

Mariology in the E.O.T.C Tradition: Special Emphasis on *Dərsanä Şəyon* *

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በክርስቲናው ምህር ግንባር ቀደም ከሆኑት አንዱና ዋናው «ነገረ ማርያም» ነው። በዚህም ስለ እመቤታችን ቅድስት ድንግል ማርያም ዜና ሕይወት፣ አምላክን በጎጥም ድንግልና ስለመውለዷ፣ ስለ ክብረ ቅድስት ድንግል፣ ወዘተ... ይጻፋል፣ ይተረጎማል፣ ትምህርት ይሰጣል። ቅድስት ቤተ ክርስቲያናችን ይህን መሠረታዊ ትምህርት ጠብቀው ከያዙትና በስፋትም ከሚያስተምሩት ቀዳሚያ ናት።

በኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን የእመቤታችንን ክብርና ልዕልና የሚያስረዱ በርካታ መጻሕፍት ይገኛሉ። ለምሳሌ መጽሐፈ ልደታ፣ ነገረ ማርያም፣ መጽሐፈ ዕረፍታ፣ ውዳሴ ማርያም፣ ተአምረ ማርያም፣ ቅዳሴ ማርያም፣ ድርሳነ ማርያም፣ ድርሳነ ጽዮን፣ መዝሙረ ድንግል፣ መልክክ ማርያም፣ አርጋኖን ውዳሴ፣ ወዘተ... ግንባር ቀደምት ናቸው። የእነዚህና ሌሎች ዋና ዋና መጻሕፍት ዝርዝር እና የያዙት ጭብጥ፣ ስለ እመቤታችን ክብር ጠቅለል ባለ መልኩ በዚህ ጽሑፍ የመጀመሪያ ሦስት ክፍሎች ውስጥ ተዳሰዋል።

በእግዚአብሔር ጣቶች ስለተጻፉት ሁለቱ ጽሑፍ እና ለሙሴ ስለተሰጠችው ታቦተ ጽዮን ክብር እንዲሁም ስለ እመቤታችን አማናዊ ጽዮንነት በስፋት የሚዘረዘረውና ስለ ክብረ ድንግል ከሚያስረዱት መጽሐፍት አንዱ የሆነው ድርሳነ ጽዮን ነው። የዚህ ጽሑፍ አራተኛ ክፍል በድርሳነ ጽዮን ውስጥ የተገለጹትን ትምህርቶች ማለትም ስለ እመቤታችን ጽዮንነት፣ ሰማያዊ ክብር፣ ልዩ ልዩ ሕብርና ምሳሌያት የሚገልጹትን ምንባባት በመዘርዘር ምሥጢራቸውን ያራቅቃል።

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The transliteration followed the Encyclopedia Aethiopia format and the diacritical signs in this article are based on the EAE-Garamond font. Please note some abbreviations: CSCO = *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*; DS = *Dərsanä Şəyon*; EAE = Encyclopedia Aethiopia; EMMML= Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library; KN = *Kəbrä Nəgüşt*; MS/S=Manuscript/s; SAe = *Scriptores Aethiopic*; (sic) = correctly copied; viz. = namely. The symbol [d] is applied to show the section in DS edition.

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1. Introduction

The Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, is highly venerated in the Christendom Light. She gave birth to the Son of God - Jesus Christ. Her divine maternity not only sheds on the meaning of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ's humanity, but it also illuminates the meaning of God's gracious dealings with humanity and the completeness of our freedom within that grace. She, as it is recorded in the Gospel, is glorified by mankind (Lk. 1:30-31, 48)¹. It is through her that God has saved the world. In her obedience, the Virgin Mary is the primary model of humility that waits upon the Lord. In her perpetual virginity, we can see the glory of the Lord who fills all in all, '*for whom nothing is impossible*' in the virgin birth of Our Lord the promise and the prophesies of the OT are fulfilled and the old chains that bound Eve are loosed by the obedience of Mary. In the Virgin's humble response to the angelic message, we can witness the magnificence of the Incarnation of Our Lord and Savior.

The study of teachings about the Blessed Virgin Mary, according to Christian theology, is known as Mariology. It is apparent that Mariology is closely associated with Christology. *Dərsanä Şəyon* (henceforth, DS) 'Homily [in honor] of Zion' is the title of a Ge'ez text mainly devoted to the glorification of the Ark of the Covenant and the Blessed Virgin Mary. DS is one of the Ethiopic sources of Mariology.

It is clear that there are plenty of Marian texts in our Church. Nevertheless, scholarly papers in the area are rare. One of the reasons to conduct this research is to stimulate interest in order to study and promote our literary heritage.

This study is intended to present a general view of the teaching of the EOTC related to Virgin Mary-the Theotokos, according to *Dərsanä Şəyon*. It begins with a literature review on Mariology and the glories of the Blessed Virgin in the EOTC. Subsequently, the article presents a brief discussions on the *dərsan* 'homily' and *Şəyon* 'Zion'. Marian veneration is reflected in other Ethiopic hymnodies (such as KN, Yaredic hymns, etc.) which are also concisely reviewed. Finally, various epithets and expressions concerning the veneration of the Virgin Mary St. Mary will be discussed from DS (including the *Zena Şəyon*, *mälkä`a Şəyon* and *Tä`ammärä Şəyon*).

The work is based on texts and describes the veneration of the Virgin Mary, when appropriate a descriptive research approach will be employed. The texts are analyzed from philological and theological perspectives. Literal translation and some commentary will be given on DS readings. The source materials for the paper are Manuscripts and printed texts.

¹ 'And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for you have found grace with God. Behold you shall conceive in your womb and shall bring forth a son: and you shall call his name Jesus. ... He has regarded the humility of his handmaid: for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.'

2. Survey of Marian literatures in the EOTC

According to the book of James, the name of Mary's father is Joachim and Anna is her mother.² Etymologically, the name Mary is derived from the Hebrew *Mariham* which has the meaning 'a sweet name'.³ The miracle of Mary⁴ begins as follows:

We will declare unto you, O beloved brethren, ye children of the Church, and may [God] make bright eyes of your hearts to hear [them], the miracles of our Lady, the Holy Virgin Mary, which [name] is in Hebrew *Mārīhām*, (a sweet name!) the life of the world, and the God-bearer, whose great praise and honor neither the beings of heaven nor the beings of earth will ever be able to bring to an end. May her prayer and her blessing be with her servant Forever and ever!⁵

ʾInzira Šəbbhat, concludes the text as: ኦ: እግዛእትሃ: ቅድስት: ድንግል: በክልሌ: ማርያም: ዘበሰብራይስጢ: ማሪሃም:: 'O! My Lady Mary the Blessed Virgin in two ways, which in Hebrew [is] *Mariham*'.⁶

We have numerous Biblical references to the Blessed Virgin. Prominent Prophecies are: Gen. 3:15; Ps. 45:9-11; 87:5; 132:13-14; Isa. 7:1-17; Jer. 31:22; Ezk. 44:1-2; Mic. 5: 2-3; etc. In the NT we read various accounts of the Blessed Virgin Mary. i) from the Gospels: Mtt. 1.18-25; 2: 1-23; 13:55; Mk. 6:3; Lk. 1:26-80; 2:1-20; 11:27; Jn. 2:1-10; 19:25-27; ii) Acts 1:14; iii) Epistles: Gal. 4:4 and iv) Rev. 12:1-6 etc.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin clearly had its origins in the life and history of the early Church. For early ascetics Mary was the pattern or model of Virginity; and by the third century the idea of the Virgin as the new Eve, adopted by the Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.), greatly increased the devotion of the faithful to her. In addition, the development of Marian devotion was aided by the spread in popular piety of a belief in the Virgin's miraculous powers of intercession. For the Orthodox Churches veneration of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, is an expression of the incarnation of one triune God and has a clear Christological imperative. For Orthodox Christians adoration of the humanity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ necessarily implies veneration of His mother from whom He received His humanity, and who in her person, represents the whole of humanity.⁷

² E.A. Budge, Wallis, *Legends of Our Lady Mary the Perpetual Virgin and her mother Hanna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. xxv ii.

³ The Ethiopic text reads: ... ማርያም: ዘበሰብራይስጢ: ማሪሃም: ጥዕምተ: ስም:: Getatchew mentions that in the early versions her name is also written as: ማርያ: (Getatchew Haile, 'Mary' in *Encyclopedia Aethiopia* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007) vol.3 (He-N), p. 807.

⁴ This miracle also contains the *Images of Mary* (42 hymns).

⁵ E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the life of Hanna and the magical prayer of St. Aheta Mikael* (London: W.Griggs, 1900), p.1.

⁶ Edited by Marcus Van Den Oudenrejn, 'Helenaë Aethiopum Reginae Quae Feruntur Preces et Carmina', in *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalum*, SAc. 39 [Ge'ez Text], SAc. 40 [Latin translation], (Louvain: secretariat du CorpusSCO, 1960-1, p. 90.

⁷ Paulos Yohannes, *Felsata: the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and the Mariological Tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church*, a PhD dissertation submitted to the Princeton Theological Seminary (Princeton: U.M.I., 1988), pp. 41-43.

