

Content analysis of Mäṣḥafä Mäwäśə'ət

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የዚህ ጽሑፍ ዐላማ በኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ሥርዐተ ትምህርት ትልቅ ቦታ ከሚሰጣቸው የዜማ ትምህርቶች መካከል አንዱ ስለሆነው መጽሐፈ መዋሥኢት ትምህርታዊ ይዘት ማብራራትና ትንትኔ መስጠት ነው። በስድስተኛው መቶ ክፍለ ዘመን ይኸንና ሌሎች የዜማ ድርሰቶችን ስለ ደረሰው ታላቁ ኢትዮጵያዊ ሊቅ ቅዱስ ያፌድ፣ ጻድቁ አባ አረጋዊ እና ንጉሥ ገብረ መስቀል በወቅቱ የነበራቸውን ሀገራዊና ሃይማኖታዊ ፍቅር ያብራራል። እንዲሁም ድርሰቱ ስለተደረሰበትና ከላይ የተጠቀሱት ሦስቱ ቅዱሳን ሦስት ዐመት ስለተቀመጡበት ታላቋ ገዳም ዙር አምባ አረጋዊ ጽርሐ ዐርያም ያብራራል። በተጨማሪም ሊቃውንቱ መዋሥኢትን እንዴት እንደሚማሩት እና እንደሚያስተምሩት ከጀማሪ ደቀ መዝሙር እስከ አድራሽ (ዕጩ መምህር) የትምህርት አሰጣጥ ሥልቱን ያስረዳል። ከመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ እና ከሌሎች የዜማ እና የንባብ መጻሕፍት ጋር ያለውን ልዩነት እና ተመሳሳይነት ታሪካዊ እና ሥነ ጽሑፋዊ ጠቀሜታ ማከራዊ መስተጋብር ያብራራል። በዋናነት ተመራማሪዎች በቤተ ክርስቲያን መጻሕፍት ይልቁንም በዜማ መጻሕፍት ላይ የበለጠ የዘርፉ ሊቃውንት እንዲመራመሩ መነሻ ይኾናል። መጽሐፈ መዋሥኢት ምንም እንኳን በየሊቃውንቱ እጅ እና በየአብያተ ክርስቲያናቱ በብዛት ቢኖርም በዚህ ጥናት የተመረጡት ግን አስፈላጊነታቸው ጉልህ ኾኖ የተገኙ ኹለት የብራና መጻሕፍት ብቻ ናቸው። አንደኛው በዙር አምባ ጽርሐ ዐርያም ገዳም በጉባኤ ቤቱ የሚገኝ በመጠን አነስ የሚል እና ሊቃውንቱ የሚማሩበት ነው። ስሙም መዝገብ ይባላል። ምንም እንኳን ኹሉም አድራሾች የየራሳቸው መጻሕፍት ቢኖሩአቸውም ከፍተኛውን ዕውቀት ለማዳበር በዚህ ይማራሉ። ኹለተኛው ደግሞ በዚህኛው ገዳም ዕቃ ቤት የሚገኝ ሲኾን ሊቃውንቱ ከራሳቸው መጽሐፍ እና ከመዝገብ ያልተስተካከለውን ለማመሳከር የዕቃ ቤት ሐሳላፊውን እያስፈቀዱ አልፎ አልፎ ያዩታል። በመጠንም ከመጀመሪያው ከፍ ያለ ነው። ልዩ መጠረያ ስሙም መጽሐፍት ይባላል።

* ርእሰ ደብር ብርሃኑ አካል የመጻሕፍተ ሐዲሳት ትርጓሜ እና የዝማሬ መዋሥኢት መምህር፣ ኹለተኛ ድግሪ በሥነ ልሣን ትምህርት፣ በአኹኑ ወቅት በማኅበረ ቅዱሳን ኤዲቶሪያል ቦርድ አርታዲ ሆነው በማገልገል ላይ ናቸው።

1. Introduction

Ethiopia is an ancient nation which has developed a system of graphic representation of its traditional wisdom and philosophical thoughts since an early stage (Baye, 2008:60). This graphic representation includes literary works which have been scattered throughout parishes, monasteries and private collections. Many Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches have Gə'əz manuscripts, including biblical exegesis, apocrypha, hagiography, liturgical books, chronicles and others. Many manuscripts are translated from texts in foreign languages, but a large proportion of them are products of the Ethiopian church scholars. Most of the texts were composed for religious purposes; such as glorifying Jesus Christ and His Mother the Perpetual Virgin Lady Mary. There are also hagiographies of different Saints and many more literary genres such as chronicles, ethical books (e.g. māṣḥafä ḥawi), philosophical books, physiologies, astrological books (eg. 'awädä nägäšt), books of the solar system (e.g. māṣḥafä - Sabela), agricultural books (e.g. māṣḥafä - māṣäbbəḥ) etc. However, most of the texts have a tendency to relate secular matters often involving tradition and culture, to religion and spirituality. The well known books of Saint Yared are also part of these texts which were primarily written and composed for religious purposes specifically to glorify the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary and other saints. These texts have a totally religious content, and further more are poetic. They constitute five books: the Dəgg^wa, Ṣomä Dəgg^wa, Mə'əraf, zəmmare and māwaśə'ət. All these books have different variant manuscripts.

Māwaśə'ət, the main subject of this paper, is a poetic and musical text that has never been scientifically studied. The author of these hymnal texts is St. Yared who lived around Aksum during the reign of king Gäbrä Mäsqäl. His works were composed in northern Ethiopia, especially in today's Tigray and Gondar. According to dərzanä 'ura'el¹ (homily) and the tarikä nägäšt², abba Arägawi (one of the nine saints), St. Yared and king Gäbrä Mäsqäl traveled from Aksum to lake Tana³ to visit the monastery of St. Qirqos which was built by Abreḥa and Aṣbəha. The texts state that they lived there for two years evangelizing and baptizing the people in the surrounding area. The sources further state that the three Saints left Tana Qirqos after a two year stay on the Island, because the Archangel 'Ura'el revealed to abba Arägawi and told him to go to Bägemädər, today's

¹The manuscript I used here is unpublished and available at zuramba 'Arägawi monastery.

²Tarikä nägäšt is a chronicle which describes the history of many kings from the beginning of the Aksumite dynasty up to king Tewoderos II. It is the unpublished text from zuramba Aregawi monastery.

³Mäzgäbä səbḥat philological and historical analysis on the book of zəmmare

Gayənt. He said, *ወበሀየ አርእየኸሙ ደብረ ነጎስ ዘአተብኸወ በደመ እግዚእነ ኢየሱስ ክርስቶስ*⁴ Wä-bähəyyä 'ar'əyākkəmu dābrā nā'as zä'atābkkəwwä bādāmā 'əgəzi'ənā 'Iyyäsus krəstos 'I will show you a small mountain which I sprinkled with the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.'⁵ He also advised them to build a church in the name of the perpetual Virgin Our Lady Mary. Having received these instructions from the Angel, three of them left qana traveled to Bāgemədr and settled in a field at the foot of the mountain which is now called *አፄ ከተማ* ('aše kätäma), which literally means "the city of the emperor".

These saints then found the mountain after they spent much time searching for but they were unable to climb up the mountain because of the steep cliffs. Consequently, abba Arāgawi prayed to God for them to climb up the mountain. He said, *“እመ ረከብኸዎ ለውእቱ አርዋ ዘአዕረገኒ ደብረ ዳሞ ይእዘኒ እምአዕረገኒ ኀበ ሃቲ ደብረ”* 'əmmä rākābkəwwō läwə'ətu 'arwe zä'a'əragänni dābrā damo yə'əzeni 'əm'a'əragänni ḥabä zatti dābr': literally mean "Had I met the snake that ascended me up to mount [Debrä Damo], it would help me climb up to this mountain."

Three of them stayed there for a long period but it was only 'abba Arāgawi who kept praying and praying, then the Archangel 'Ura'el descended from heaven and said to him, *ዙር አባ መንገል ምሥራቃ ለሃቲ ደብረ*⁷ zur 'abba māngälä məsraqa lāzatti dābr abba, turn to the East of this mountain." abba Arāgawi found the exact mountain which the Archangel had pointed to him. In addition, Archangel 'Ur'el told him that the mountain would be the abode to him and his disciples, and it would be the place where he would teach and evangelize the word of God. Afterwards, St. Yared saw a group of Angels above the monastery praying and glorifying God. Subsequently, St. Yared named the place *ፍጥሃ* 'arəyam⁸ zuramba and *ፍጥሃ* 'arəyam, are memorial names to the two saints: St. Yared and abba Arāgawi. The Angel said to abba Arāgawi, 'zur'⁹ 'abba' which means 'abba, turn' and diachronically changed into zuramba. Later, it took the name "zuramba *ፍጥሃ* 'arəyam." the [bb] of [abba] gets degeminated and assimilated to [m] and the

⁴Dərsanā 'Ur'el unprinted Recto 150 col.

⁵Translations in this study are literal.

⁶Ibid recto 160

⁷Ibid

⁸Lit. 'heavenly house'

⁹*ዙር* means to turn (*ከዳነ ወልድ ክፍሉ፣ መጽሐፈ ሰዋስው ወግሥ ወመዝገበ ቃላት ሐዲስ፣ ዐዲስ አበባ፣ አርቲስቲክ ማተሚያ ቤት፣ ፲፱፻፵፰ ዓ.ም.፣ ገጽ ፬፻፲፭*)

name reads [zuramba].

Three days after their entrance into the future area of the monastery, the king, Gäbrä Mäsqäl, met them and pitched a tent on top of the mountain. Then, the saints put the Ark of the Virgin Mary inside the tent and celebrated the Divine liturgy and the king took the Holy Communion.

According to tradition, zuramba was the center of the head of the state (Ethiopia) for three years. Having built the church in three years, these three people left the monastery of zuramba. Thereafter, the king went back to Aksum and abba Arägawi to his own monastery — däbrä damo, after assigning a Church administrator to zuramba. For three years, St. Yared taught the five subjects¹⁰ and mǎzgābā qəddasse ‘the book of liturgy’¹¹ at zuramba šərḥa arəyam. He also had a close disciple who assisted him and finally represented him when he went to šällāmt¹² to start another monastic establishment. In EAE it is mentioned that:

Later, zuramba šərḥa ’arəyam became the vital center of excellence (ማስመከሪያ — masmäskärya, for zəmmare and mǎwaśə’ət. For zəmmare and mǎwaśə’ət a student who wants to receive a certificate for teaching subjects has to go to that place and pass through all the studies and examinations (Vol. III p.877)¹³.

The celebrated traditional scholar Aleqa Enbaqom Qale wold (1970, p. 23) also said that:

For the study of zəmmare mǎwaśə’ət, the student has to go to zuramba in Bägemədr province. Here, too, he finds at least two styles of zema namely zəmmare and mǎwaśə’ət, but it does not really matter which style he adopts, since they are equally good and not so different after all. He will complete this part of his studies in about a year.¹⁴

Studying mǎwaśə’ət is very challenging for students, since it requires preliminary knowledge of poetry and other related subjects. The duration of mǎwaśə’ət studies could be minimized to 18 months. However, before joining zuramba,

¹⁰Dəggwa, mə’əraf, məmmare and mǎwaśə’ət

¹¹ኢልያስ አብርሃን፣ የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ታሪክ ክልደተ ክርስቶስ እስከ ፳፻ ገጽ ፻፳

¹²Place found in North Gondar.

¹³EAE, Vol. III, p. 877.

¹⁴Enbaqom Qalāwold, 1970.

students have to study the prerequisite subjects thoroughly with other scholars in different parts of the country.

