalog of contents and organization, a brief description of particularly interesting findings in Hamar, and strengths/weaknesses of the work.

The first chapter provides an overview of the language's geographical setting, variation across space, patterns of use. The author mentions previously published work (mainly wordlists, comparative work as well as substantial ethnographic and anthropological work by Ivo Strecker and Jean Lydall, among others) and unpublished work as well (sketches of morphology and phonology, mainly). The grammar's subsequent chapters include phonology and morphophonology (Chapter 2), nouns (Chapter 3), pronouns and pronominal clitics (Chapter 4), minor word classes (Chapter 5), verbs (Chapter 6), basic syntax (Chapter 7), noun phrases (Chapter 8), simple clauses (Chapter 9), complex clauses (Chapter 10), interrogative clauses (Chapter 11), negative clauses (Chapter 12), classification (Chapter 13). Chapters are followed by three appendices: texts (Appendix A), Hamar-English lexicon (Appendix B), and English-Hamar lexicon (Appendix C).

Some of the more interesting findings include relevant stress and tone, a seven-vowel system with contrastive length, and head-final clause vs. head-initial noun phrase orders. While the vast majority of Omotic languages are tonal, Hamar is described as exhibiting a system involving both stress and tone (pp. 40-52). Cues of stress include increases in amplitude and duration as well as high pitch. Stress can be assigned to any syllable of a two or three syllable noun. It appears that for the vast majority of the data only one high tone is found per word (on the stressed syllable), though there is some variation (as on certain masculine nouns, p. 49) where two highs can surface on one word.

Hamar's seven-vowel system also shows a departure from the more widespread five-vowel system found in many Omotic languages. As in many Omotic languages, vowel length in Hamar is contrastive. It's worth noting, however, from the presentation of the data, it is not clear whether the author believes the distinction between mid-high and mid-low vowels (e.g. [e/ee] vs. [ɛ/ɛɛ] and [o/oo] vs. [ɔ/ɔɔ]) to be a still-emerging development for Hamar. Conditioning relative to stress (mid-high vowels > mid-low before [a] in stressed syllables, p. 33) as well as lexical ('free') variation is maintained for some words (p. 34). The relationship between the mid-high and mid-low vowels appears to be largely predictable: e.g. the result of phonological and morphophonological processes (p. 29).

Hamar word order (pp. 157-159) is also of interest typologically. While simple clauses exhibit an expected SOV order and the morphological structures are suffixal, noun phrases are typically head initial. While multiple orders are attested in other South Omotic languages (cf. Bender 1991, for Aari, and Mulugeta 2008, for Dime), the author also notes the similarities to Heine's D2 pattern found in some Nilo-Saharan languages and Lowland East Cushitic (Heine 1976). Finally, there are no markers of sentence/utterance type or mood markers in Hamar (p.

210); this is another major departure from the more common Omotic pattern where robust mood, modality, and utterance marking is found.

While the grammar is generally laid out in an entirely transparent manner, some readers may find portions of the analysis and/or organization to be unclear. The author embeds a section on adjectives in the noun chapter because some adjectives behave as nouns with respect to declensions and morphophonology (p. 94). In this section, however, many of the examples, as the author points out, illustrate deverbal forms (via relativization) (p. 95). No explicit argumentation is provided to demonstrate that there is a coherent, structural adjective category in Hamar.

Another point that could be improved involves the discussion of tone. Given the likelihood of interest in stress + tone systems, it would be beneficial to have the data presented in a manner that makes all claims explicit at the outset, including a clear argument as to why the tone system should not be seen as merely epiphenomenal to stress. The data for tone are not organized relative to CV shapes which are important to determining contrast; in a similar manner melodies from nouns and verbs are treated together without evidence supporting that they behave the as parts of the same system (p. 49).

The discussion of verbal tense and aspect is somewhat limited in scope, given the many forms mentioned. The reader would benefit from a conceptual map of the tense and aspectual domains which are allocated morphosyntactic structure. For instance, terms like *present* and *future* are used, but there's no clear indication of the organization of the temporal system itself. In more complex predicates, we encounter *past probability* and even *irrealis*. Readers need more guidance as to how these domains interact and carve up the conceptual domains of events and time in the language. Additionally, the use of grammatical terminology for aspectual categories is not always straightforward. The term *perfect*, for instance, is used for events completed at the time of reference. Some readers, I suspect, will wonder why such a domain is not considered *perfective* given that completeness appears to be central to its meaning. The terms *perfective* and *imperfective* are used instead for denoting differences with respect to boundedness: the author's use of *perfective* appears to correspond (at least at times) to *telic* while *imperfective* corresponds to *atelic*. This somewhat non-standard use of these terms may be confusing. It's also worth noting that since the /-de/ perfective suffix is also used in the intentional future construction, more research into the development of Hamar's tense and aspect system is still warranted.

The discussion of converbs (pp. 229-233) shows three distinct structures. While these are treated as subordinate structures, the data appear to suggest a wider phenomenon incorporating the distribution and function of typical medial verbs in clause chains as well. The author does not demonstrate in what way the converb-marked structures are subordinated in all cases. Some examples appear to demonstrate non-adverbial (and non-complement), clause chains involving sequences of events--perhaps the term dependent (rather than subordinate) would be helpful. Illustrative examples in this section are unfortunately limited to two or three clauses, and as such, don't demonstrate the extent to which a speaker may find multiple chains in the same string of speech. Clause chaining is also mentioned in the section on complementation (pp. 242-244): clause chains are said to function as complements in some instances. This argument could be bolstered through an examination of the valence of the matrix (final) verbs involved. It seems to me that each of the examples involving clause chains in this section could be seen as additional instances of the adverbial converb function described earlier. If the term *complement* used here refers to a clause functioning as an argument of a matrix clause, the claim is not necessarily supported through the evidence provided.

Despite some issues with analysis, organization, and a lack of adherence (in a few cases) to the generally accepted use of terms (e.g. terms related to verbal aspect, subordination, complementation), the grammar is generally clear in its description. The data are represented with an easy-to-follow transcription and clear and consistent glossing. Cross-referencing is well-handled throughout the work and is ample enough to be of real use to the reader. The final chapter features a balanced and brief overview of the major debates involving Omotic (both internal and external); the chapter also provides a 150-item South Omotic comparative wordlist, and a morphological comparison including pronouns, case, copular forms, and verb morphology. On the basis of similarity, the data are argued to support the South Omotic classification. Such an argument could perhaps be further substantiated by working out sound correspondences and shared innovations. But all in all, the author's point is well-established: Hamar, Aari, and Dime for a coherent group. Certainly this work provides excellent data for Omotic and Afroasiatic comparativists and is successful in its primary goal: to provide a clear description of this very interesting and previously under-described language. The author is to be congratulated on having added to our knowledge of the least documented Afroasiatic family.

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