Marian devotion in Ethiopia is as old as the Christian faith itself. It is based on the essential unity between the Incarnation and the Mother of the incarnated one-Jesus, chosen by God to participate in this His greatest work of salvation. The EOTC (of course the whole Orthodox and Catholic world in general) fully affirms that Virgin Mary now resides with her Son in the state of heavenly, eternal glory in which she prays and intercedes on behalf of the whole world. Her veneration, as a result leaves an imprint on all Christian anthropology, cosmology and the entire life of prayer and piety.

Within the Eastern Orthodox Churches⁸ and medieval Latin traditions and in the EOTC in particular, sacred devotional writings and compositions in honor of the Virgin Mary are abundant. Some of them are translations⁹ and most literatures are indigenous. A great deal of this literature is translated and composed after the 14th century. But the tradition of devotion to the Blessed Virgin goes back to the early days of Christianity. One of the oldest and best known Marian literatures, what our Church shares with other Churches, is called *protoevangelium Jacobi* or 'the book of James'.¹⁰ The work is existent in classical languages. Its original title which is preserved in the EOTC is መጽሐፈ፡ ልጅታ፡ ለማርያም፡ 'The Story of Mary's nativity'.¹¹ The French scholar, M. Chaine¹² studied the text.

The translations of Wallis Budge¹³ gives a lively description of the Young Virgin's early life in the Temple, full of simplicity and grace. He also notes that the spark of Marian interest and demand for her stories came a careful recording of oral traditions regarding the holy Virgin. Every detail pertaining to her life was carefully preserved and incorporated into ever new forms of the old accounts. Visions of the Virgin Mary experienced by certain Church Fathers, such as Theophilus and Timothy, Patriarchs of Alexandria, furthered the popular interest in the Virgin. Often these men composed written narratives of the Virgin's life which they were said to have received from St. Mary herself. The substance of such narratives was derived chiefly from the *protevangelium*. Many Church Fathers also composed homilies about the Blessed Virgin. St. Cyril of Jerusalem writes extensively about the Virgin's life in the Temple; Cyril of Alexandria describes her life before the Annunciation; and Dimetrius of Antioch authors a discourse on the life of the Virgin following the Angel's Annunciation. The Homily of Proclus of Cyzicus included in the *Qerelos*, was directed against the teaching of Nestorius and contains the basic terms for Ethiopic Mariology.¹⁵

⁸ For the Marian literatures in special treatment of her miracles in Europe and the Orient, see Cerruli, Enrico, *Un episodio della storia culturale medievale: il libro dei miracoli di Maria nelle letterature europee e orientali* (Roma: in Cultura e scuola, no. 19, Luglio-Settembre 1966), pp. 117-123; and the same Cerulli on *Il libro Etiopico dei miracoli di Maria e le sue fonti nelle letterature del medio evo Latino* (Roma: Università di Roma studi Orientali Pubblicati a cura della scuola Orientale, vol.1., 1945), pp. 7-16.

⁹ Such as from Syriac, Coptic and Christian Arabic etc.

¹⁰ James, the 'brother' of the Lord and first bishop of Jerusalem.

¹¹ Also called the 'Gospel of the Birth of Mary', which was attributed to St. Matthew, and was regarded as genuine and authentic by many early Christian sects. It was believed to have been written in Hebrew and translated into Latin by Jerome as '*Liber de Ortu Beatae Marie et Infantia Salvatoris*'. The text is full of marvelous stories about Mary and the Child, and many of this have found their way into the writings of the Syrian, Coptic, Ethiopian Churches; (Budge 1933:xxvii-xxviii).

¹² M. Chaine, 'Apocrypha de B. Maria Virgine' in *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, SAe. VII (Romae: Execudebat Karolus de Luigi, 1909), pp. 3-19.

¹³ E.A. Wallis Budge, *Miscellaneous Coptic Texts in the dialect of Upper Egypt* (London: Longman & co. 1915), pp. xxii-iii.

¹⁴ Bernd Manuel Weischer (ed. Trans.), *Qerellos IV: 2 Traktate des*, 1979:64-87.

¹⁵ Getatchew Haile and Denies Nosnitsin "Mariology" *Encyclopedia Aethiopia*, 2007, Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. vol. 3, pp. 808-811; Ugo Zanetti, "Church and popular veneration of St. Mary" *Encyclopedia Aethiopia*, (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. vol. 3, 2007), pp. 811-814.

Habtemichael¹⁶ lists about six Marian texts as the most famous and he describes more than twelve various images (*mälkä'at*) of Virgin Mary. Besides, he discussed some other Marian hymnodies. However, some important texts are not included. The following paragraphs present prominent Mariological texts in Ge'ez. An attempt has been made to list all known Marian texts.

1. The first text is መጽሐፈ ልደታ ለማርያም ፤ 'The Story of Mary's nativity', which is discussed above.
2. ነገረ ማርያም ፤ 'The story of Mary' - found in various form and content.¹⁷
3. መጽሐፈ ዕረፍታ ለማርያም ፤ 'Book of Dormition of Mary'.
4. መጽሐፈ ዕርገታ ለማርያም ፤ 'Book of Assumption of Mary' - Also called ዜና ዕርገታ ፤ 'News of her Assumption'; edited by Victore Arras.¹⁸ The text composes eight homilies: i) a homily by Cyril of Jerusalem (pp. 1-33); ii) homily of Cyriacus of Behensa (pp. 34-55); iii) Homily of John the Metropolitan (pp. 56-61); iv) Lection of Thomas the Apostle (pp. 62-71); v-vi) homily of *Pactum misericordiae* 'Covenant of Mercy' I & II (pp.73-85); vii) ነገረ ስዊድን *De Se'id resuscitato* -about the miracle that Our Lady did in front of the Jews when she gave life from a dead body; viii) ንግረኒ ስምክ ፤ *Dic mihi nomen tuum*.
5. ድርሳነ ማርያም ፤ 'Homily [in honor] of Mary' - We have a variety of versions under the same title in brief and lengthy contents. Some of the versions include ድርሳነ ጳዮን ፤ 'Homily [in honor] of Zion'. EMMML 2044, for instance, is one of the biggest versions. Recently, the text was translated into Amharic by Täsfa Mika'el Takkälä.¹⁹
6. ውዳሴ ማርያም ፤ 'Praise of Mary- the text was edited and translated into different languages.²⁰
7. አንቀጽ ብርሃን ፤ 'Gate of the light' - Also known as አንቀጽ ወግናይ ፤ (sic) 'Gate of the Praise'. St. Yared is the composer. The text has been translated and studied.²¹
8. ተአምረ ማርያም ፤ 'Miracles of Mary' - the Ethiopic version of the text was translated into English for the first time by Wallis Budge.²² Cerulli²³ states the existence of various versions of the miracles of Mary. He presents the text of 222 miracles and their Italian translation. On the other hand, Getatchew²⁴ mentions the presence of more than 600 miracles of Mary.

¹⁶ Habtemichael Kidane, "Hymns to the Virgin Mary" *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. vol. 3, 2007), pp. 817-819.

¹⁷ EMMMLs 1763, 2044 and 3157. EMMML 2044 contains ነገረ ማርያም ፤ ላሃ ማርያም ፤ ድርሳነ ፍልሰታ ፤ ድርሳነ (ውዳሴ) ማርያም ፤ ራክዮ ማርያም. Getatchew Haile and William F. Macomber, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts Microfilmed for the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library* (Minnesota: Collegeville, vol.vi, 1982), pp 27-41. A prayer book (2000: 637-687) published by Gäbrä Sällase Bərhanu preserves brief text of Nägärä Maryam (pp. 637-687).

¹⁸ Victore Arras, *De Transitu Marie Apocrypha Aethiopice* *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, (Louvain, 1974), SAE. 68.

¹⁹ Täsfa Mika'el Takkälä (trans.), *Dərsanä Maryam*, (Addis Ababa: Mahbärä Qəddusan), 2003 EC.

²⁰ Edition and German translation by Karl Fries, *Weddâsê Märjâm: Ein Äthiopischer Lobgesang an Maria, Nach Mehreren Handschriften* (Leipzig: Gustav Fock, 1892); English translation by Budge 1933:279-296; French translation by Bernard Velat, 'Études sur le Me'eräf: commun de l'office Divin Éthiopien – Introduction traduction Française, commentaire liturgique et musical' in *Patrologia Orientalis*, (Paris: vol. xxxiii, (1966:284-296)) and the text by the same author in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. xxxiv (1968:1-392); for a summarized note on the seven days, Paulos 1988:110-119; for Amharic commentary of the Praise of Mary, EMMML 1241; EMMML 1254; EMMML 1271; MS IES-419 (contains Amharic printed commentary of 'Praise of Mary', (1925 EC.) and also unpublished commentary of Anaphora of St. Mary).

²¹ Getatchew Haile, 'The Mariology of Emperor Zär'a Ya'äqob of Ethiopia: texts and translations' *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, n. 242, (Roma: Pontificum Institutum studiorum Orientalium, 1992), P.1; Bernard Velat (1966:279-283) translates the text into French; Christopher Lash, (trans.), 'Gate of Light: an Ethiopian hymn to the Blessed Virgin' in *Eastern Churches Review*, III-IV, 1971-1972, pp. 36-46; for a summarized note - Paulos 1988:119-122.