According to Kefyalew Merahi (2004:69), “If a student has prior knowledge of zema and studies purposely, he can be a teacher of *māwāsə'ət* within two years”.¹⁵ However, this is his personal opinion; in practice, the ability of each pupil is decisive. The period of the study might greatly decrease for clever students. Consequently, as he concluded, it is better to take the average since the commitment and ability of learners differ greatly.

In the course of the learning process of *māwāsə'ət*, students are expected to learn from their teacher during the day, and are obliged to revise and master this material during the night, since *māwāsə'ət* is easy to learn at night through oral repetition. During specialized studies, students are engaged in comparing what they wrote during their teachers' tuition, with the content of books under the supervision of the Chief teacher. After graduation in *māwāsə'ət* they are blessed by the main teacher who acts as —*məsəkkər*—“witness”. In zuramba, those who are named as *adrashoč*—senior students in zuramba, depart teach their specialities in their home parishes or elsewhere.

2. Statement of the problem

St. Yared is known as the founder of chanting ‘spiritual music’ and one of the most influential authors in Gə'əz literature. However, most of his works have not been adequately studied. Particularly, one of his works *māwāsə'ət*, has neither been translated nor critically annotated. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the content of *māwāsə'ət*. Specifically, the study attempted to:

- Analyze the poems found in the text of *māwāsə'ət*.
- Show the literary value of the book in relation to its liturgical service.
- Show the basic categories of *māwāsə'ət*.
- Point out the physical features of the variant manuscripts.
- Evaluate its liturgical, religious and cultural values.

3. Significances of the study

This research is presumed to help readers know more about the content of *māwāsə'ət* and its benefit for the church. It also brings new insights for those doing further research in the area of liturgical texts. Likewise, it will also

¹⁵ Kāfyalew Mārahi, 2004: 60-61

serve as a stepping stone for future research on hymnology.

4. Scope of the Study

Manuscripts of *māṣḥafā māwaś'ət* are found in many Ethiopian churches and monasteries. However, the focus of this paper is on the manuscripts which have long been preserved in the place where the text— *māwaś'ət*, was authored by St. Yared. A copy of the manuscript found in the library of the Institute of Ethiopian studies is used for parallel comparison. Furthermore, this study is limited to content analysis.

5. Methodology

The objective of this study is to analyze and describe the text of *māwaś'ət* based on the existant texts, hence the researcher used text analysis. Both primary and secondary sources were used. The primary sources are the various copies of *māwaś'ət* from zuramba and other monasteries, and the secondary sources are articles and books pertinent to the tradition of church music, in general, and *māwaś'ət*, in particular. The methodology followed a three-phase pattern. Phase one consisted of collecting a record of (at least three) manuscripts of *māṣḥafā māwaś'ət*, by digitalized at the monasteries. During this phase, informants were consulted and the collected material was digitalized. Phase two consisted of cross-checking the collected manuscripts with each other on the basis of clarity, age and condition. Phase three, consisted of poetic analysis, philological (physical feature) analysis, and analysis of the historical, religious and cultural values were determined.

6. Review of Related Literature

In general, very little has been written on *māwaś'ət* in the context of Ethiopian studies. Habte Michael Kidane¹⁶ discussed the definition, content and service of the *māwaś'ət*. In his discussion, he mentioned that the word *māwaś'ət* (መዋሰኛ) is a plural form of *mośa'ə* (ሞሳኤ) which means response. The base form is derived from the *Gə'əz* verb. He discussed, how *māwaś'ət* is used like other liturgical books on specific occasions in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo church. It is also mentioned that the book *māwaś'ət* is attributed to St. Yared, and there are *māwaś'ət* for some 70 feasts, when they are employed as part of the *səbhata nägh* and *kəstātä 'arəyam*. Discussing the features of *māwaś'ət*, Habte Michael wrongly describes it as a non-biblical text.

¹⁶Habtä Michael Kidane. In *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, Vol.3, 2007, pp. 877-878.

However, as discussed in chapter three, almost half of its constitutive elements are directly taken from the Bible. He also pointed out that every portion of the book has two segments which are called 'ənnat¹⁷ and məltan. They symbolize the Virgin Mary as Mother and Jesus Christ as Son, respectively. Even though the above statement is correct, it is not well expressed. So, it will be further discussed in the third chapter of this paper.

Furthermore, he cited the use of *mäwäsə'ət* in spiritual service such as in the Prayer of the dead, morning prayer during the great Lent, and in annual celebrations. Finally, he listed the manuscript that had been studied by different scholars.¹⁸ Fritsch (2001:54) pointed out that *mäwäsə'ət* is used as an antiphony in the church around 50 times a year, and is especially used for funeral services. He further states that according to the tradition of the church, it can also be used on different occasions.¹⁹ Another church scholar, Tiumelissan gave a clear definition of the *mäwäsə'ət*. He defined it in a similar way to Habte Michael, and mentions its peculiar affinity with other liturgical books like *Dəggwä* and *Zəmmare*²⁰. Haddis also cited its content, advantage and manner of singing in his “the works of St. Yared in [the] light of the Bible” (1999:60). The other article written by Elyas Abrha for the memorial book of the EOTC in the new millennium (2000:120) expresses similar ideas to Tiumelissan and Habte Michael. Abba Beaman²¹ (2011) “philological and historical analysis on the book of *Gənzät*” clarified its use for: “funeral services usually including prayers, hymns from the book of *Dəggwä*, *Mäwäsə'ət* and *Mə'əraf* readings from sacred texts and the Holy Bible preached by the clergy.” The last work is by Habte Maryam (1962 E.C). He argued, wrongly that the meaning of its name is unknown and it is not useful for the church service except for funeral purposes. He added that it is performed twice in year on the eve of Easter; i.e on holy Saturday or victorious Saturday as a funeral prayer for Christ and on Palm Sunday for those deceased during the passion week since funerary prayers cannot be conducted for those deceased during this week.

¹⁷Lit. “mother”.

¹⁸ Habtemichael Kidane, 2007, 877.

¹⁹Fritsch, E, 2001, 54. ..

²⁰Tiumelissan Kassa, 1981, 58.

²¹Abba Beaman Girum. Philological and historical analysis on the Book of *gənzät*. Addis Ababa University, Unpublished MA Thesis, 2011.

He also mentioned how it is performed, the number of māwaśə'ət needed on different occasions and the general number of Māwaśə'ət with the three modes of zema. However, none of these scholars discussed māwaśə'ət extensively and in depth. They simply provided insights concerning the text and traditions. Consequently, this work is aimed at filling in this gap, through thorough analysis of the content of the text. The analysis will be backed by an extensive discussion of the ecclesiastical tradition and its life context.

6.1 Definition

The definition of the term māwaśə'ət comprises two main points. First, as Laslau (1989:620) and Kidanāwold (1948:394) stated, it comes from the Gə'əz verb wāśə' ወሥክ፡ አውሥክ፡ 'wāśə'a 'respond' or 'answer'; and māwaśə'ət is a plural form of mośā'ə ሞሻኢ. The use of this word indicates that the chanters or church scholars chant it repeatedly turn by turn in two parallel groups, to the right and the left. According to Habte Michael Kidane (2007:877), māwaśə'ət is the ancient Antiphonary, i.e. a book containing choral portions, antiphonaries for the prescribed form of the liturgy. In the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Māwaśə'ət is used on specific occasions. In addition, it is called ሰዋስወ፡ ነፍስ፡ — sāwaswānāfəs lit. ladder of the soul or መርሐ፡ ለመንግሥተ፡ ሰማያት፡ — 'märḥ lāmāngəśtā sāmayat' lit. guide to the kingdom of heavens, because it is considered a prayer that accompanies or leads the soul of the diseased to God. The other scholar, Tiumelissan Kassa, agrees to the above definitions. On the other hand, Habtemaryam Workineh, currently known as abunā Mālkā šedeq, a bishop in North America, wrongly states that 'the exact meaning of the word is still unknown' (1962:104). However, the above two meanings of the word seem plausible, and for most of scholars it is appropriate to adopt these meanings. But the third is totally without any evidence. Thus, most church scholars do not agree with this opinion because as the name, the performance and the purpose indicate, it is most probable for the above meanings to be correct.

7. Performance

Māwaśə'ət is performed at the śərə'atā maḥəlet with 'ryam²² and səbḥatā Nāgh²³.

²²Rule of song.

²³Parts of the service.

For example:

1. On Psalm Sunday:

እለኒ፡ ይመርሑ፡ ወእለኒ፡ ይተልው፡ ይጸርሑ፡ ወይብሉ፡ ሆሃዕና፡ በኦርያም፡
(f.24r^a) 'əlläni yəmārḥu wä'əlläni yətälləwu yəṣārəḥu wäyəblu
hoṣa'ənna bā'arəyam. Those who went ahead and those who follow
shouted 'hosanna in the highest' (Mark 11:9)

2. On the Eve of Easter:

አሠዩኒ፡ እኪተ፡ ህየንተ፡ ሠናይት፡ ወአንሰ፡ እጼሊ፡ (f.25r^c)
'asäyuni 'əkkitä həyyäntä šānayt wä-'ansä 'əṣelli.
'They repay me evil for good and I pray' (Psalm 109:5)

3. On the Sabbath:

እግዚኣ፡ ለሰንበት፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ አክሊለ፡ ሰማዕት፡ ሠያሜ፡
ካህናት፡ አርኅወን፡ ንባዕ፡ ታዕካ፡ መንግሥተ፡ ሰማያት፡ (f.34v^c)
'əgzi'a lāsānbät 'Iyyäsus Kərəstos 'aklilä sāma'ət säyame
kahənat 'arəḥəwännä nəba'ə ta'əka mängəṣtā sāmayat. 'Lord
of the Sabbath, Jesus Christ, throne of martyrs, and annointer of
priests open unto us that we may enter the heavenly house!'

This is also used on holidays of our Lord, our Lady, the saints and Martyrs. It is chanted on Palm Sunday for there is no absolution during the Passion week. On the eve of Easter, it is performed to remember the humanity of Christ. During funeral ceremony, it is performed in connection with the procession of the corpse from the house of mourning to the church before the burial. On the other hand, there are prayers of absolution for the deceased at which *mäwäṣə'ət* is performed, and these days are the 40th and 80th days, on the 6th month, and on each year from the day of the burial.

7.1 Rules of the prayer of absolution

As earlier mentioned, the major function of *mäwäṣə'ət* is for funeral purposes. It has a unique sound which expresses sorrow or grief. When a person dies, verses are selected from *mäwäṣə'ət* and the Psalms that are appropriate for the person's life, the way he/she died and the day on which he/she died. It is fashioned in such a way as to be appropriate for every kind of lifestyle and form and date of dying. Therefore, when a well-educated scholar chants, it seems as if he composed it

right there on the spot. For example, once at the town of Gondar, a telephone operator passed away, and a famous “Zema” scholar, Aleqa Yemane Berhan was invited to lead the chant during the funeral prayers. He selected the following verse:

ዘይፌኑ፡ ቃሉ፡ ለምድር፡ ወፍጡነ፡ ይረወጽ፡ ነቢቡ፡ (f.19^{rb} and Psalm 47).

Zäyefännu qalo lämədr wäfəṭunä yərāwwəṣ nābibu. ‘He sends his word to earth and his saying runs fast’.

Yared quoted it to glorify God and to praise the swiftness of His Words. The scholar connected this with the life of the deceased. On the occasion of the funeral of a carpenter, who lost his life falling from a roof while building a house, a church scholar who was one of the major teachers at t zura mba, chanted the following verse:

ትቤላ፡ ነፍስ፡ ለሥጋ፡ ምድራዊት፡ አንቲ፡ ለምንት፡ ተሐንጺ፡ አብያተ፡ ንቡ፡
ኢትነብሪ፡ ለዓለም፡ (f.7^{va}). Təbela nāfs läśəga mədrawit ‘anti lāmənt
täḥanəṣi ‘abəyatä ḥabä ‘itənābbəri lä‘alām. ‘The soul says to the
earthly flesh why do you build houses that you don’t live in for ever’.