²² Wallis Budge, *The Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the life of Hanna and the magical prayer of St. Aheta Mikael* (London: 1900).

²³ Cerulli 1943:17-538.²⁴

²⁴ Getatchew Haile, 'Ethiopic Literature' in Greirson (ed.) *African Zion the secrete Art of Ethiopia* (Texas: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 47-55. atchew Haile, 'Ethiopic Literature' in Greirson (ed.) *African Zion the secrete Art of Ethiopia* (Texas: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 47-55.

- 9 መልክክ: ማርያም፤ 'Image of Mary'- The author of *Mälkä'a Maryam*, according to Gezahegn, is Aše Na'od (1494-1508), whereas Getatchew says *aše Bā'ädä Maryam* (1468-1478).²⁵ Dillmann²⁶ edited the text, nevertheless, it contains different *arks* from that of the Zāmāhbārā Ḥawaryat Printing Press by Šāgay Tāsfa ʿĒgzi'e.
- 10 ኦርጋንን፤ 'Arganon'- also called ኦርጋን: ውዳሴ፤ 'Harp of Praise' or ኦርጋን: ድንግል፤ 'Harp of the Virgin', written by Abba Giyorgis of Gasəčča during the reign of Dawit (1380-1412).²⁷ A specimen of the *Arganonä Wəddase* was translated by Budge²⁸ under the title 'Organ of the praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary'.²⁹
- 11 ቅዳሴ: ማርያም፤ 'Anaphora of Mary'- the text was translated into English³⁰ and its commentary has been studied.³¹ Albeit all Ethiopian scholars do not agree concerning the notion, it is said that there are four types of Anaphora of St. Mary; viz. 1) ጐሥዕ: ልብዩ፤ *G'äs'a ləbbəyā* (supposed to be composed/translated in 1382-1424 AD), 2) መዓዛ: ቅዳሴ፤ *Mä'aza Qəddase* - that of Giyorgis of Gasəčča. The rest two can not be properly dated (EMML 1159).
- 12 ማሕሌተ: ጽጌ፤ 'Canticle of the Flower'.³²
- 13 ራእዮ: ማርያም፤ 'Vision of Mary'- is a homily by St. John, son of Zebedee also known as ራእዮ: ተአምር: ዘዮሐንስ: ወልደ: ነጐድጓድ: (EMML1480, ff. 114^r-127^r).³³
- 14 ኦንዚራ: ስብሐት፤ 'Harp of Praise'- It is believed that the author was Abba Giyorgis of Gasəčča. The text was edited by Marcus Van Den Oudenrejn.³⁴
- 15 መልክክ: ኤድም፤ 'Images of Edom'- Its author is *aše Ləbnä Dəngəl* (1508-1540)³⁵. Habtemichael lists different images of the Virgin Mary³⁶

²⁵ Getatchew Haile, 'Builders of Churches and Authors of Hymns, makers of History in the Ethiopian Church' in Claude Lepage (ed.) *Études éthiopiennes*, vol. I *Actes de la X^e conférence internationale des études éthiopiennes*, (Paris: de la Société française pour les études éthiopiennes, 24-28 août 1988), pp.369-375. Gezahegn, 'Various natures of Images' in *Proceedings of the Workshop on 'The Ethiopian Church Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow'*, (Addis Ababa: held at Africa Hall, U.N.E.C.A., April 18-19, 2002), pp 89-114). See also the Asmara version of the text by Šāgay Tāsfa ʿĒgzi'e መልክክ: ማርያም: ወመልክክ: ኢየሱስ፤ 'Effigies of Mary and Jesus' (Asmara: Kokäbä Šəbaḥ Zāmāhbārā Ḥawaryat Printing Press; 1972), pp. 1-17; 'Salutations of the members of the body of the Blessed Virgin Mary', the short form of this effigy is translated by Budge (1933:236-244). See also Paulos pp. 139-141.

²⁶ August Dillmann, *Chrestomathia Aethiopia* (Lipsiae: 1866), (reprinted in E. Hammershmidt (ed.), *Anthologia Aethiopia* (Hildesheim-Zurich-New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1988), here pp. 136-146.

²⁷ Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State 1270-1527* (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1972) p. 223, note 4.

²⁸ Budge 1933: 297-304.

²⁹ Paulos 1988:122-139.

³⁰ Marcos Daoud, (trans.), revised by Marsə'e Ḥazān, Wolde Qirqos (*Bəlatā*), *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church* (Addis Ababa: Berhanenna Selam Printing Press, 1954), here 'The Anaphora of St. Mary', pp. 104-121; Samuel A.B. Mercer, *The Ethiopic Liturgy: its sources, development, and present form*, (London: The Hale Lectures, Milwaukee the Young Churchman Company, 1915), presents the translation of the words of Institution of the 13 Ethiopic Anaphora, here pp. 258-259, Anaphora of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

³¹ Verena Böll, , 'Some remarks about the *Andemta* on the *Qəddase Maryam*, specifically the Anaphora of Our Lady Mary from Heryaqos of Behensa' in Bahru Zewde et al. (eds), *Proceedings of the Eleventh International Conference of Ethiopian studies*, (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, vol. 1, 1994), pp.595-608. There are several MSS (about 12) in the EMML, which contain commentary of *Qəddase Maryam* [EMMLs-538, 1019, 1066, 1073, 1075, 1231, 1241, 1254, 1271, 1514, 1669, 1675], but they are different from that of the printed *Qəddase Maryam* commentary. They contain similar content with commentary of *Wəddase Maryam*.

³² Edited by A.Grohmann, *Aethiopische Marienhymnen* (Leipzig: Abhandlungen der Philologisch-historischen Klasse der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 33/4, 1919).

³³ Wallis Budge, 1933:245-278. Gäbrä Šəllase (2000:591-636) presents the text in the form of a prayer book.

³⁴ Marcus Van Den Oudenrejn, 'Helenaethiopia Reginae Quae Feruntur Preces et Carmina', *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, SAe. 39, (Louvain, 1960), pp.1-93.

³⁵ Getatchew 1994:369-375).

³⁶ Habtemichael Kidane (2007:701) lists different effigies of St. Mary (such as: *Mälkä'a Maryam*, *Mälkä'a Kidanä Məhrät*, *Mälkä'a Šə'əl*, *Mälkä'a Maryam Šəyon*, *Mälkä'a Edom*, *Mälkä'a Q'əsəq'əm*, *Mälkä'a Fəlsäta*, *Mälkä'a Lədäta*, *Mälkä'a Bā'ata*). Gäbrä Šəllase (2000:930-943) publishes *Mälkä'a Edom* in the Amharic prayer book.

- 16 መልክክ: ስእል፤ ‘Images of the Icon’- Also called ኦርኅርኅተ፡ኅሊና፡ ‘*O! the compassionate mind*’ and it is compiled as a composite text with *Sä’atat* ‘Horologium’. Its author was *ase* Gälawdewos (1540-1559).³⁷
- 17 ድርሳነ፡ ጽዮን፤ ‘Homily [in honor] of Zion’- the text was edited and translated into English by the presenter of this article.³⁸
- 18 መልክክ: ጽዮን፤ ‘Effigies of Zion’.³⁹
- 19 መዝሙረ፡ ድንግል፤ ‘Psalter of the Virgin’. With each of its 151 parts meant to elaborate the corresponding Psalm of David.⁴⁰
- 20 ሰዓታት፡ ዘሌሊት፡ ወዘነግህ፤ ‘The Hours of the Night and of the Day’ also called ‘*Horologium*’.⁴¹
- 21 ስቈቃወ፡ ድንግል፤ ‘Lamentation of the Virgin’-The author is known as *Qolla Šum Yohannäs*.⁴²
- 22 ስብሐተ፡ ፍቅር፤ ‘Praise of the beloved’ - Also called ብፅዕት፡ አንቲ፤ ‘Blessed you are’. The hymn is made up of about 70 stanzas.⁴³ It is considered as a composite text in the *Horologium*.⁴⁴
- 23 ፍጥተ፡ ብርሃን፤ ‘The Gate of the Light’ - The title is given after the title of the Virgin Mary, which is described at the beginning and the end of the text. The *incipit* ‘beginning’ of the text goes as: ብስመ፡ አብ፡... ውዳሴ፡ ወግናይ፡ ዘእግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ እንተ፡ ይእቲ፡ ፍጥተ፡ ብርሃን፡ ወሙጻክ፡ ፀሐይ፡ ... ‘In the name of the Father, ... Praise and homage of Our Lady Mary who is the Gate of the Light and exit of the Sun...’. The *desinit* also says: ተፈጸመ፡ ፍጥተ፡ ብርሃን፤ ወይም፡ ፀዳሳ፡ ብርሃን፤ ወይም፡ ፀዳሳ፡ ፀሐይ፡ ይባላል፡፡ ‘the [text] which is called *hoḥätä bərhan* or *šädalä bərhan* or *šädalä šähay* is finished’.⁴⁵
- 24 ውዳሴ፡ አንቀጽ፡ ነቢያት፤ ‘Praise of the Gate of the Prophets’.
- 25 የሰኔ፡ ጎልጎታ፤ ‘Golgotha of Säne’- The tradition of EOTC attributes the text to St. Thomas the Apostle.⁴⁶
- 26 አኮነ፡ ብእሲ፤ ‘It is not a man’.⁴⁷
- 27 ምሥጢረ፡ ጽጌያት፤ ‘Mysteries of Flowers’- It is known as the earliest Amharic Marian Text.⁴⁸

All these are major Ethiopic hymnodies of St. Mary. Most of them are used by the faithful in their private devotions (daily and on the feasts of St. Mary) and some are used in public worship in the Church.

Budge⁴⁹ lists 29 Ethiopic Marian texts found in the British Museum. Some of them are already listed above.

³⁷Getatchew 1994:369-375. See also Täsfa Gäbrä Šällase, *Book of Hours, Miracle of Mary, Miracle of Jesus and other miracles* (Ge’ez version) (Addis Ababa: Täsfa Printing Press, 1989 EC), pp. 227-236.

³⁸Amsalu Tefera 2011 (181-211 [Text], 212 –236 [translation]).

³⁹Amsalu 2011 (293-302 [text], 303-313 [translation]).

⁴⁰Habtemichael 2007: 818.

⁴¹Täsfa Gäbrä Šällase, 1989 EC; Paulos (1988:141-145) presents a summary of the text.

⁴²Getatchew 1994:369-375.

⁴³Habtemikael 2003, p. 548.

⁴⁴Täsfa 1989:161-181.

⁴⁵Marcus Van Den Oudenrejn 1960: 94-143.

⁴⁶Arras, V. ‘De Transitu Mariae Apocrypha Aethiopica (II), ‘De Thoma Apostolo Lection’, chapter 2, p. 62);

⁴⁷Paulos 1988:71-72.

⁴⁸A. Grohmann 1919.

⁴⁹Habtemichael 2007:218

⁴⁹Budge 1933: lxii-lxix.

1. The history of the Conception and Birth of the Blessed Virgin which was read on the 1st day of the month *Gənbət* and on the 21st day of the month *Säne*.
2. An anonymous Discourse on the Birth of the Virgin in a MS of the 15th cent.
3. The history of the Birth of the Virgin Mary. A discourse for the 3rd of Tahsas.
4. Discourse on her Birth and her visit to Elizabeth.
5. On the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin.
6. Dialogue between Mary and the angel of the Annunciation.
7. Story of how Mary concealed herself from Herod in Mount Lebanon, and the history of Gigar, the Judge in Syria and Domitianus.
8. The history of the death of Mary as narrated on the authority of St. John. It is called *Aster'eyo* and was read on the 21st of *Terr*.
9. The book of the Death of the Virgin Mary in a MS of the 15th Cent.
10. History of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary.
11. Homily on the Assumption of the Virgin.
12. The history of the Covenant which Christ made with His Mother, commonly called the 'Covenant of Marcy'.
13. The discourse on the building of Mary's house.
14. Story of the discovery of the History of the Virgin Mary.
15. Discourse by St. John the evangelist on the Virgin Mary.
16. Discourse by John, Metropolitan of Ethiopia, on the Virgin Mary.
17. Discourse by St. Theophilus of Alexandria on the Virgin Mary.
18. Encomium on the Virgin Mary by Cyriacus of Behensa.⁵⁰
19. Discourse on the Virgin Mary by Basil of Ceasarea.
20. Two discourses on the Virgin Mary.
21. Prayers of the Virgin Mary at Golgotha.
22. Prayer of the Virgin Mary at Bartos, or Berut.
23. The Vision which Mary described to John, son of Zebedee.
24. Salutations to the members of the body of the Virgin Mary.
25. Selections of the Miracles of the Virgin Mary are contained in a great many MSS, and as these are all described in a companion volume to this nothing need be said about here.
26. The text pretends to be a narrative of the period of 3 years and 6 months which Mary, and the Child, and Joseph, and Salome passed in Ethiopia as the guests of the King of Ethiopia.

⁵⁰ Cyriacus of Behensa,- Allegedly, Həryaqos of Bəhənsa has been assigned the authorship of the anaphora. Həryaqos (Lat. Cyraicus, Greek - Kyriakos, Arab - Quraqos/Huryaqos) was bishop of Bəhənsa in upper Egypt and well known as the composer of several writings about Mary, but he is famous as the author of the Anaphora. He wrote his homilies in Coptic, which were then translated into Arabic. Translation from Arabic into Ge'ez is connected with the metropolitan Abba Samuel (1348-1387); Böll 1994:595.

- 27 Service books containing a series of Prayers and hymns to the Virgin Mary. 1) *Arganonä Dəngəl*, 'the organ of the Praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary', also known as 'Harp of the Psalter' and the 'Lyre of Praise'; 2) *Wəddase Maryam* '[Book] of Praise of Mary'⁵¹ (some begin with Sunday and some on Monday). Many portions of this work seem to have been translated from some Coptic text similar to that which was published by Tuki in his *Book of Theotokia* (Rome, 1764?), and it is probable that the first Ethiopic translation was made from a Coptic service-book in Ethiopia in the 7th cent. AD.
- 28 *Mäzmurä Dəngəl* or 'Psalter of the Virgin Mary'.
- 29 Prayer for the dead, ascribed to the Virgin Mary.

For further literature of the Blessed Virgin Mary see - Paulos;⁵² Paulos Tzadua;⁵³ Lusini;⁵⁴ Getatchew and Nosnitsin.⁵⁵ The Ethiopic *Sənkəsar* on Mäskäräm 10; Hədar 6; Taḥsas 3; Taḥsas 28-29; Tərr 21; Yäkkatit 16; Gənbət 1; Säne 8; Nəḥase 7 and 16, also contains long passages dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.⁵⁶

3. Marian glory in the EOTC

Our Lady the Virgin Mary is the humble handmaiden through whom God glorifies Himself. She is the virgin to whom God gave a child. The EOTC teaches that St. Mary was born immaculately and free from the original sin.⁵⁷ She is the very Mother of God apart from whom no genuine incarnation of God would have been possible. The Church dedicates many sanctuaries/churches to the name of the Virgin Mary. The monthly calendar dedicates five days of each month to the Virgin Mary: the 1st, the 3rd, the 16th the 20th and the 21st.⁵⁸ Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus (320-404 AD) described the physical stature of the Virgin Mary as follows:

She was grave and dignified in all her actions. She spoke little and only when it was necessary to do so. She listened readily and could be addressed easily. She paid honor and respect (*i.e.* she saluted) to every one. She was of middle stature, but some say that she was of more than middle height. She was wont to speak to everyone fearlessly and clearly, without laughter, and without agitation, and she was especially slow to anger. Her complexion was of the color of ripe wheat, and her hair was auburn (or reddish). Her eyes were bright and keen, and light brown in color, and the pupils thereof were of an olive-green tint. Her eyebrows were arched (or semicircular) and deep black. Her nose was long; her lips were red and full, and overflowing with the sweetness of her words. Her face was not round, but somewhat oblong (*i.e.* oval). Her hands were long and her fingers were long. She was wholly free from all ostentatious pride, and she was neither stupid nor slovenly, and inclined to excessive humility.

⁵¹ Budge (1933:lxix) states that *Wəddase Maryam* is the greatest in importance and the second is *Wəddase Amlak*.

⁵² Paulos 1988:45-204.

⁵³ Paulos Tzadua (Cardinal), 'Mary and the most Holy Eucharist in the Ethiopic Liturgy' in *Ethiopian Review of Cultures* (Addis Ababa: Theological and Philosophical Studies Centre, vol.1, 1991), pp. 219-236.

⁵⁴ G. Lusini, 'Därsanä Maryam', *Encyclopedia Aethiopica* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007, vol 2 (D-Ha),) pp. 138-139.

⁵⁵ Getatchew and Nosnitsin 2007:808.

⁵⁶ E.A. Wallis Budge, trans. & ed. *The Book of Saints of the Ethiopian Church* (Cambridge: vol. I, 1927; vol. II -IV, 1928).

⁵⁷ Abba Mekarios et al. ed. *The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Faith, Order of worship and Ecumenical Relations* (Addis Ababa: Tinsae Publishing House, 1996), pp. 51-55, here p.51.

⁵⁸ Ugo Zanetti, 'Church and Popular veneration of St. Mary' *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, 2007, vol. 2, Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. 811-814, here p. 812; Emmanuel Fritsch and Ugo Zanetti, 'Christian Calendar' *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, 2003, vol. 1, Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. 668-672, here pp. 671-672.

She wore garments of natural colors (i.e. undyed homespun), and was content with them, a fact which is even now proved by her holy head-cloth. And to sum up, she was filled with divine grace in all her ways.⁵⁹

Blessed Virgin Mary has a prominent role in the economy of our salvation. The salutation of St. Gabriel (Lk.1: 28); the praise of Elizabeth (Lk.1:42); the testimony of herself on what the Almighty Lord had done to her (Lk. 1:48); the witness and exclamation of the lady (Lk. 11:27) are brief examples showing the glory of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Despite some historical reactions such as the monastic - resistance movement of the Stephanites,⁶⁰ the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has always honored and venerated the Holy Virgin Mary in her Liturgy and Theology. The Ethiopic hymn praises her as: ብኪ ድኅነ፡ ዓለም፤ ወበወልድኪ፡ ኮነ፡ ሰላም። 'the World is redeemed through you; and by your Son peace has been secured'.