Here the direct message of the text is to preach how useless earthly life is, and to advise against extreme stress as a consequence of it. Thus, the scholar related the verse of the māwaśə’ət with the incident. Once upon a time, a group of bandits attacked a peaceful farmer. They killed him and took his valuables. As appropriate, one scholar recited the following hymn from ‘araray māwaśə’ət:

ቆሙ፡ ላዕሌየ፡ ሰማዕተ፡ አመፃ፡ ወዘኢየሐምር፡ ነበቡ፡ ላዕሌየ፡ Qomu
la‘əleyä säma‘ətä ‘amäṣa wäzä’iyyä’ammər nābābu la‘əleyä (f.25^{vb})
— ‘False witnesses did rise up; laid charge on the things that I knew
not’ (Psalm 35:11).

According to church scholars, the above verse is a prophecy of king David regarding Christ’s crucifixion; the scholar related it to the sudden appearance of bandits when attacking the departed. In yet another instance, a clergyman who insulted the abbot of a monastery was discharged from his position in the church. Later, when one of his neighbors passed away and a former colleagues invited him to lead the singing of the māwaśə’ət.

He said:

እኔ፡ አአቅብ፡ አፋየ፡ ከመ፡ ኢይስሐት፡ በልሳንዮ፡ ‘əbe ‘a’aqqəb ‘afuyä kāmā
‘iyyəṣḥat bäləssanəyā. ‘I said I will keep my tongue in order not
to deceive with my mouth’ (Psalm 39:1).

Hearing his regret, the abbot put him bad to his job. Here, we can understand that in the course of the funeral service, scholars can speak out their feeling, emotions and thinking. *Māwaśə'ət* is fashioned in such a way that it fits to every season and incidence. It follows the biography of the dead; it virtually corroborates each incident in the life of the diseased. That is why the total number of *māwaśə'ət* is numerous amounting to 968 verses. From this, the *Gə'əz ግእዝ Māwaśə'ət* major እናት (mother) is 803, whereas the ምልላን *məltan* is 803. ዕዝል 'əzl *māwaśə'ət* major (mother) is 62 and its *məltan* is also 62. ላላላ *'araray māwaśə'ət* major is 103 and its *məltan* is also 103. The total of all the majors is 968. Each begins with the Psalm; sometimes, the beginning, the middle as well as the end of the Psalms, called ክርሠ: ዳዊት *kärsä – Dawit*²⁴.

7.2 Instructions for the prayer of absolution

The instructions for the prayer of absolution are mainly not preserved in written form, but passed on orally by the clergy, and the full service for the funeral is called ሥርዓተ: ፍትሐት: *śərə'atā fəṭṭat*²⁵. To begin with, the prayer of *māwaśə'ət* follows the following steps which are necessary for the performance:

- A Priest in charge of the *ṣəlotä 'akotet* (Praising Prayer) invites the people to pray the 'Lord's prayer'.
- The prayer of the Psalms, song of songs, the prayer of the fifteen Prophets (መኃልዮ: ነቢያት:) which are compiled together with the Ethiopian book of Psalms;
- Məqnay zä-dawit* some verses from the Psalms, song of the prophets and song of songs with their own different *halletat*²⁶;
- Wəddase Maryam* (praise of the virgin Mary) of the days of the week.
- And 'əzl of *Dəggwä ድን* is chanted first by one who is in charge and followed by another one chanting once again. Then all the choirs sing and chant using 'prayer stick', መቋጣያ *mäqqwāmya* ከበሮ the 'drum' and the እናጸል 'systrum'. There are three distinct stages of chanting known as ቁም 'qum' or ንዑስ 'nə'us', መረግድ *märägd*, and ጽፋት *ṣəfat*. Then the prayer 'ənzä nä'akkuto is recited by a priest. The proceeding scholar who is in charge of the ceremony continues the chant of ከቡን *abun*, five *Gə'əz*, one 'əzl and one 'araray *māwaśə'ət*. *Gə'əz māwaśə'ət* always performed with the beginning and ending verses

²⁴Womb of psalm signifying the verses are taken from the middle verses of psalms.

²⁵Rule of absolution.

²⁶Plural form of halleluyah.

of the Psalms, but ‘araray is chanted with only three verses from the Psalms. These are ሰብሕዎ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ እምስማዖት፡ ‘praise the Lord from the heavens’, (Psalms 148:1), ሰብሕዎ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ ስብሐተ፡ ሐዲሱ፡ ‘sing to the Lord a new song’ (Psalm 149:1), ሰብሕዎ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ በቅደሳኑ፡ and ‘praise God in his sanctuary’ (Psalm 150:1), respectively. In addition, from the prayers of the Old Testament prophets, only ይባርክዎ፡ ኩሉ፡ ግብረ፡ እግዚእ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ creatures of the Lord’s hand praise God is performed. But during ‘əzl māwaśə’ət all verses of näbiyat (prophets) that are traditionally compiled with the Ethiopian Psalms are chanted in between.

One māwaśə’ət is chanted twelve times; during the Lent season using prayer sticks and in ቁም፡ ዜማ፡ qum zema²⁷ only, but in other seasons it includes drums and systrium. After all these, the previous ‘abun’ is chanted first with prayer sticks then with the drum and systrium in three distinct modes of chanting. Then two ‘əsmā lä‘alām are chanted following lä‘alām and sālam by a chant in a faster mode with the drum and systrium which is called səfat. And this is the end of one whole cycle of prayers for the dead (fəṭṭat).

7.3 Yäguzo fəṭṭat (processional prayer of absolution)

This is a prayer for the dead, the chanting begins from the house of the diseased up to the place of his/her burial. For a full prayer of absolution, there must be five stations from the house of the diseased up to the church regardless of the distance; this is only to fulfill the rule and tradition of the church. Beginning from the house, the corpse rests at each of these five stations, and the final seventh station is at the courtyard of the church. The prayers vary from monastery to monastery, and depend on the ability of the scholars. In some big monasteries and churches, in the middle of each māwaśə’ət abuns are chanted but as previously mentioned, one ‘abun’ is enough. On the other hand, if the deceased is a scholar, a priest or a famous person šəllase qəne²⁸ is sometimes chanted in the middle of each māwaśə’ət. The above mentioned pattern chanting is practiced by big parish churches and monasteries.

²⁷A mode of melody sung without prayer stick, the drum and sistrium.

²⁸The fifth grade of Gə’əz poetry having six lines of rhymes.

7.4 Performance and representation

The number of *māwaśə'ət* that should be chanted during the prayer of the dead is as follows: As per the law, 12 *māwaśə'ət* are chanted. If this is not possible five to nine *māwaśə'ət* should be chanted. But it should not be less than seven according to the tradition of the church. As mentioned earlier, in some big churches and monasteries seven abuns and seven *māwaśə'əts* are sung, and one of each is chanted. The tradition of the church states that the numbers should be from five to twelve *māwaśə'ət* as shown below:

- a. Five represents the five nails with which Jesus was crucified by that is on two of His hands, the beating of his Head, the piercing of His ribs, and of His two legs and by His passion, we are cured from our wounds (sin). *māwaśə'ət*, is thus considered a healer of the soul.
- b. Seven represents the seven days. God worked six days and rested on the seventh day. And *māwaśə'ət*, causes the soul to rest in peace.
- c. Nine represent the nine saints. As saints are free of judgment, *māwaśə'ət* causes one to be cleansed from one's transgression.
- d. 12 represents the 12 tribes of Israel. As they crossed the frightening sea with the mighty God, so does *māwaśə'ət* cause the soul to crossed the hell.
- e. 24 is peculiar because it is performed once in a year only on 'victorious Saturday'. It also represents the 24 Heavenly priests, who give thanks to God without rest, likewise *māwaśə'ət* is a rest giver.

8. Content analysis of *māwaśə'ət*

8.1 Definition of the manuscripts

In order to analyze *māwaśə'ət*, the researcher chose two manuscripts found at zuramba Ṣərḥa 'aryam monastery. These manuscripts are considered better than all others because church scholars keep them as references for teaching and learning purposes. The first manuscript is called *māṣəḥet* 'glass'. It is a students' daily reference in the course of their studies. The main teacher, *məsəkkər* sits nearby while one of the students stands firmly and leads the singing from this manuscript. The other students listen and attend to him carefully following through their personal books. Subsequently, they usually discuss and argue with each other. Finally, the main teacher is asked, and if the answer is not similar to that of the manuscript and the students' previous knowledge, they use the second manuscript for reference. The second manuscript, which is the main subject of

this work, is the biggest and more reliable for reference. Students suffer to get it because it is kept in the archives of the monastery, and it is difficult to see it if the responsible monk is not willing or obliging.

8.2 Physical materials

The two manuscripts are parchment texts, with minute handwriting. They are written with traditional pens in two colors; red and black. The red ink is used as usual, mainly to begin each Feast and for the names of God and the saints. Sometimes, the abbreviation of *məḷtan* (ሞልጥን) is written with red ink. Black is used to write the rest of the text. Both the manuscripts are covered with hard wooden boards bound with cloth and leather. With regard to the second manuscript, it is half covered with leather and tattered cloth.

8.3 Orthographic definition

In all the manuscripts, the title of the book is written as መዋሥኦት; *māwaśəʾət*, but most of the dictionaries written by expatriates and indigenous scholars, such as Kidanä Wäld, Leslau, and Dillmann state that መዋሥኦት *māwaśəʾət* is derived from the root አውሥኦ. The researcher believes that the which is correct for it traces the right root form of the noun አውሥኦ i.e. 'awəsəʾ. In addition to these, the word (ለንጹዎን) *länṣewon*, is spelled: (ለንጹዎን) *ländewon* in all the Mss. But according to Kidanä Wäld (568), the first is correct and its origin comes from the Greek word (ለንቴዎን) *lentewon* 'towel'. The researcher also tried to find out if *ländewon* had another meaning though no similar word was found. Church scholars translate it as *masäro* in Amharic, which means pottery.

In conclusion, the above words, *māwaśəʾət* and *länṣewon*, have been corrupted throughout history.

8.4 Page layout and style of writing

In both manuscripts the pages are not numbered. The second manuscript has three columns. On the first page and at the beginning of some big feasts, there is illumination (ḥaräg). The illumination has the same pattern and color throughout. There are two guard covers at the beginning and end of the text. The second guard cover bears a text by someone tries out a pen that says: ብዕር፡ ዘፈተነ፡ ወዘወጠነ፡ *bəʾər zäfätänä wäzä-wätänä* — 'one who tries to begin writing and tests a pen'. Both Mss have the same preface which is called *mäqdəm*. It reads as follows: በስሙ፡ አብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ አሐዱ፡ አምላክ፡ ንዌጥን፡ በፈድኤተ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ጽሒፈ፡ መዋሥኦት[sic]ኦት፡ እምዮሐንስ፡ እስከ፡ ዮሐንስ፡ — 'In the name of the Father, of

the Son, of the Holy Spirit one God, we begin the writing of *mäwäsə'ət* with the help of God from John up to John'. The second Manuscript also has two columns but no illumination at all. It also has two guard covers at the beginning and end. The first ms is 24.3 x 16.8, and the second is 35.7 x 18.9 c.m.

8.5 Basic Contents

To evaluate the text, the following basic sub-components are essential. **ወጥኑ፡ ዳዊት፡** *wəṭṭane Dawit*, 'beginning of Psalms that is the opening verse of the Psalms or Canticles to which the *mäwäsə'ət* is related. And as stated earlier, when the 'əzl *mäwäsə'ət* is also chanted, verses from the known prayer of the prophets may be included. **መዋሥኡት፡** *mäwäsə'ət ሕናት* lit. 'mother', including the three modes of zema. **ፍጹሙ፡ዳዊት፡** *fəṣṣame Dawit*; lit. 'final verses of the Psalms'. **ስብሐት** *səbhāt*; lit. the Gloria. **ለዓለም** *lä'alām* lit. 'for ever'. **ምልጣን** *məḥṭan*; it is the end of the the main body of the *mäwäsə'ət*. **ምልክት** *mələkət*; it is the notation which guides the chanters.

The above components constitute the major elements of the text of *mäwäsə'ət*. Each element will be analyzed independently.

8.5.1 Provenance

Though *mäwäsə'ət* is performed for funeral services, it is not clear whether St. Yared composed it for funeral services, for personal prayer or for any other religious purpose. However, according to some sources, he prepared it for the prayer of absolution, taking into consideration the feasts and the personal life of those who died under different circumstances. He also included all sorts of people: men and women, young and old. Others think he may have composed it for personal prayer, glorifying God, the Virgin Mary and the saints.

However, many church scholars²⁹ believe that St. Yared composed the *mäwäsə'ət* in the following way: One day while he was praying to God, the Holy Spirit descended upon him and instructed him to spend seven days as a hermit. After accomplishing this, he decided to add another seven days. On the fourteenth day, as he was praying the fourteenth Psalm, the Gospel was revealed to him and he cried out in melodious mode, and said **እግዚአብሔር፡ መኩ፡ የኅድር፡ ውስተ፡ ጽላሎትክ፡** — 'əgəzi'o männu yähaddər wəstä ṣəlalotəkä — 'Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary?³⁰ The Holy Spirit answered **ዘዮሐውር፡ በንጹሕ፡ ወይገብር፡ ጽድቅ፡** — zä-yäḥawwər

²⁹Lisanä worq, 1997, pp. 44-45.

³⁰Psalm 14/15 Verse 1.

bänəṣuh wä-yəgäbbər šədqä — ‘He who walks blamelessly³¹.’ And St. Yared replied the final verse *ዘይገብር፡ ከመዝ፡ ኢይትሐወክ፡ ለዓለም፡* — zä-yəgäbbər kāmāzə ’iyyəṯhawwāk lā’alām — ‘He who does these things will never be shaken³²’. At that moment, remembering the blameless and righteous John the Baptist, he added the following words; *ዐቢዮ፡ ነቢዮ፡ ዮሐንስዓ፡ አስአልነ፡ ያስተምራር፡ በእንተአነ፡ ሃህልክ፡ ይኩን፡ ላእሌነ፡* (f.1r^a) — ‘abiyyä näbiyyä yohannəsha ’as’alänä yastāmhər bā’ənti’anä šahələkā yəkun lā’əlenä. ‘O Lord we beg the great prophet, John the baptist, to grant forgiveness and that mercy be shown towards us’.

According to the EOTC tradition, māwaś’ət begins with these words. The other scholars³³ believe that the four evangelists, proceeded by some introductory parts, they begin their writing the Gospel with the history of John the baptist. Because of this, all Ethiopian liturgies including māwaś’ət start and end with praise of the John the Baptist. On the other hand, as the prophet and Baptist John is the last of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament, EOTC celebrates him on the New year and on the third day of Pagumen³⁴. That is why the text starts with the following statement: *ንዋጥን፡ በረድኤተ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ጽሐፈ፡ መዋሥኢት፡ እምዮሐንስ፡ እስከ፡ ዮሐንስ፡* — nəwetṭən bārād’etä ’əgzī’abəher šəhifä māwaś’ət ’əmyohannəs ’əskä yohannəs — ‘Let us begin with the help of God writing māwaś’ət from John up to John.’ This does not only concern the saints, but it is believed in the church, that the Sabbath day which symbolizes dooms day is the last for the māwaś’ət.

8.5.2 Peculiar Psalms

There are three unique psalms which are not chanted at the performance of māwaś’ət, These are:

፩. ግፍጋፎ፡ እግዚአ፡ ለአለ፡ ይገፍዑኒ፡ gəfə’omu ’əgəzi’o lā’əllä yəgäfə’uni — ‘O Lord oppress those who oppress me.’³⁵

፪. እግዚአ፡ መኑ፡ ከማክ፡ ’əgəzi’o männu kāmākä — ‘O Lord, who is like you?.’³⁶

፫. እግዚአ፡ ፀወነ፡ ኮንክነ፡ ለትውልድ፡ ትውልድ፡ — ’əgəzi’o šāwānā konkännä lätəwləddä təwlədd. ‘Lord you have been our dwelling-place throughout all

³¹Ibid no 2.

³²Ibid no 5.

³³የዝማሬ መዋሥኢት ይትበሃል ዙር አባ ዐረጋዊ ገጃም።

³⁴Thirteenth month of Ethiopian five days in three distinct years and once a fourth also 6 days

³⁵Psalm 34/35 Verse 1.

³⁶Psalm 82/83 Verse 1.

generations.³⁷

We can ask here why these peculiar Psalms are not used as part of the prayers. There are different views concerning this among church scholars. And it has its own history and mystery. According to Christian tradition, on the day of salvation—i.e. Good Friday, after Jesus was crucified on the cross and separated His soul from His flesh by his own will, He descended deep into hell and saved Adam and Eve and their offsprings. But three souls remained unsaved: These were Pharaoh king of Egypt, king Herod the third and Judas Escariot.

In assertion to this the scripture says, *ወኃደጎሙ፡ ለእኩያን፡ ህየ፡ ምስለ፡ መላእክቲሆሙ፡ ውስተ፡ ትውክልና፡ እስከ፡ ዕለተ፡ ደይን፡* — *wäḥadägomu lä'əkkuyan həyyä mäslä mäla'əkti homu wəstä təwkelənnä 'əskä 'älätä dāyn.* 'And he left the wicked in the hell with their leaders until the day of Judgment.'³⁸

According to tradition, it is believed that the worst sinners were left in hell with the demons, but some church scholars do not agree concerning Judas; rather they consider that he was possessed by the devil himself in some sense.³⁹ Their argument is based on the evidence that at the time of Christ's 'death', Judah was alive. Others also give this account concerning three people who were excommunicated according to Orthodox doctrine. They are: Arius, who was condemned by the 318 Orthodox scholars assembled in Nicaea. Macedonius, who was condemned by 150 Orthodox bishops assembled in Constantinople. Nestorius, who was condemned by the 200 bishops assembled in Ephesus. The scholars of the church symbolize the congregation of bishops with the bunch of Psalms and the remaining three, as indicated above, with those condemned.

Though there are no clear causes for representing these three Psalms, the first two psalms are messages full of curses and rebuke of David's opponents. In another tale, it is the prophecy concerning those who crucified Jesus Christ. Even though there are similar Psalms, at last, they have words of reconciliation. Because *mäwäṣə'ət* is a prayer for the salvation of the 'departed'. The third is a prayer of Moses, not of David. The psalms include portions which are not by him, but by different prophets and singers.

7.5.3 The 'gloria': *ስብሐት* – *səbəḥat*

The main elements which include the 'Gloria' are: *ስብሐት፡ ለክብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡*

³⁷Psalm 89/90 Verse 1.

³⁸*ትምህርተ ጎብኣት አንድምታ እና መቅድመ ወንጌል፡፡*

³⁹*የዝማሬ እና መዋሥኢት ይትበሃል ዙር አምባ ዐረጋዊ ገዳም (ያልታተመ)፡፡*

ቅዱስ፡ ለዓለም፡ ወለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ ‘Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, in this world, for ever and ever’. It is not found in the psalms, but in the EOTC whenever the psalm, the prophets and the songs of songs are prayed and chanted at the end of every psalm. Church scholars believe that St. Yared included the gloria since it is melodious and glorifies the Holy Trinity in Eternity.

7.5.4 The antiphon: māwaś’ət with its məṭṭan — መዋሥኢት፡ ወምልጣን፡

There is not much difference between the two segments except some melodic techniques. In māwaś’ət, there is no məṭṭan without ’ənnat ‘mother’ and vice versa. The word məṭṭan is not separated from its ‘mother’. It is merely a symbol, as if to say there is no son without a mother and a mother without a son. As stated in chapter two, it represents the Virgin Mary and her Son, respectively. This verse can be inserted with the addition of melodic techniques, altering the performance; the two are chanted one after the other repeatedly. This represents their persecution when they fled from country to country in fear of Herod. The məṭṭan is also chanted with drums and sistrums. This represents Jesus being beaten and crucified in the mortal body he assumed from the Virgin Mary. Subsequently, the leading chorister, and the other choristers follow him in singing it, other choristers, one from each side i.e. the right and the left repeat the chant. This repetition from both sides symbolizes Jesus being sent from between Cayafa and Hana to Pilate. The chant with the prayer sticks symbolizes his being beaten with a stick and slapped, and the sistrums’ sound also represents that he was beaten. The ‘mother’ is not chanted with the use of stick, drum and systrium which symbolizes that the Virgin Mary did not undergo all this sufferings.

Inter-textuality

As it is a hymnological text, it is directly related to sacred texts such as the Bible, apocrypha, hagiographies, synaxarium, homilies, and to liturgical texts like Dəgg^{wa}, šomä Dəgg^{wa}, Mə’əraf, Zəmmare and Qəddase.

With the Bible

Since the EOTC accepts both the Old and the New Testaments, all her traditions are based on these two texts, and most of St. Yared’s verses are based on the Old and New Testaments, as he often illustrated and clarified.

With the Old Testament

፩. ይቤሎ፡ ያዕቆብ፡ ለወልዱ፡ ይሁዳ፡ ሀሎ፡ ንጉሥ፡ ዘይወጽዕ፡ እምኔክ፡ ዘየሐጽብ፡ በወይን፡ ሉብሶ፡ (f.25r^b) — Yəbelo ya’əqob läwäldu yəhuda hallo nəguś zäyewäś ’əmənekä

zäyähäṣəb bäwäyn ləbso — ‘Jacob said to his son, Judah there a king will arise from among you who will wash his garments with wine’ (Genesis 49:11).

፪. ሀሎ፡ አምላክነ፡ ወሀሎ፡ ነጉሥነ፡ እምእዴክ፡ ውኡቱ፡ ያድኅኅነ፡ ወእምእቶነ፡ እሳት፡(f.17r^a) — hallo ’amlakənä wä-hallo nəguṣənä ’əm’ədekä wu’ətu yadəḥənännä wä’əm’ətonä ’əsat — ‘If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king’ (Daniel 3:17).

፫. ቆመ፡ ነጉሥ፡ መንገሉ፡ አቶን፡ ምስሉ፡ አዝብ፡ ወይቤ፡ ገጽ፡ ለራብዕ፡ ወልደ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ይመስል፡ — qomä nəguṣ mängälä ’əton məslä ḥəzb wäyəbe gäṣu lārabə’ wäldä ’əgzi’abəher yəməssəl (f.17r^b) — ‘The king stood with the people in front of the furnace and said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like the son of God’ (Daniel 3:25).

፬. ትወጽዕ፡ በትር፡ እምስርወ፡ እሴይ፡ ወጽኔ፡ እምውስቲታ፡ የዐርግ፡ ወየአርፍ፡ ላዕሌሁ፡ መንፈስ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ (f.19v^b) — təwäṣə’ bātr ’əmsərwä ’əsey wäṣəge ’əmwəsteta yä’arrəg wäyā’arrəf la’əlehu mänfäsä ’əgzi’abher — ‘A shoot will come up from the root of Jesse; and it will put forth a bud and blossom, and the spirit of the Lord will rest upon Him’ (Isaiah 11:1).