In the theology of EOTC, Mary's place is reflected in the frequent epithets attributed to her such as: ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ፡ 'the mother of God'/Theotokos;⁶¹ ወላዲተ፡ ፈጣሪ፡ 'mother of the Creator'; ወላዲተ፡ ብርሃን፡ 'Mother of Light'; እመ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ 'Mother of the Lord'; ወላዲተ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ 'Mother of the Lord'; ድንግል፡ በክልኤ፡ 'the two fold Virgin'; ድንግል፡ ፍጽምት፡ 'Perfect Virgin'; ድንግል፡ በከለሄ፤ 'Perpetual Virgin'; እኅተ፡ መላእክት፡ 'Sister of Angels'; ወለተ፡ ነቢያት፡ 'Daughter of Prophets'; እመ፡ ሐዋርያት፡ 'Mother of the Apostles'; ንጹሕተ፡ ንጹሐን፡ 'the purest among the pure ones'; ቅድስተ፡ ቅዱሳን፡ 'the most saintly among the saints';⁶² ቤዛዊተ፡ ዓለም፡ 'Redeemer of the World' etc.⁶³ The Anaphora of St. Mary mentions several of her epithets . The text reads as follows:

... Thou was the hope of Adam when he was driven out of paradise, the meekness of Abel who was killed through unrighteousness, the kindness of Seth, the works of Enoch, the ark of Noah through which he was saved from the evil destruction, the blessing and portion of Shem; the sojourning of Abraham, the savior of Isaac, the ladder of Jacob, the comforter of Joseph; the tablets of Moses, the bush of Sinai, the bells in the garment of Aaron the priest, the rod which grew, blossomed and bore fruit; the stone of testimony of Joshua, the fleece of Gideon, the bottle of ointment and horn of oil of Samuel, the root of Jesse of which he boasted, the chariots of Ammi-nadib, the harp of David, the crown of Solomon, the enclosed garden , the spring shut up; the golden omer of Elijah, the curse of Elisha, the virgin conception of which Isaiah prophesied, the first giving birth without intercourse of which Daniel (also spoke); the mountain of Pharan of Habakkuk, the closed house in the east of Ezekiel,

⁵⁹ Quoted from Budge, 1933:xxiii.

⁶⁰ Getatchew Haile, 'The Cause of the Ἐστίφανοσιτες: A fundamentalist sect in the Church of Ethiopia', *Paideuma* 29 (1983) 93-119; Kaplan, Steven, *The Monastic Holy man and the Christianization of early Solomonian Ethiopia*, Studien zur Kulturkunde 73, (Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GMBH, 1984), pp. 41-44. - also K. Wendit, 'Die theologischen Auseinandersetzungen in der aethiopischen Kirche zur Zeit der Reformen des XV. Jahrhunderts', in *Atti del convegno internazionale di studi etiopici*, (Roma, 1960), pp. 137-146.

⁶¹ The Greek term - ἡ Θεοτόκος 'God-bearer' is equivalent with the Ethiopic ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ፡. For the definition of the term and how it is treated in Cyrilian Christology, - Bernd Manuel Weischer, 'Historical and Philological Problems of the Axumite Literature (especially in the Qérellos)' in *Journal Of Ethiopian Studies* (Addis Ababa, vol. IX, no. 1,1971), pp. 83-93.

⁶² This epithet is based on the salutation of the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin: 'Blessed are you among women' (Lk.1:28).

⁶³ See also Mekarios et al. 1996:52. Other epithets of the Blessed Virgin from DS will be discussed in the next section.

the place in Bethlehem from which the law goes forth, the land of Ephratah of Micah, the tree of life of Silondis,⁶⁴ the healer of Nahum's wounds,⁶⁵ the rejoicing of Zachariah, the clean hall of Malachi.

O Virgin, thou art the ideal and the prophecy of the Prophets; the flavor of the Apostles; the mother of the Martyrs; the sister of the Angels; the boast of the young men and the virgins and the monks who are watchful day and night at thy gates.⁶⁶

Emperor Zär'a Ya'eqob (1434-1468), the Ethiopian Constantine, was the one who instituted very many Marian feasts "to be observed like Sunday" and he himself was a devotee of the Blessed Virgin.⁶⁷ Zär'a Ya'eqob declared that the 33 feasts of the Virgin Mary should be observed as Sundays:⁶⁸

**ወበዓላቲሃኒ፡ ለእግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ ሸወጃ፡ [ሸወ፫]⁶⁹ አዘዘ፡
ከመ፡ ያክብሩ፡ በተጠናቅቆ፡ ከመ፡ ዕለተ፡ እሑድ፡ በከመ፡
ጸሐፊ፡ ጳጳሳት፡ ወሊቃነ፡ ጳጳሳት፡ ምስለ፡ ግዘት፡፡**

*'As for the feasts of Our Lady Mary [they] are 32 [33]. He ordered in order they observe [them] strictly like Sunday as the bishops and the archbishops wrote in condemnation.'*⁷⁰

It is well known that the Venetian artist Brancalone was employed by King Zär'a Ya'eqob and his son Bä'ädä Maryam (1468-1478) to paint pictures of Our Lord and the Virgin Mary,⁷¹ and scenes from the Old and New Testaments on the walls of the Churches that they built in their kingdom.⁷²

The Ethiopian tradition says concerning Marian images that St. Luke was the first to paint the icon of the Virgin Mary, what was commonly known as ሥዕል፡ አድኅኖ፤ 'The saving picture'. *Horologium* declares the fact as: ሰላም፡ ለሥዕልኪ፡ እንተ፡ ሰዐላ፡ በአዱ፡፡ ሉቃስ፡ ጠቢብ፡ እምወንጌላውያን፡ አሐዱ፡፡ 'Salutation to your Icon, which the wise Luke, one amongst the evangelists, painted [it] by his hand' (Text - Täsfa Gäbrä Šöllase 1989:234-235, trans - mine). Spencer was told by the Late Patriarch, His Holiness Abuna Theophilos, about the existence of three miraculous icons of St. Luke in the EOTC: i) *śä'älä adḥäno* (also *näwa bäggä'u* cross) found in Tädbabä Maryam - Wällo; ii) *śä'älä adḥäno* (also *śä'äl Gəbšawit*) in Däbrä Zämäda Maryam - Wällo; iii) *śä'älä Wäynut* in Däbrä Wärq-Goḡḡam.

⁶⁴ Name of a philosopher who represents Solomon.

⁶⁵ Neh. 3:19.

⁶⁶ Daoud, 1954 pp. 107-8, sections 31-37.

⁶⁷ E.A. Budge, Wallis, *One Hundred and Ten Miracles of Our Lady Mary* (London, 1923), pp. xlvii-1; J. Perruchon, *Les chroniques de Zar'a Ya'eqob et de Ba'eda Maryam de 1434-1478* (Paris, 1893), here pp. 75-76; Täsfa Gäbrä Šöllase, *Mäto haya söstu Tä'ammärä Maryam* (Addis Ababa, 1988 EC), pp. 16-18. See also Getatchew 1992:1.

⁶⁸ See also Budge, *History of Ethiopia* (London, 1928), p. 309.

⁶⁹ MS - [B] in his edition says so.

⁷⁰ Text - Perruchon 1893:75-76; translation - mine).

⁷¹ Täsfa 1989:234-235. - Diana Spencer, 'In search of St. Luke Icons in Ethiopia', *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, vol. X, no. 2, 1972.), pp. 67-93. - also Paulos 1988:156-157. The short chronicle by Basset mentions that King Bä'ädä Maryam (1468-1478) commissioned the icon of St. Mary to be painted by a certain white man and donate to Atronsä Maryam Church. (Rene Basset, *Histoire d'Ethiopie*, (Paris: 1882), p. 12).

⁷² Budge 1923:viii-ix; Basset 1882:12.

Abuna Marqos, the then Arch Bishop of Goğğam also informed Spencer (1972:85) that there was a fourth icon of St. Luke at the Church of *Oho Bāhalit* in Goğğam, which unfortunately had been burnt with all the treasury three years before his visit.⁷³

Some authors (like Heldman 1984:131-142; Getatchew 1992:1) write that the cult of the Virgin Mary,⁷⁴ which implies more than her veneration as Mother of God and it embodies a special devotion to Mary as intercessor for the faithful, was introduced by King Dawit I (1380-1412) then Zār'a Ya'eqob more actively encouraged her cult. Nevertheless, EOTC by no means teaches the cult of Saints but veneration of St. Mary and other Saints. Paulos (1988) states that there are two types of worship in the EOTC. The first one is the worship rendered unto God the Lord alone. The other form is the veneration and high respect of saints and sacred objects. This one is the accepted form of veneration or reverence, which is different from the first. EOTC strongly teaches that worship or የአምላክ ስግደት: 'prostrating oneself for worship of the Lord' should be given solely to God; whereas the second form is expressed as የፀጋ ስግደት: 'prostrating oneself for grace/high respect'.

Venerating and glorifying the Mother of the Lord above all creatures is a universal phenomenon in the Orthodox realm. Paulos states how churches venerate her and identifies that she is glorified above all creatures. He notes as follows:

For eastern Orthodoxy as a whole, a proper Christological understanding hinges upon a right understanding of the Virgin Mary's role in the incarnation, a point which is often overlooked or under-estimated by the Reformed churches. As the Mother of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary is exalted above all creatures, worthy of the praise and honor befitting her high status.⁷⁵

Consequently, the importance of the Blessed Virgin Mary is foundational to the oriental Orthodox Churches or the non-Chalcedon Christian Churches who profess their belief in the 'One Incarnate nature of God the Word' formula. It is on this premise that the EOTC gives great honor to the Virgin Mary which exceeds all creatures as መትሕተ፡ ፈጣሪ፤ መልዕክተ፡ ፍጡራን፤ 'below the Creator; and above [all] creatures'. The Book of *Sä'atat* also praises her as:

ዓዲ፡ ዘወደሰኪ፡ ቃለ፡ ዐዋዲ።
መትሕተ፡ ሥላሴ፡ ትሰገዲ።
እሳተ፡ ፍቅርኪ፡ ነዳዲ።
ዘያውኃዮ፡ ለከሓዲ።

*'Again the messenger praised you;
You are venerated under the Trinity;
The burning fire of your love consumes heresy'.*⁷⁶

⁷³ Diana Spencer, 'In search of St. Luke Icons in Ethiopia', *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, vol. X, no. 2, 1972.), pp. 67-93. See also Paulos 1988:156-157.

⁷⁴ Budge (1933:xxv-xlix) also writes about 'The Worship of the Virgin Mary in Egypt and Ethiopia'.

⁷⁵ Paulos 1988:40.

⁷⁶ Text - Täsfä 1989:106; translation - mine. Mekarios et al. (1996:52) express St. Mary as '*Our Lady, the Virgin St. Mary, is the most prominent from all Angels. She is pre-eminent in honor and intercession from all saints*'.

Nonetheless, this teaching cannot be regarded as a cult. It is an expression of the veneration of St. Mary. Works of Zär'a Ya'əqob including *Mäṣəḥafä Bərhan*, *Mäṣəḥafä Milad*, *Mäṣəḥafä Šallase*, *Tomarä Təsb'ət* and some other Marian works⁷⁷ contain significant sections dealing with the exaltation of the Blessed Virgin. The Emperor demanded from the faithful that they prostrate themselves to the ground whenever three names are mentioned: Jesus, Mary and Zär'a Ya'əqob (Getatchew 1983:93-119). The Emperor also declared that every church should possess two *tabots*, and the second one must be dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. Paulos adds that 'One could say that Ethiopia is a country literally built around churches dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Even the churches not dedicated to St. Mary contain an extra *tabot* or ark which is dedicated to her'⁷⁸. One among the miracles of Mary tells how her name is honored. The text goes as follows:

ዛቲ፡ ይእቲ፡ ስመ፡ አግዛእትነ፡ ቅድስት፡ ድንግል፡ በጀኤ፡
ማርያም፡ ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ፡ አመ፡ ተጸውዐ፡ ያድለቀልቅ፡
ዕንዐ፡ ሰማያት፡ ወግዘፈ፡ ምድር፡ እስከ፡ መሰረታ፡ ለሲኦል፡፡
ወለመላእክትኒ፡ ይትሀወክ፡ ክነፊሆመ፡ በድንጋዬ፡ አመ፡
ቈጽል፡ አመ፡ ይዘብጦ፡ ነፋስ፡፡

*'This is the name of our Lady the Blessed Virgin in two fold, the Theotokos. Whenever [her name] is called, the power of the heavens and the thickness of the earth will be trembled until the foundation of Sheol. As for the Angels, their wing will be shaken in astonishment like foliage by the wind.'*⁷⁹

The Anaphora of Mary praises her as 'O Virgin, full of glory, with whom and with what likeness shall we liken thee?'⁸⁰ In the same way the Miracle of Mary pronounces that 'all creatures are created to glorify Mary'. *Ra'əyā tä'ammər* (EMML 1480 (f.115^f)) applauds her as: እስመ፡ በእንቲአሃ፡ ተፈጥረ፡ ኩሉ፡ ዓለም፡፡ 'For the whole world was created because of her'.⁸¹

The Virgin Mary is venerated as the Perpetual Virgin in two folds: ወበእንተዝ፡ ንብል፡ ማርያምስ፡ ድንግል፡ ይእቲ፡ በክልኤ፡ ፍና፡ ድንግል፡ ይእቲ፡ በሕሊናሃ፡ ወድንግል፡ በሥጋሃ፡፡ ወአልቦ፡ ዘይትማሰሎ፡ ለድንግልና፡ ንጽሐ፡ ሕሊናሃ፡ ወለድንግልና፡ ንጽሐ፡ ሥጋሃ፡፡ 'Therefore, we say Mary is virgin in two ways: she is virgin in her mind and she is virgin in her body. Nothing resembles the virginity of the purity of her mind and the virginity of her body',⁸² which is also recited in the Ethiopian *Ave Maria*⁸³ as ድንግል፡ በሕሊናክ፡ ወድንግል፡ በሥጋክ፡ 'Virgin in your mind and Virgin in your body' and elsewhere in the Marian glories (EMML1480, ff. 114^f-127^f).⁸⁴

⁷⁷ Such as *Arganonä Dəngəl* (Paulos 1988:41); *Mälkə'a fəlsäta* (Getatchew 1994:369-375).

⁷⁸ Paulos 1988:153.

⁷⁹ Text - Cerruli 1943:76; translation, *mine*.

⁸⁰ Daoud 1954:107.

⁸¹ Getatchew Haile, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts Microfilmed for the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library* (Minnesota: Collegeville, vol. iv, 1979), pp 599-603. See also Getatchew 1992:74.

⁸² Getatchew 1992:82.

⁸³ See also other *Ave Marias* 'Hail Marys' in Budge 1933:xxxiii-xxxvi.

⁸⁴ Getatchew 1992:70-93.

4. Mariology in *Dərsanä Şəyon*

Dərsanä Şəyon is the Ge'ez text which glorifies the Ark of the Covenant and St. Mary. Before presenting the text in relation to Mariology, it is worth discussing the *Dərsan* and *Şəyon* briefly. After that the epithets of Our Lady in the entire text of the edited DS (viz. DS 'proper', News of Zion, images of Zion and miracles of Zion) are discussed.

Dərsan is a Ge'ez word that comes from the verb *däräsä*, which has several Semitic parallels. It describes the exegetical or homiletic writing developed by an ecclesiastical interpreter or *därsäsi*. Consequently, its derivative *Dərsan* 'homily' applies to the written result of this activity, i.e. to a new composition written to explain the sense of the scriptures. Kidanä Wäld⁸⁵ adds the following to the definition of a ጵርሳ፡፡ 'homily' - long passage, sermon, discourse, melodious hymn, etc. The English term 'homily' is derived from the Greek word *homilia* (*homilein*), which means to have communion or hold intercourse with a person.⁸⁶

The Homily, was a type of oral religious instruction, delivered to the Church congregation. In the patristic period and through the middle Ages, the focus of the homily was on the explanation and application of texts read or sung during the celebration of the liturgy. In most cases, homily applies to works of literature giving moral advice. Lusini⁸⁷ states that the title *Dərsan* usually stands for a text devoted to a specific theological argument. Any treatise or homily of a church father, including the fathers of the Ethiopian Church, who were mostly anonymous, could be called a *Dərsan*.

The titles of the Ethiopian homilies commonly run according to the following structure:⁸⁸

i) *Dərsan*; ii) The relative *zä-* followed by the indication of the author; iii) The preposition *bä'əntä* followed by the indication of the argument, e.g., *Dərsan bä'əntä Sänbät zädäräsä rätu'a haymanot* 'Homily concerning the Sabbath, composed [by] *rätu'a haymanot* (lit. 'Orthodox faith')'; *Dərsan zätewoflos bä'əntä qəddus Yoħannəs*, 'Homily of Theophilus concerning St. John'. iv) When the subject is a divine personality or a doctrinal concept, the title of the book is made up of *Dərsan* in status constructus, followed by the personal name of the celebrated religious figure: e.g., *Dərsanä mahyäwi* 'Homily on the Life-Giver or Healer', i.e. Christ; *Dərsanä Sänbät* 'Homily [in honor] of the Sabbath'; *Dərsanä Šəllase* 'Homily [in honor] of the Trinity'; *Dərsanä Abraham wäSara bəgəbš* 'Homily on Abraham and Sara in Egypt'; *Dərsanä Ragu'el* 'Homily [in honor] of [the Archangel] Ragu'el'; *Dərsanä 'Ura'el* 'homily [in honor] of [the Archangel] Ura'el'. The last two homilies contain eschatological revelations and thus belong to the apocalyptic genre. Here *Dərsanä Şəyon* 'Homily [in honor] of Zion' falls under the fourth type of classification. It glorifies the Ark of the Covenant and equates the Virgin Mary the Theotokos with the Heavenly Zion and the True Ark of God.