፭. በህየ፡ ማርያም፡ እህቱ፡ ለሙሴ፡ በዕብራይስጥ፡ በይባቤ፡ ዘበጠት፡ ከበሮ፡ በዝዩ፡ ማርያም፡ ቅድስት፡ በሥምረተ፡ መለኮት፡ — bāhəyyä marəyam ’əḥətu lāmuse bā’əbrayəṣṭ bāyəbabe zābātāt kəbāro bāzəyā mariam qəddəst bāsəmrätä mälākot (f.33r^c) — ‘Then Miriam the prophetess, Moses’ sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing’ (Exodus 15:20).

፮. ወይኤልሁ፡ አሐዱ፡ አሐዱ፡ ምስሉ፡ ካልኡ፡ ወይብሉ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ጸባዖት፡ (f.11v^a)—wäyəkəlehu ’aḥadu ’aḥadu məslä kalə’u wäyəblu qəddus qəddus qəddus ’əgəzi’abher ṣəba’ot — ‘and they called to one another: Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD Almighty’ (Isaiah 6:3).

፯. እስመ፡ አልቦ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ከመ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ወአልቦ፡ ጸድቅ፡ ከመ፡ አምላክነ፡ (f.17r^a) — ’əsmä ’albo qəddus kāmā ’əgəzi’bəher wä-’albo ṣadəq kāmā ’amlaknä — ‘There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no rock like our God’ (1 Samuel 2:2).

With the New Testament

፩. ወበሳድስ፡ ወርኅ፡ ተፈነወ፡ ገብርኤል፡ መልአክ፡ እምነብ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ኅብ፡ ማርያም፡ ሀገረ፡ ገሊላ፡ እንተ፡ ስማ፡ ናዝሬት፡ (f.24r^c) — wābāsadəs wārəḥ tāfännāwā gābrə’el mälə’ak ’əmhābä ’əgəzi’ab’her ḥabä marəyam hagärä gälila ’əntä səma nazret — ‘In the sixth month, God sent the Angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin’ (Luke 1: 25).

፪. በሰላም፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ በከመ፡ አዘዘክ፡ እስመ፡ ርእሥ፡ አዕይንትየ፡ አድኅኖተክ፡ (f.27r^a) — bäsälam 'əgəzi'o bākämä 'azzāzkä 'əsmä rə'əya 'a'əyyəntəyā 'adəhənotkā — 'now, dismiss your servant in peace for my eyes have seen your salvation' (Luke 2: 29).

፫. መልአ፡ መንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ላዕለ፡ እስጢፋኖስ፡ ነጻረ፡ ሰማየ፡ ወርዕየ፡ ስብሐተ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ወኢየሱስ፡ ይነበር፡ በየማነ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ (f.7r^b) — mälə'a mänəfäs qəddus la'ələ 'əstīfanos nāsārā sāmayä wärəyā səbhātā 'əgzi'abəher wä'iyāsus yənābbər bāyāmanā 'əgəzi'abəher — 'but Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit looked up to heaven and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing⁴⁰ at the right hand of God' (Acts 7:55).

፬. (f.2v^a) እስጢፋኖስ፡ ጸለየ፡ አንቃዕዲዎ፡ ሰማየ፡ ወይቤ፡ ሥረይ፡ ሎሙ፡ ዘንተ፡ ወኢትረሰ፡ ጌጋየ፡ — 'əstīfanos şälläyā 'anqa'ədiwo sāmayä wäyəbe šəray lomu zāntā wä'itərāsi gegayā 'while they were stoning him, Stephen prayed: ['Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he fell on his knees]⁴¹ and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them' (Act 7:59).

With the apocrypha

1. ቡሩክ፡ አንተ፡ አምላክ፡ አበዊነ፡ ቡሩክ፡ አንተ፡ (f.10v^c) — Buruk 'antä 'amlakä 'abāwināburuk 'antä 'you, God our father, [you] are blessed' (ተረፈ. ዳን. 13:6).

፪. እሙን፡ ኩሉ፡ ግብርክ፡ ወርቱዕ፡ ኩሉ፡ ፍናዊክ፡ ዘአድነንክ፡ ነፍሱ፡ አግብርቲክ፡ እለአምነ፡ በስምክ፡ (f.17r^b) — 'əmmun kullu gəbrəkä wärətu'ə kullu fənnawikä zä'adhankä nāfsä 'agbərtikā 'əllä 'amnu bäsəməkä — 'O God your deeds are believable and your way is straight that you might save Your servants who believe in Your name' (ተረፈ. ዳን. 13).

፫. ነሥክ፡ አብርሃም፡ አዕፁቀ፡ በቀልት፡ ተፈሥሐ፡ ሰብሐ፡ ወዘመረ፡ በዕለተ፡ ሰንበት፡ (f.24v^b) — nāsə'a 'abrəham 'a'əşuqā bāqālt tāfäsəha sābbəha wāzāmmārā bā-ələtā sənbat 'Abraham took a palm tree and praised and sang joyfully on the Sabbath day' (Jub .15 :24).

፬. ሰብሐ፡ ወዘመረ፡ ወገብረ፡ በዓለ፡ ወይቤ፡ ዛቲ፡ ዕለት፡ በዓለ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ (f.24v^c) — Sābbəha wāzāmmārā wägābrā bā'alā wäyəbe zatti 'ələt bā'alā 'əgəzi'abher. 'He sang, made a feast and said: 'This day is the LORD's feast' (Jub. 15 :24).

⁴⁰ Mss says sitting but the Bible says standing

⁴¹ The words in brackets do not correspond with those of the Mss

With the books of church scholars

፩. ነጻረ፡ አብ፡ እምሰማይ፡ ወኢረከበ፡ በከማኪ፡ ፈነው፡ ወልደ፡ ዋሕደ፡ ወተሰብኦ፡ እምኔኪ፡ (f.33r^b) — Nāṣārā ‘ab ‘əmsāmay wä’irākābā zākāmaki fānāwä wäldo waḥədä wätäsābə’a əmneki. ‘God the father looked down from heaven and did not find like you; He sent His only begotten Son who became man’ (St. Ephrem⁴²). The same phrase occurs in Abba ḥəryaqos’⁴³.

፪. ወሶብ፡ ርዕዮ፡ ንጽሕናኪ፡ ለሊሁ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ አብ፡ ፈነው፡ ኃቤኪ፡ መልአኩ፡ ብረሃናዊ፡ በስሙ፡ ገብርኤል፡ — wäsobä rə‘əyā nəṣəḥənnaki lālihu ‘əgəzi’abḥər ‘ab fānāwä habeki mälə’ako bərhanawe zäsəmu gäbrə’el. ‘Since He saw your purity (of heart), God the Father Himself sent an Angel by the name of Gabriel to you’.

8.6 Citations from the text

The second most famous Ethiopian composer of zema after St. Yared was Abba Giyorgis of Gasəçça, and the following is cited from his text.

፩. ይዌድስዋ፡ መላእክት፡ ለማርያም፡ በውስተ፡ ውሳጤ፡ መንግሥት፡ ወይብልዋ፡ በሀኪ፡ ማርያም፡ ሐዳስዮ፡ ጣዕዋ፡ (f.33r^c) — (mäṣḥafä sä‘atat) yəwädəsəwwa mäla’əkt lämarəyam bāwəstā wəsate mǎntola‘ət wäyəbləwwa bāhakki marəyam haddasəyu ta‘əwa ‘The Angels praised the Virgin Mary behind the curtain and said: greetings to you Virgin Mary, the little lioness cub’.

፪. ሰብኦ፡ ኮነ፡ ከማኑ፡ አኩ፡ ንዲኑ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ከዊኑ፡ መጽኡ፡ ይቤዝው፡ እምኩሉ፡ አበሳኑ፡ (f.19v^a) — (mäṣḥafä məšṭir mənəbab zä-lədät) sābə’a konā kāmānā ‘akko ḥadigo ‘əgzi’bḥər kāwinā māṣə’a yəbezəwännä ‘əməkullu ‘abāsanä. ‘He became human like us without abandoning His Divinity. He came to save us from our sins’.

8.6.1 With the synaxarium, hagiographies and homilies

There is no substantive difference between the synaxarim, the hagiographies and the homilies, but the Synaxarium relates to history more concisely. On the other hand, the Synaxarium covers more incidents than the hagiographies, and it gives us clear information about past events. As stated above, *mäwäśə‘ət* is composed for Saints in nearly the same way as in hagiographies. They are very numerous. An example of hagiography is that of Alexis or Gebre Kirstos.

፩. ቦኦ፡ በሌሊት፡ ኀብ፡ መርዓት፡ አኀባ፡ እዴሃ፡ ወይቤላ፡ ንዲ፡ ንትኅየድ፡ ኪዳነ፡ ወግበራ፡ በእቤለኪ፡ —

⁴²*wəddase Marəyam zārābu* ‘ə.

⁴³*Qəddase Marəyam*.

bo'a bälelit ḥabä märə'at 'ahaza 'ədeha wäyəbela nə'i nətkayäd kidanä wägəbäri zä'əbeläki 'At night, he entered to where the bride was, held her hand and said: 'Come let us promise and do what I will tell you'.

፪. ወተካየደት፡ ምስሌሁ፡ ከመ፡ ትግበር፡ ዘይቤላ፡ ተገሥኡ፡ ጎብረ፡ ሰገዱ፡ ወጸለዩ፡ ቅድመ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ — wätäkayädät mäslehu kāmā təgbär zäybela tänsə'u ḥəburä sägädu wäsälleyu qədmä 'əgəzi'bḥer. 'And she took an oath in order to perform what he said, and they stood together, bowing and praying before God'.

፫. ሐረ፡ ጎብ፡ መርዓት፡ ብእሱ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ሰዓማ፡ ርእሳ፡ ወይቤላ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ የሀሉ፡ ምስሌኪ፡ እምግብረ፡ ለይጣን፡ ያድኅንኪ፡ — ḥorä ḥabä märə'at bə'əse 'əgəzi'bḥer sä'ama rə'əsa wäyəbela 'əgəzi'bḥer yāhallu mäsleki əmgəbrä säyəṭan yadhənki. 'The man of God went to the bride, kissed her head and said, let God be with you and save you from evil deeds'.

፬. ወ-አተ፡ ጊዜ፡ በከየት፡ ወትቤ፡ እግዚእየ፡ ወፍቁርየ፡ አይቱ፡ ተሐውር፡ ወለመነ፡ ተጎድገኒ፡ — wə'ətä gize bākāyät wätəbe 'əgzi'əyā wäfəqurəyā 'ayəte tāḥawər wälāmānnu tāḥaddəgänni. 'At that moment, she wept and asked her Lord and beloved: Where are you going and to whom do you leave me?'

፭. ወይቤላ፡ ቅዱስ፡ አጎድገኪ፡ ጎብ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ንጉሥ፡ አንሱ፡ አጎውር፡ እትልዎ፡ ለክርስቶስ፡ — wäyəbela qəddus 'ahaddəgäkki ḥabä 'əgzi'abḥer nəguś 'ansä 'ahawər 'ətləwo läkrəstos. 'And the saint said to her, "I leave you to God, the King, while I go to follow Jesus'.

፮. አርመመት፡ በአንብዕ፡ ሶቤሃ፡ ተዘኪራ፡ መሐላ፡ ወኪዳነ፡ ዘክርስቶስ፡ ዘተካየደት፡ ምስሌሁ፡ — 'armāmät bā'anbə'ə sobeha täzäkkira māḥala wākidanä zäkrəstos zätäkayädät mäslehu. 'She remained silent and wept remembering the oath she made to [Jesus] Christ'.

፯. ወጽኦ፡ በሌሊት፡ ወሐረ፡ ርትቀ፡ ብሔረ፡ ከመ፡ ይገሥሥ፡ ዘበላዕሉ፡ ሀገረ፡ እንተ፡ አልባቲ፡ መምሰለ፡ ቤተ፡ ማርያም፡ በጽሐ፡ ወነበረ፡ — wäṣə'a bälelit wāḥorä rəḥuqā bəherä kāmā yəhsəs zäbälä'əlu hagärä 'əntä 'albatti mamsälä betä marəyam bāṣḥa wänäbärä. 'He went out far away at night in search of a distant country; and arrived at the house of Mary where he dwelled'.