Dərsan can designate not only a separate text, but also a homiliary, i.e. a collection of texts having a religious figure as the main character: e.g., *Dərsanä Maryam*, *Dərsanä Gäbriel*, *Dərsanä Mika'el*, *Dərsanä Rufa'el* etc.

⁸⁵ Kidanä Wäld Kəfle, *Məşhafü säwasəw wägəss wäməzgäbä qalat Haddis* (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing Enterprise, 1948), p. 363.

⁸⁶ Beecher, P., 'Homily' in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), retrieved on April 26, 2010 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07448a.htm>.

⁸⁷ Lusini, Gianfranco, 'dərsan' in EAE, vol. 2 (D-Ha), 2005, p. 136.,

⁸⁸ Lusini 2005: 136, Kidanä Wäld: 1948:363.

In this case, different units composing the collection belong to the hagiographic rather than to the homiletic genre, since they contain mostly narratives of miracles (*Tä'ammər*) performed by a religious figure.⁸⁹ As compared with other literary works of the country, Homilies (*Dərsanat*) are less studied and sources are limited.

The term *Şəyon* 'Zion' is associated with different toponyms.⁹⁰ Initially, Zion was related with Mount Sinai. The Lord ordered Moses to ascend the Mount then He gave him the two Tablets (Exd. 19:2 ff.). It was there that Moses delivered the Ark of the Covenant. The following *Tä'ammərä Şəyon Maryam* of DS (EMML 8823)⁹¹ states as follows:

ስምዑ፡ እነግረክሙ፡ ሕዝብ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ጥንተ፡ ሙሉዳ፡ ለጽዮን፡
 ፀወንነ፡ አመ፡ ጸመ፡ ሙሴ፡ ሻ፡ ሙዓልተ፡ ወሻ፡ ሌሊተ፡ በደብረ፡
 ሲና፡ ወሀቦ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ጽላት፡ ዘዕብን፡ ዘበውስቴታ፡
 ጽሑፍ፡ ዓሀርቱ፡ ቃላት፡፡⁹²

'Listen, I will tell you O! Christian people. The beginning of the generation of Zion, our shelter, [is] at the time when Moses was fasting for forty days and forty nights on Mount Sinai. The Lord gave him a Tablet of stone inside which the Ten Words are inscribed'.

The Virgin Mary is foreshadowed in the Old Testament. She is called the True Zion. Munro-Hay,⁹³ after collecting the tradition at Axum on Zion, states '*Zion represents many things, according to the dabtarat and priests of Aksum - Virgin Mary, shelter, the land of Ethiopia, the land of King David*'. There are also additional representations of the Blessed Virgin as the true Zion.⁹⁴

The annual feast of *Hədar Şəyon* (Nov. 30) at Axum Zion attracts high public participation. The solemn ceremonies and form of worship have immense impact. The ceremonies is including the reading of *Dərsanä Şəyon* in front of the Ark Chapel, then kissing and blessed by it. Infertile women carry the MS and vow in front of the Ark in order that they would bear fruit.

*Dərsanä Şəyon*⁹⁵ is one of the most popular EOTC texts about Zion - Mary. It contains prominent mention of the Glories Mary. Here is the philological analysis and description of DS: Existing D.S. manuscripts are arranged in different ways. According to Amsalu (2011) so far four kinds of DS arrangements have been attested. They are arranged into four forms:

⁸⁹ Samuel Yalew, 'Nature of homily of Angeles' (Amharic) *Proceedings of the workshop on 'the Ethiopian Church yesterday, today and tomorrow'* (Addis Ababa: organized by EOTC-Mahbere Kidusan, April 18-19, 2002) pp. 79-89. See also Gezahegn Getachew and Samuel Yalew, 'Images and Homilies of Angeles' (Amharic) *Hamer*, a publication of EOTC SSD-MK, 1995 EC, vol. 10, no. 4 Sep-Oct, pp. 32-34.

⁹⁰ Augustin Dillman, *Lexicon Linguae Aethiopicæ cum Indice Latino* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1864, reprint 1955), p. 1300; Leslau 1987: 566.

⁹¹ EMML 8823 is described in Amsalu (2011) and given the *sigla* [F]. This is a 19th Cent. MS and found in Southern Gondar Diocese, Bābbāks Dābrā Gännāt St. Mary Church, Fogāra, near Dābrā Tabor.

⁹² Text - EMML 8823, f. 20v^a; translation – mine.

⁹³ Munro-Hay, *The Quest for the Ark of the Covenant - the true history of the Tablets of Moses* (London-New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006), p.47.

⁹⁴ Zion can be applied for various notions including: St. Mary, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Christian Empire of Ethiopia, Axum Zion Cathedral etc. For a detailed note on the subject, see Amsalu (2011:67-81).

⁹⁵ The researcher has collected ten different versions of DS (dated from 15th to 20th Cent. AD) for the dissertation. He believes the original DS was composed prior to 1400 AD. (Amsalu 2011:124).

a separate text (DS ‘proper’), a composite text with KN, a miscellaneous text⁹⁶ in Dərsanä Maryam (DM) and a multiple text. In MSS, the DS often appears together with the *Kəbrä Nägästä*,⁹⁷ placed before the latter text in a series of composite MSS (eg. DS of Axum, 1925 EC, ff. 1r-15v; DS of ʾEnṭoṭto Maryam, 20th cent. AD, ff.1-24; Printed DS of Ṭana Qirqos, 1998 EC, pp. 1-28). In multiple text MSS, DS can be placed after KN (eg. NL-630, 1977 EC, ff.44r-59v). It is also included into the *Dərsanä Maryam* homiliary (eg. EMMML - 8979, MS of Šame Maryam, 1884 EC, ff. 137r-146r; EMMML 8713, Ṭana Qirqos, 18th cent., ff.1r-8v; MS TānāSee 72, 16th cent., ff. 25r-42v). In some cases DS is also transmitted as an independent text (eg. NL-273, 15th cent., 39 ff; EMMML 8823, Bäbbäks Däbrä Gännät St. Mary Church, 19th cent., 20 ff.; EMMML 8429, Kota Maryam, 17th cent., 18 ff.).

Based on the description of KN, the Ark of the Covenant is said to have been deposited at Zion-Ethiopia. Strangely enough, there is no mention of Axum in KN and DS texts. Nevertheless, the claim is based on the colophon of these texts. DS colophon, for instance, says:

ሰምዑ፡ እንግርክሙ፡ ኦ፡አገዘ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ እግዚአብሔር፡
 ይባርክሙ፡ ወያብርህ፡ አዕይንተ፡ አልባቢክሙ፡ ለሰሚዓ፡
 ተአምራሃ፡ ለመቅደሱ፡ እምነ፡ ጽዮን፡ ገዘዘ፡ አክሱም፡ እለ፡
 ትናፍቁ፡ ወትብሉ፡ ኢሀለወት፡ ጽላት፡ ዘሙሴ፡ በምድረ፡
 አክሱም፡ ዓባይ፡ ሀገር፡ ማኅደረ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ዳግሚት፡
 ኢየሩሳሌም፡ፀወነ፡ ኩሉ፡ዓለም፡ ሰሚኣክሙ፡ እምዓለውያን፡
 ሃይማኖት፡ አእምሩ፡ ወለብወ፡ ዘገብረ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡
 ተአምረ፡ወመክከረ፡በመገገሥተ፡አብርሐ፡ወአጽብሐ፡ ነገሥታተ፡
 አክሱም፡ እገዘ፡ ጳጳስነ፡ አቡነ፡ ሰላማ፡ ከሣቴ፡ ብርሃን፡።

*“Let you listen so that I tell you O! Christian People. May the Lord bless you and make the eyes of your heart shine on hearing the miracles of the Temple of our Mother Zion, the Treasure of Axum. Those of you who doubt and say ‘The Ark of Moses is not found in the Land of Axum, the great city, which is the dwelling of the Lord, the second Jerusalem and refuge of all the world’, by hearing from the rebels against faith, let you know and understand the miracle and wonder which the Lord has done during the reign of Abrəha and Ašbəha, the kings of Axum while Sälama, the Revealer of Light; was our bishop.”*⁹⁸

DS discusses various theological topics. Glorifications of the Trinity, Incarnation, Mariology, theology of the Ark, biblical episodes related to the Ark of the Covenant etc. are fundamental contents of DS. Miracles of Zion including Christian ethical teachings. All in all, the text presents the EOTC doctrines through deep hermeneutical approach regarding the Ark-Mary resemblances.

⁹⁶ For a detailed note on the text arrangements of DS, Amsalu 2011:124 ff.

⁹⁷ *Kəbrä Nägästä* is edited and translated into different European languages: such as, Carl Bezold - 1905 (German); Wallis Budge -1922 (English); Gérard Colin -2002 (French); Mazzoni, L. -2007 and Osvaldo Raineri -2008 (Italian); Ran Hacoen -2009 (Hebrew) and recently Amharic translation by Sergew Gelaw -1994 EC. For a comprehensive note on the works of KN - Amsalu Tefera, *Kəbrä Nägästä and Dərsanä Šəyon: a comparative study*, a paper read at the 17th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University - Ethiopia, Nov. 2009.