፰. ... ቤተ፡ ማርያም፡ በጽሐ፡ ወነበረ፡ አሠርተ፡ ወሃምስተ፡ ዓመተ... — betä marəyam bāṣḥa wänäbärä 'aṣärtä wāhamstä 'amätä. '...arriving at the house of Mary, he lived for fifteen years...'.

፱. ጎብ-አትዮ፡ ዘምስሌኪ፡ ለሰብእ፡ አከሰትኩ፡ ይቤላ፡ ለማርያም፡ ይእዘኒ፡ ምርሐኒ፡ ጎብ፡ ዘይጌይስ፡ ወይሲኒ፡ — ḥəbu'atəyā zāməslekki lāsäbə'ə 'ikäsätku yəbela lāmarəyam yə'əzeni

mərḥanni ḥabä zäyəheyəs wäyəsenni. 'He said to Mary, I will not disclose the secret we have together to anyone, and now please let me choose that which is best and the good'.

፲. በዓማ፡ ብዙኅ፡ በጾም፡ ወበትጋህ፡ ውስተ፡ ቤተ፡ አቡሁ፡ ነበረ፡ አሠርተ፡ ወክልኤተ፡ ዓመተ፡ እንዘ፡ ይፈጽፍድ፡ ትዕግሥተ፡ — bäsama bəzuh bäsom wäbätəgah wəstā betä 'abuhu näbärä 'asärtä wäklə'etä 'amätä 'ənzä yafädäfəd tə'əgəstā. 'With much exhaustion, fasting and cunning, he lived at his father's house for twelve years and was treated with tolerance'.

፩፲. እንዘ፡ ይበውሉ፡ ወይወጽኡ፡ አግብርተ፡ አቡሁ፡ ወእሙ፡ ይጸርፉ፡ ላእሌሁ፡ ወይቤሉ፡ አሰስሉ፡ ለነ፡ ዘንተ፡ ምስኪኑ፡ ዓና፡ ጸሐቱ፡ ኢዮኸመነ፡ — 'ənzä yəbāwə'u wäyəwäsə'u 'agbörtä 'abuhu wä'əmu yəšärəfu la'əlehu wäyəbelu 'asäsəlu länä zäntä məskinä šena ši'atu əyyahsəmənnä. 'His father's and mother's slaves, insulted him as they went in and out, saying: Avoid the poor creature; let his bad smell not bother us.'

፪፲. (f.6r^b-f.7r^b) ኢይትአቀፉ፡ በላዕሌዮ፡ አግብርተ፡ አቡዮ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ እግዚእዮ፡ አንሰ፡ እፈቅድ፡ ከመ፡ ትንሥክ፡ ለነፍስዮ፡ — 'iyyətə'aqāfu bälä'əleyä 'agbörtä 'abuyä 'iyyäsus kərstos 'əgzī'əyā 'ansä 'əfäqəd kāmätənsə'a länäfsəyā. 'May my father's and mother's servants, not be an obstacle for me, may the Lord Jesus Christ take my soul!'

8.6.2 With Liturgical Texts

One might say that all liturgical texts have a close relationship to one another. It is difficult to distinguish one from another except for their melodical styles. Most of the time they are performed side by side; they can not be performed separately.

8.6.3 With Dəggʷa

As stated in chapter one, *mäwäsə'ət* is performed together with *Dəggʷa*, and the church scholar who leads the chant has to ensure right associations between the elements of the *Dəggʷa* and the *mäwäsə'ət*. Besides, there are many similarities between the two liturgical traditions.

፩. ሐዋርያተሁ፡ ከበበ፡ እግረ፡ አርዳኢሁ፡ ሐፀበ፡ ኮኖሙ፡ አበ፡ ወእሙ፡ ወመሐሮሙ፡ ጥበበ፡ (f.31r^c) — ḥawarəyatihu kābābä 'əgrä 'arda'ihu ḥasābä; konomu 'abä wä'əmmä wāmāḥaromu tēbābä. 'He anointed His disciples and washed their feet; He was like a father and a mother to them; and taught them wisdom'.

The above verse is found in the same form and structure in *mäṣḥafä Dəggʷa* on page 284 in the form of poetry.

፪. ሰማዕት፡ ዘሞቱ፡ መሰሎሙ፡ ለአዕይንተ፡ አብዳን፡ ውእቱሰ፡ ባረከ፡ ዓመተ፡ ጸድቃን፡(f.5v) — sāma‘ət zāmotu mäsälomu lä’a‘əyntä ’abdan wə’ətussä barākä ’amätä šadqan. ‘To the foolish it seems the martyrs are dead but He blessed the year of the righteous’. Except word transformations, a similar text with identical translation and transliteration is the following:

፫. እሰ፡ ሐረስዋ፡ ለምድር፡ በእርፈ፡ መስቀልከ፡ ወዘርኡ፡ መዝገብ፡ ቃልከ፡ ውስተ፡ ኩሉ፡ ምድር፡ ወኢተን፡ ባረከ፡ (f.31r) — ’əllä ḥaräsəwwa lämədr bā’ərfä mäsqäləkä wäzär’u mäsḡäbä qaləkä wəstā kulu mädər wä’itāḥafu bāqədmekä. ‘Those who plowed to the earth with your plowing cross and sowed your word don’t get ashamed before you’.

3.1. With the Mə’əraf The similarity of Mäwaśə’ət and M’əraf is that both are performed within the Psalms and Dəggwā. To perform the two liturgies without the Psalms and Dəggwā is impossible. The other relation is that both of them are performed orally during the teaching and learning process. A student who is learning Dəggwā is expected to study Mə’əraf at night, and a student who attends Zəmmare has to do mäwaśə’ət. All the Psalms provide examples of these connections.

8.6.4 With the Zəmmare

These two liturgical texts, zəmmare and mäwaśə’ət, have more similarities than the others. Their style of melody is nearly the same, and they are taught at the same time and school. They are usually described with a compound word zəmmare- mäwaśə’ət. Likewise, there are similarities between them to the level of words. For example:

ኩሉሙ፡ ማኅበረ፡ መላዕክቲሁ፡ ይሰብሉ፡ ወይዘምሩ፡ ለዘበሥ፡ ሰብዕ፡ አስተርአዩ፡ ንዑ፡ ንሥግድ፡ ሎቱ፡ (f.23r) — Kullomu maḥəbärä mäla’əktiḥu yəsebbəḥu wäyzeməru läzä bäsəga säb’ə ’astärə’ayä nə’u nəśḡəd lottu. (And the same is found in māṣḥafā zəmmare with the readings). ‘All the assemblies of His angels give thanks and sing to Him who revealed Himself in humanity’.

8.6.5 With qəddase (The book of Anaphora)

Qəddase and mäwaśə’ət show similarities both in performance and, sometimes in meaning. For example, during funeral services, the two are performed side-by-side. Their melodic style is also nearly the same. For example, ወበእንተ፡ ኩሉሙ፡ ሐዋርያት፡ እሰ፡ ሐረስዋ፡ ለምድር፡ አካዛብ፡ በእርፈ፡ መስቀልከ፡ — kullomu ḥawarəyat ’əlä ḥarəsəwa lämədrä ’aḥəzab bā’ərfä mäsqäləkä. And concerning all the

apostles who plowed the earth of the nations with the plow of the cross (Anaphora of John, Son of 'Thunder', p. 205). This is also the same with the resemblance of Dəgg^wa and mäwaṣə'ət.⁴⁴

8.7 Literary Features of the Text

Ethiopian liturgical texts have a unique literary feature besides their religious significance. Mäwaṣə'ət in particular has many such features. Such as beyond the following:

8.7.1 Poetic features

Most of the time, the text has a unique poetic structure, and the stanzas are not more than four or five lines. Within these short verses, there are many messages.

ተመክሩ፡ ሰማዕት፡ tāmakkāru sāma'ət

ከመወርቅ፡ በእሳት፡ kāmā wärq bā'əsət

(f.5v^c) ተወክፎሙ፡ መድኅኒኑ፡ ከመ፡ ጽንኑ፡ መሥዋክት፡ Tāwākfomu mädəḥanninā kāmā sənəḥaḥa mäsəwa'ət.

'The martyrs were tested by fire like gold, and our Savior accepted them as a worthy sacrifice.'

As can be seen in the above poem, it has three one and the last verse is longer than the others. It has also the structure of nəṣəsər Qəne which is similar to a simile; i.e. it compares gold with martyrs.

(f.1v^b) እግዚአብሔር፡ መርሐ፡ 'əgzi'u mārḥa
 ዮርዳኖስ፡ አብጽሐ፡ Yordanosä 'abṣḥa
 ወበህየ፡ ዮሐንስ፡ ፍጹመ፡ ተፈስሐ፡ wābāhəyyä yohannəs fəsumä tāfäsəḥa

'He led his Lord and brought him to the Jordan and in these John filed with great joy'.

Though the meaning is a kind of story, the structure is the same as the previous one. Similarly, most of the text's form is poetic. On reflection, in relation to the mournful melody, the pleasant poetic structure and its performance, appears to have the content of a funeral song or elegy which in Ethiopian tradition is called መብሽ 'mušo'⁴⁵.

⁴⁴See page 38 no 5.

⁴⁵A poetic funeral song means an elegy.

8.7.1 Simile

A simile is a kind of figurative speech that draws a comparison between people or things. A phrase containing the word “like and as” is called a simile. The following are examples:

(f.9r ^a) ከመ፡ ኖኅ፡ በየውሃቱ፤	kāmā Noḥ bāyāwwəhatu
ወከመ፡ ኢዮብ፡ በትዕግሥቱ፤	wākāmā’Iəyyob bātə’əgstu
ወከመ ኤልያስ፡ ይመስል፡ ሕይወቱ፡ ለብፁዕ፡ አባ፡ ዮሐን፡	wākāmā ’eləyas yəməssəl
	ḥəyəwātu lābəṣu‘ə ’abba yohanni

‘Like Noah in his humility, and like Job in his patience, and his life seems like Elijah to Abba Yohanni’. Here abba Yohanni is compared to three great figures from the Old Testament.

(f.30r ^b) እንዘ፡ በምድር፡ ያንሰሱ፤	’ənzä bāmədr yansossu
ከመ፡መላእክት፡ ይመስል፡ ሕይወቱ፤	kāmā māla’əkt yəməssəl ḥəyəwātu
ለብፁዕ፡ አባ፡ ገሪማ፡ ዘፈጸመ፡ ገድሎ፡ በትዕግሥቱ፡	lābəṣu ’abba gärima zäfäšämä gädlo
	bātə’əgstu

‘Concerning abba Gärima, who accomplished much bearing endurance, the time he spent on earth, his life resembles that of the Angels’. Here, one of the nine saints, Abba Gärima, is compared to the Angels. In other words, the rhyme of the first verse ends with the consonant [s], the second and the third. However, with the consonant [t]. A special relationship is observed with three of them ending with the vowel sound [u]. This is different from the mainstream tradition of qəne and mälk‘ə in the EOTC.

(f.30vb) ከመ፡ ደመና፡ ከረምት፡ ምሉዕ፡ ሃይማኖት፤	kāmā dämmāna kərämt məlu‘ə ḥaymnotəkä
ወስተ፡ ከሉ፡ ምድር፡ ተሰመዐ፡ ዜናክ፡	wəstā kullu mədr tāsāmə’a zenakä
ወስተ፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ሕይወት፡ ተጽሕፈ፡ ስምክ፡	wəstā māṣḥafä ḥəyewät täṣəḥəfä səməkä

‘Your faith overflows like a cloud in the rainy season, and your news heard all over the Earth, and your name is written in the book of life’. The above sentence also shows a comparison of similar things such as cloud and faith.

8.7.2 Metaphor

This kind of figurative language also expresses an implicit comparison. In this text, there are several metaphorical speeches.

(f.33v ^b) ጸርሕ፡ ንጽሕት፡	ṣəṣḥə nəṣḥəṣə
ማኅደረ፡ መለኮት፡	maḥədärä mäläkot
እሞሙ፡ ለሰማዕት፡	’əmmomu lāsāma‘ət

ወእኅቶሙ፡ ለመላእክት፡
ስለሊ፡ ለነ፡ ማርያም፡ ቅድስት፡

wä'əḥətomu lāmāla'əkt
sä'ali länä marəyam qəddəst

‘A clean hall, the house of the Divine, the mother of martyrs, and the sister of Angels, Virgin Mary, pray for us’. Here the words ‘clean hall’, ‘house’, ‘mother’ and ‘sister’ are metaphorical expression.

(f.12v^c) እስመ፡ ተጽእኑክ፡ ዲባ፡ አፍራሲክ፡ አፍራሲክ፡ አይወት፡ ውኣቱ፡ —’əsmä täṣə’ənkä Dibä ’afrasikä ’afrasikāni ḥəywät wə’ətu. ‘For you ride on your horses and your horses are life. Horses are a metaphoric expression.’

8.7.3 Personification

This is also a kind of figurative speech that personifies inanimate things and animals. For example:

(f.32v^c) ለዝንቱ፡ ደብር፡ ይዌድስዎ፡ ወንይስት፡ lāzəntu dābr yəweddəswwo wāḥayəst
ወሎቱ፡ ይጠፍሉ፡ አፍላግ፡ wālotu yətäffəḥu’afḥag
ወኪያሁ፡ ይሰብሁ፡ አብህርት፡ wākiyahu yəsebbəhu’abhərt
ወበውስቱቱ፡ ይዜምሩ፡ ደመናት፡ wābāwəstetu yəzemməru dāmmānat

‘For this mount—village, spring gives thanks, and rivers clap, oceans thank him and clouds sing unto Him’.

All of the above are inanimate things, but they are given the character of human beings. The following is similar to the previous one. (F.33ra) አድባር፡ ተፈስሎ፡ ወአውግር፡ ተሐስዩ —’adbar tāfäsəḥu wä’awəgər tāḥasəyu. ‘mountains are pleased and the hills rejoice...’.

8.7.4 Symbolism

As stated in the preceding sections, every movement of the text is full of symbolisms. For instance, the number of māwaśə’ət performed at once, the chanting style and the representation of notations have symbolic meanings. One can safely conclude that māwaśə’ət is a symbolic text.

8.7.5 Parallelism

Parallelism is the deliberate repetition of words or sentence structures for reasons of emphasis. The text has many examples of use of parallelism like the following:

(f.31r^b) ለእግዚአብሔር፡ ፍቁሩ፡ lā’əgəzi’abəḥər fəquru
ለክርስቶስ፡ ካህኑ፡ lākərstos kahənu
አባ፡ ገሪማ፡ ለመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ማኅደሩ፡፡ ’abba Gārīma lāmānfās qəddus maḥədāru.

‘Beloved of God, Priest of Christ, Abba Gerima, dwelling of the Holy Spirit’.

The sentences in the above text have a parallel structures.

8.8 Values of the Text

The text has many values, it is difficult to do justice to it in a short paper. But some important points are mentioned below.

8.8.1 Doctrinal Value

As other liturgical texts, it has a tendency of including doctrinal values. Besides its funeral service and pleasant melodical style, it also carries messages that exhort the faithful with mesmerizing poems such as the following:

(f.31r^c) ኢገደርህ፡ ሞተ፡ 'inəfärrəh motä
 ነሢኣን፡ ሕይወተ፡ näśi'anä həywätä
 ሐዋርያት፡ መሐሩነ፡ ርትዕተ፡ ሃይማኖተ፡ ሐዋርያተ māḥarunä rətə'otä hayəmanotä

'We do not fear death while possessing life; the apostles taught us the Orthodox faith'. Such texts invoke the Spirit and give stability, support, courage and endurance. In addition, it can express feelings and exhortations concisely, as in the following:

(f.28v^c) ነአምን፡ ልደቶ፡ ለክርስቶስ፡ ብሔረ፡ ግብጽ፡ በአቶ፡ ጥምቀቶ፡ ሞቶ፡ ወተንሥኦቶ፡ እርገቶ፡ በየማነ፡ አብ፡ ንብረቶ፡ ዳግመ፡ ምጽአቶ፡ በስብሐት፡ — nä'amən lədäto läkrəstos bəherä gəbəṣ bā'ato təmqäto moto wätānsə'oto 'ərgäto bāyāmanä 'ab nəbräto dagəmə məṣə'ato bäsəbḥat. 'We trust in the Incarnation of Christ, His flight to Egypt, baptism, death, and resurrection, His ascension and sitting on the right side of the Father, and His coming again'. These words are few but almost all Christ's activities on Earth are included in it.

8.8.2 Social Value

Different social values are also treated as follows:

(f.22r^c) ይቤሎ፡ ሊባኖስ፡ ለጳጳስ፡ ኢይደልወክ፡ ትንሣኢ፡ ጎልያነ፡ ወበእንተዝ፡ ሰደድዎ፡ እምሀገር፡ እሎ፡ ገበዘ፡ አክሱም፡ — yəbelo libanos läpappas 'iyyədälləwäkkä tənśa'ə hələyanä wäbä'əntäz sädädəwwo 'əmhagär 'əllä gäbäzä' 'aksum. 'Libanos said to the bishop it is not correct for you to take offerings. Because of this, the leader of the priests of Axum chased him from the country'. This is an example of avoiding corruption that is associated with the presentation of gifts; from which a society can learn from such things.

8.8.3 Cultural value

It has also many cultural values. For example, it advises people to welcome guests, which is one aspect of Ethiopian identity.

(f.27v^b) ዝንቱሰ፡ ብዕሊ፡ መፍቀሬ፡ ነግድ፡ ዘመታነ፡ ያነሥኢ፡ ወእስተርአየ፡ ለሕዝብ፡ ከመ፡ ኮከበ፡

ጽግህ: — zəntussä bəʾəsi mäfqäre nägd zämutanä yanäsʾə wäʾastärəʾayä lähəzb kāmā kokäbä šəbah. ‘This man is a lover of strangers; he wakes up the dead and he appears to the people like the morning star’.

7.8.4 Historical value

Many historical elements can be reconstructed from this text. For these *mäwäṣəʾət* of the Saints contain much useful information. People, place names, incidents and many other useful things are mentioned in the text. In other words, as stated above, there is clear indication that the text was composed by St. Yared, for there is much evidence in the text. For example, as mentioned in the proceeding page, አለ ገበየ አክሱም ’əllä gäbäzä ’aksum — ‘leader of the priests of Aksum’, is an indication that the text is authored by an indigenous scholar from Aksum. In other words, most of its contents are similar to that of the Ethiopic account of the Bible and Apocrypha. No Saints who came after St. Yared are mentioned in the text.

7.8.5 Borrowed words

In Geez literature, some words are from Greek. This is because much of Ethiopian religious literature was translated from Arabic and Greek. The researcher found the following loan words from Greek:

The four cherubim (Angels) respectively

Greek	Gəʾəz	English
ḏ. ባራማራ	ገጽ ሰብ፡	face(of) human
፪. መሰጢን	ገጽ እንስሳ	face(of) animal
፫. እግራማጣ	ገጽ ንስር	face(of) eagle
፬. ሱርጉሮን	ገጽ አንበሳ	face(of) lion
፭. ኤጲፋንያ	አስተርአዮ	‘appearance’

8.8.6 Basic Notations

Notations constitute an important element of the text. To learn the liturgy, one has to know the basic notations (signs). The well known basic notations are eight in number. These notations represent Jesus’ incarnation and crucifixion.

Table 1: basic notations

No	Name	Notations	Symbolical meanings
፩	Dəfat		The coming of Jesus to this world (Incarnation).

ḡ	Hidāt	Ⲙ	His activities on Earth teaching, and passing from Cayafa to Pilate and Hirod.
ḥ	Qənat	ⲛ	Judas' envy of Jesus when He healed the sick.
ḡ	Yəzāt	ⲛ	His capture by the Jews and His immanent
ḡ	Qurt	ⲛ	His Incarnation and intervention to save Adam and Eve
ḡ	Cərāt	ⲛ	His floggings
ḡ	Rəkərək	ⲛ or ⲛ	His blood drippings during the flogging
ḡ	Dārāt	Ⲙ	His Ascension

The above eight symbols (signs) are said to have been created by St. Yared himself.

8.8.7 Additional acronymic technical terms (Atts)

Other later scholars added further symbols like 'dərs' ⲉⲚⲏ (ḥ) and 'anbər ⲁⲛⲃⲉⲣ (C). Scholars gave similar interpretations for these additional notations. Although these are Gə'əz letters, they are written very small on top of other letters, and are considered not as letters but as symbols.

Table 2: additional notations

No	Name	acronymic technical terms	Symbolical meanings
ḡ	ⲉⲚⲏ (dərs)	ḥ(Cḥ)	The accomplishment of prophesy regarding the Incarnation.
ḡ	ⲁⲛⲃⲉⲣ ('anbər)	C(ḥC)	Jesus' sitting on the right side of God the Father

The previous eight notations and the two additional acronymic technical terms also have other religious symbolic meanings. Church scholars express that in the Old Testament there were eight⁴⁶ and ten⁴⁷ stringed harps which are represented by them.

8.8.8 Development of the acronymic technical terms

Further evidence indicates that many additional acronymic technical forms were used at different times and places by different scholars. These acronymic technical

⁴⁶1st chronicle 15-21.

⁴⁷A church found in Southern Wällo.

terms are called **ሥረዩ** *śəräyu* derived from Gə'əz, Amharic, and Təgreñña languages. For example, during the reign of king Gelawədwos, church scholars of Tādəbabe Marəyam⁴⁸, 'Azzaṣ Gera and 'Azzaṣ Raguel formed the additional acronymic technical terms of Dəgg^{wa}⁴⁹. One of the main teachers of zuramba, Meggabi Ezra, with his brother Raqemaseriya Salik formed the acronymic technical terms of zəmmare, māwaśə'ət and qəddase. According to church history, king made ṣion awarded them and gave them extensive farmland for the needy monastery. Because of this, some notations are not found in other liturgies except those of the tradition of this monastery. These acronymic technical terms are taken from different verses in abbreviated forms.

Table 3: unique acronymic technical terms

No	acronymic technical terms	full words	found in;
፩	ኔጽ፡	ዘይኔጽር፡ zäyənəṣər 'who looks'	ለኩሉን መልክዕኪ lākulon mälkə'əkki 'for all of you look'
፪	ካይዩ፡	ምስካይ፡ ለምጉያይ፡ məskay lāməguyay 'refugee for the escape'	" "
፫	ኩንዋቀ፡	ኩንኒ፡ ሆዋቀ፡ kunənni šāwaqä 'get me home'	" "

What makes the above acronymic and technical terms unique is that the text **ለኩሉን፡ መልክዕኪ፡** – Lākulon mälkə'əki, cannot be found in any other monastery except in zuramba monastery. It is chanted twice a year on December 22 and 28 E.C.

The following acronym technical terms are found in abbreviated forms applied practically in all liturgies, but the full words and verse forms occur only in māwaśə'ət. First of all, the acronymic technical terms from the Gə'əz Zema are illustrated as follows:

Table 4: Notations of Gə'əz māwaśə'ət

No.	acronymic technical terms	full form	found in the māwaśə'ət part of;
፩	ዔክ	ለጉርዔዮ፡ ነገረ፡ መስቀልክ፡	ከመስቀል፡
፪	ሐንሳን	ሐንካሳን፡ ሐሩ፡	ከመስቀል፡
፫	ሕማመ፡	ሕማመ፡ ዘኮኖ	ከመስቀል፡
፬	ምድ	ምድር	ከጳድቃን

⁴⁸Ibid.⁴⁹Chronicle of king Gälawdwos.

ረ	ሰብገል	ሰብስ: ሰገል	ከቃና: ዘገሊላ
ረ	ሰገ	ሰገደ: ንጉሥ	ከሠለስቱ: ደቂቅ
ረ	ስምዊነ	ስምዑ: አበዊነ	ከእስጢፋኖስ
ረ	ቃለዋዲ	ቃለ: ዐዋዲ	ከዮሐንስ
ሪ	በምረሲ	በምክረ: ረሲዓን	ከአባ: ገሪማ
፲	ደት	በስደት	ከጥር: እስጢፋኖስ
፩፲	መስ	በዐለ: መስቀሉ:	ከመስቀል
፪፲	ተነ	ተነበየ: ኢሳይያስ	ከሆሣዕና
፫፲	ተፈሐ	ተፈስሐ: ፍስሐት	"
፬፲	ትኩጸወ	ተኩነነ:ፀወነ: እመንሱት	ከዮሐንስ
፭፲	ብራ	ኅብራቴሆሙ	ከካህና: ተሰማይ
፮፲	ነኦተኩ	ነኦተኩ	ከአዕላፍ
፯፲	ነገልከ	ነገረ: መስቀልከ	ከመስቀል
፰፲	ነጸኦብ	ነጸረ: ኦብ	ከማርያም
፱፲	አሌለከ	አሌዕለክ: ንጉሥዮ	ከዳዊት: መምሪያ
፳	አመናት	አመት: ግዕዝት: እምግብርናት	ከሰንበት
፳፩	አዩ	አዩጉና ትመስላለች መና	ዐማርኛ
፳፪	ዩማ	አዩማ	ዐማርኛ
፳፫	ኒዎ	ኢያርኒዎ	ከልደት
፳፬	ቃል	እምድንግል: ቃል	ከአማኑኤል
፳፭	ኦሆ	ኦሆ: በሃሊት	ከማርያም
፳፮	ኩሎ	ኩሎ: ጊጋዮሙ	ከሐዋርያት
፳፯	ወመርዎ	ወመተርዎ	ከመርቆሬዎስ
፳፰	ወበቴቱ	ወበወስቴቱ	ከደብረ ታቦር
፳፱	ወከማሁ	ወከማሁ	ከናግራን
፴	ወደ	ወደምስስ	ከፈላስፎን
፴፩	ተከ	ጽላሎትከ	ከመዝሙር: ዳዊት 14
፴፪	ወዳማር	ወዳሴ:ማርያም	ከማርያም
፴፫	ዕሌሥት	ዕሌኒ:ንግሥት	ከመስቀል
፴፬	ሞቱ	ዘሞቱ	ከሰማዕት
፴፭	ዘአኒተ	ዘአዘዝክ:ከዋኒተ	ከመስቀል
፴፮	ዘአቀር	ዘአፍቀር	ከዮሐንስ
፴፯	ዘወ	ዘወይጠለ	ከአባዮሐኒ
፴፰	ዜና	ዜናሆሙ	ከማርያም
፴፱	ዝያቆን	ዝያቆን	ከእስጢፋኖስ
፵	ረብ	የመረብን: ዓሣ: ላሜ: ወርድ:ትብላ	ከዐማርኛ
፵፩	ይሁዳስ	ይሁዳስ	ከመስቀል
፵፪	ዮሐስሃ	ዮሐንስሃ	ከዮሐንስ
፵፫	ዮሴ በሮ	ዮሴፍ:ቀበሮ	ከዕሌኒ
፵፬	ገዳ	ገዳማዊ	ከዮሐንስ
፵፭	ግብርሃ	ግብተ: በርሃ	ከቤተ ክርስቲያን
፵፮	ኄር	ግነዩ: ለእግዚአብሔር: እስመ: ኄር	ከመዝሙር:117

ጳጊ	ጠለየክ	ጠለ: ገዳም: ረሰይክ:	ከሊባኖስ
ጳጂ	ጥዑ	ጥዑም	ከመስቀል
ጳ፱	ጸጋ	ጸጋ ወጋይል	ከጥቅምት: እስጢፋኖስ
፯	ጸለ ጊዮ	ጸለየ: ጸለተ: ጊዮርጊስ	ከጊዮርጊስ
፯፩	ፀማቀሉ	ፀማ: መስቀሉ	ከሰማዕት
፯፪	ዪናኦቱ	ዪና:ዪኦቱ	ከገብረ: ክርስቶስ

In the above table (Table 4) an attempt is made to tabulize abbreviations found in Gə'əz melody of māwaṣō'ət, and these serve as chanting in the text and other liturgical texts.

Table 5: Acronyms and technical terms of 'əzl māwaṣō'ət

No.	acronymic technical terms	full words	found in;
፩	ሀገራን	ሀገረ: ናግራን	ከናግራን
፪	ምስቃለ	ምስለ: ቃለ: ስብሐት	ከካህናተ: ሰማይ
፫	ሰማተክ	ሰማዕክ: ጸሎተክ	ከገብረ: ክርስቶስ
፬	በመፀር	በመስቀሉ: ፀር: አግረረ	ከመስቀል
፭	ኀበበሊ	ኀበ:ኢይበሊ: ወኢይማስን	ከካህናተ: ሰማይ
፮	ነቢ ልዑ	ነቢየ: ልዑል	ከዘክርያስ
፯	አምሐት	አምላክ: ስብሐት	ከመስቀል
፰	አምምመ	አምጽኡ: መድምመ	ከልደት
፱	እስኮነ	እስመ: ኢኮነ	ከተክሊ
፲	እምፃማ	እምብ: ዙጎ: ፃማ	ከገብረ: ክርስቶስ
፩፲	እነቀክ	እነግር: ጽድቀክ	ከቤ: ተክርስቲያን
፪፲	ወኀክመ	ወኀት:ወ:መጋት:ዊክመ	ከፈላስን
፫፲	ወል	ወልድ	ከመስቀል
፬፲	ጌሉዘወ	ወንጌሉ: ዘወርቅ	ከሊባኖስ
፭፲	ወፍጡነ	ወፍጡነ	ከሕፃናት
፮፲	ወሉኔር	ወሉዶ: ለኔር	ከፈላስያን
፯፲	ይመጽዕ	ይመጽዕ	ከማርያም
፰፲	ይረቢቡ	ይረውጽ: ነቢቡ	ከሕፃናት
፱፲	ጸራ	ጸራህክ: በምንዳቤየ	ከርክበ: ካህናት

The above notations serve in 'əzl melodies only.

Table 6: Acronyms and technical terms of 'arar'ay

No	acronymic technical terms	full form	found in;
፩	ሐራ ቶስ	ሐራሁ: ለክርስቶስ	ከሚናስ
፪	ሸ	ማየ: ሸንኮር: ፈሰሰ: በጎንደር	ከዐማርኛ
፫	ርሁ ግወ	ርሁያት: ወሥርግዋት	ከደናግል
፬	በማ ቃኑ	በማኅበረ: ጻድቃኑ	ከዮሐንስ
፭	አር ይለ	አርአየ: ኃይለ	ከመስቀል
፮	እለ ኢይ	እለ: ኢይጥዕምዎ	ከደብረ ታቦር

As it is mentioned earlier, there are many Amharic acronym technical terms. Amongst them, are examples of the historical relations with the monastery.

Table 7: Some examples of Amharic Acronymic Technical Terms

No	acronymic technical terms	full form	found in;
፩	አዩ	አዩ፡ ጉና፡ ትመስላለች፡ መና	ከዐማርኛ
፪	ዴዶ	ስንዴ፡ በማዶ፡ ይመስላል፡ በረዶ	"

8.9 Inspirations from Nature

Nature has a big place in the teaching/learning process of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Scholars usually use different natural phenomena and scenes to better understand the mysteries behind books. For example, in the school of māwaśō'ət, one of the melodies is set by a scholar who formed it while under the inspiration of a landscape associated with a place called Guna. According to tradition, while practicing the readings of the text, he saw the place and was inspired by its appearance, which seemed like a traditional Ethiopian bread and he expressed his teachings saying: አዩ፡ ጉና፡ ትመስላለች፡ መና፡ 'ayä guna tēmāslalläch männa — 'O Guna, it looks like bread'. Under other circumstances, a scholar distantly saw a harvest of wheat and received inspiration from it and sang: ስንዴ፡ በማዶ፡ ይመስላል፡ በረዶ፡ — sōnda bāmado yēmāslal bārādo—"the wheat out there looks like snow". These two sayings are permanently used in the tradition to remember melodies with the same rhythm. St. Yared himself adores nature and among the many indications of this are the following:

(f.5r ^c) አሰርኀክ፡ ሰማየ፡	'asārgokä sämayä
ወርኃ፡ ወፀሐየ፡	wärəḥa wəṣāḥayä
ወለጺድታኒክ፡ አለይኮሙ፡ ሰናየ፡	wäläṣadəqanikä 'asäyəkōmu sännayä.

'You beautify the sky with the moon and the sun, and your righteous deeds constitute all good things'.

Gə'əz, 'əzl and 'araray, are styles of chanting and they symbolize the Holy Trinity the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, respectively.

8.10 Conclusion

Māwaśō'ət is one of the four prominent melodic texts of St. Yared. The others are Dəgg^wa, mə'əraf and zəmmare. According to Ethiopian tradition, the saint composed it (māwaśō'ət) during the reign of king Gäbrä Mäsqel (534-

48 AD). Usually, the text is used for funeral services and during the sər‘atä maḥəlet, specifically during ’aryam and səbḥatä nägh. The definition of the term comprises two main points. The first comes from the Gə’əz verb wäsə’a or wäs’ə meaning ‘respond’ or ‘answer’, and māwaśə’ət is a plural form which mean ‘respondents’.

On the other hand, it is called ሰዋስወ፡ ነፍስ፡ — säwasəwä näfs ‘ladder of the soul’ or መርሕ፡ ለመንግሥተ፡ ሰማያት፡ — mārḥ lāmängəstā sāmayat ‘guide to the kingdom of heaven’. During the performance of the māwaśə’ət, scholars express their inspirations and feeling about the content of the readings they recite. There are plenty of traditional schools where the māwaśə’ət is taught. But there is only one place where senior students are certified for their accomplishments. This is zuramba ’arägawī šərḥa ’arəyam monastery. According to tradition, this is the place where St. Yared, who is believed to be the author of the book, is said to have composed and taught it. The text of māwaśə’ət is composed with reference to various Biblical and patristic books and acronyms of words. It is rich in literary features such as poetry and figures of speech. With regard to the Psalms, their use is very peculiar to māwaśə’ət.

Looking into the content of the text, one finds a lot of notations and figurative speeches like similes, metaphors, personification, symbolism and parallelism. The text contains information about doctrinal, social, cultural and historical issues. In addition to the eight famous notations in the tradition, there are also two additional notations and several acronyms taken from Gə’əz, Amharic and Təgreña words. All these notations are used to set the three types of melodies namely Gə’əz, ‘əzl and ‘araray. Māwaśə’ət is not seasonal like St. Yared’s other melodic books, but it is classified based on spiritual holydays and the Sabbath. It also uses very rare Gə’əz lexicons like ለንጽ — länəṣ ‘clothing of work’ and ከዋኒት — kāwanit ‘stone’, and quite a few Greek words for example ባራ — bara ‘man kind’ and ማራ — mara ‘bird face’.