⁹⁸ Amsalu 2011:314 [Text]; 316 [translation].

In the Ethiopic hermeneutical tradition, the similitude of St. Mary is discussed at large. For instance, we find in the Yaredic *Mäzgbä Dəggʷa* that Virgin Mary is compared to Zion, the Church and various other symbols; such as the Ark of Noah, the road of Aron etc. She is adorned with holiness, sealed in virginity and clothed in gold. Yared also speaks of the Blessed Virgin, that she is a fitting object of the highest praise.⁹⁹ We also read in the hymnody of Yared that through the Virgin, God Himself took flesh; in her was born the wisdom of the Word; Almighty God, who holds all things within His holy hands. The Holy Virgin is the burning bush which Moses saw burning but which was not consumed. St. Yared marvels that the fire which Moses saw and before which he trembled, it was the same fire which the Blessed Virgin carried without fear within her womb: from a distant land called Bethlehem a young lamb has given birth to the wonderful calf of Zion.¹⁰⁰

St. Yared in his other book of hymnody called *Mə'əraf*, represents a constant hymn of thanksgiving to the Holy Virgin for God's saving act wrought through her. In September's Marian feast, St. Mary is described as the peaceful dove, greater than all women and purer than the Seraphim. On *Hədar* 21, the day of Zion, the hymn speaks of the Virgin as the golden candlestick of Zachariah's vision. She is the city of Zion which King Solomon chose and the east gate of the Prophet Ezekiel which is sealed (Ezk. 44:1).¹⁰¹ There are also various symbol and comparisons of Our Lady in the Divine Liturgy.¹⁰²

Since both KN and DS share in the glorification of the Virgin Mary, we find common Marian doxologies in both texts.¹⁰³ The following paragraph gives a brief account of KN's Mariology. The celestial Zion, St. Mary is identified with the burning bush, the fire being the 'Godhood of the Son of God'. She is the censer, Christ being the coals, and the odor of incense, the perfume of Christ; 'and upon the perfume of the incense the prayers of the pure go up to the throne of God' (KN 97). She is the rod of Aaron (KN 98) 'She lives in Zion with the pot which is filled with manna and with the two tablets that were written with the Finger of God' (Heb. 9:4). Indeed, 'the *Gomor*' which is the pot of gold (መሰብ: ወርቅ) inside the Tabernacle (ታቦት) plated with gold symbolizes the Godhead, the deity of Christ. The 'spiritual pearl' contained in the Tabernacle is Mary, 'the Mother of Light' (KN 98). In KN 104, Mary is 'the similitude [of Zion, the Tabernacle of the Law of God, ጸዮን: ታቦት: ሕገ: ለእግዚአብሔር:] and the fruit thereof': in her name is blessed the Tabernacle [*Tabot*] of the Law of God'.

Correspondingly, DS¹⁰⁴ also narrates the glory and symbols of St Mary. The text frequently uses Mary for Zion and the vice versa. It also praises Zion Mary for her miracles and wonders. The following expressions and epithets are cited from the edited text of DS. The quotations are given with their literal translations including their section in square brackets. An attempt is also made to add theological reflections on the paragraphs.

- ተቅዋመ: ማኅቶት: ዘወርቅ: '[You are] the golden lamp stand' [፩4]. It is one of the frequent epithets of St. Mary which originally was instituted in the Tabernacle. We read similar designations of Our Lady in the Marian texts of EOTC. In the Praise of Mary (on Sundays), for instance, she is expressed as አንተ: ውክተ: ተቅዋም: ዘወርቅ: እንተ: ጸርኪ: ማኅቶት: ፀዳል: ኩሎ: ጊዜ:: 'You are the golden lamp stand which carries the radiant light all the time'.

⁹⁹ St. Yared, *Mäzgbä Dəggʷa* (Addis Ababa: Birhanenna Selam Printing Press, 1959), pp. 100-102.

¹⁰⁰ Paulos (1988:88-98) describes the symbolic representations of St. Mary in all Yaredic hymnological books.

¹⁰¹ St. Yared, *The five Modes of Chanting* (Addis Ababa: Birhanenna Selam Printing Press, 1966), pp. 259, 283-284; Paulos 1988: 93.

¹⁰² Paulos 1988:186-204.

¹⁰³ Amsalu 2009:16-18.

¹⁰⁴ Amsalu 2011:181-211 [text] and pp. 212-236 [translation]. The critical edition is divided into 139 sections. Numbers signify sections of the edited DS text.

- ታቦተ፡ ሕግ፡ ዘበአማን፡ ‘[You are] the true Ark of Law’ [፩፩ 4, 13, 38, 69, 71, 83, 109, 127]. We know the first Ark of the Law was given to Moses. Here also we read that the Blessed Virgin Mary is referred as the True Ark of Law as she gave birth to the Lord.
- አልቦ፡ ዘከማሃ፡ ዘይትዔረያ፡ በስን፡ ወበላሕይ፡ በክብር፡ ወበዕባይ፡ ዘእንበለ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ባሕቲቱ። ‘There is no one who can be equated to Her in beauty and splendor, in honor and greatness except only the Lord’ [§5]. The text speaks of the beauty (both internal and external) of Our Lady as incomparable with anyone, for she is the bride of the Lord.
- ጽዮን፡ ሰማያዊት፡ እንተ፡ ይእቲ፡ ማኅደሮሙ፡ ለቅዱሳን፡ ዘትነግሥ፡ ለዓለሙ፡ ዓለም፡ ‘The celestial Zion, in whom all the saints reside, who reigns forever and ever’ [፩8, partially ፩፩131, 135]. Here the text speaks about the heavenly Zion which presents our Lady as the perpetual queen.
- ሀገሩ፡ ለንጉሥ፡ ዓቢይ፡ ‘[You are] the country of the great king’ [፩9]. Mary-Zion is designated as the true habitation of Our Lord. We read similar epithets in the Psalter which says ‘Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God’ (Ps. 87:3, also Ps. 48:1-14).
- ጽዮን፡ ታቦተ፡ ሕግ፡ ዘኪዳን፡ ‘Zion, Ark of Law the Covenant’ [፩፩ 13, 133]. These sections laud the Virgin Mary the true Ark of Law.
- ወታቦትሰ፡ ንጽሕት፡ ይእቲ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ ዘይትማሰላ፡ አልቦ፡ ኢሰማያውያን፡ ወኢምድራውያን። ‘And as for the Tablet, she is our Lady Mary the Pure, against whom there is no one equating with Her neither among the celestials nor among the terrestrials’ [§26]. It express the reality that no one can be compared to Mary, the Theotokos.
- ወገብሩ፡ ስብሐተ፡ ዓቢያ፡ ኩሎሙ፡ ደቂቀ፡ እስራኤል፡ ወአእኩትዋ፡ ለእግዝእትነ፡ እስከ፡ በጽሑ፡ ኢያሪኮ። ወበሰብአ፡ ኃይላ፡ ገብረት፡ ኃይለ፡ ብዙኃ፡ ንግሥትነ፡ ጽዮን፡ ወእምነ። ‘All the children of Israel gave loud praise and they glorified Our Lady, until they reached Jericho.... And also for the people of Gay, Zion our Queen and Mother did prodigious things among them’ [፩፩ 30 and 32]. The sections glorify Zion for her might which was performed against Jericho and the people of Gay (Jos 6:1; 8:23).
- ወይእኬነ፡ አበውየ፡ ወአኃውየ፡ ዕግትዋ፡ ለጽዮን፡ ወሕቀፍዋ፡ ለክብሩ፡ በዓላ፡ እንዘ፡ ተሐልዩ። ወይእቲሰ፡ ሥርጉት፡ በሥነ፡ ስብሐት። ትትሉዓል፡ እምሰማያት፡ ወትክብር፡ እምኩሎሙ፡ ቅዱሳን፡ ወትጉሃን። ወሀገራቱ፡ ለአማኑኤል፡ አምላክነ። ‘And now my fathers and brothers, encircle Zion and embrace the glory of Her feast while chanting. As for Her, She is adorned in the beauty of praise. She is more exalted than the heavens and She is more glorious than all the saints and [the most] vigilant. Zion, the country of Immanuel, Our God’ [§ 35]. It reminds the laity to venerate Zion. King David acclaims her: ‘Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof’ (Ps. 48:12).
- ጽዮን፡ እምነ፡ ሙካፉ፡ ለጠለ፡ መለኮት፡ ‘Our Mother Zion, holder of the dew of divinity’ [፩35]. In this sentence, St. Mary is stated as the vessel of precipitation of the mercy of God.

- መርዓተ፡ ሊባኖስ፡ ዘትመስል፡ አትሮንስ፡ ዘአበ፡ ሮብእም፡ ‘*Bride of Lebanon, which seems the throne of the father of Rehoboam*’ [፩ 36]. The verse presents Zion as the throne of King Solomon, who was the father of Rehoboam.¹⁰⁵
- The coming sections preserve similar expression on our Lady as the true Ark of the Lord. The texts go as follows: ታቦተ፡ ሕግነ፡ ጽዮን፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ዘተሣረረት፡ እምቅድመ፡ ዓለማት፡ በሕሊና፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ አብ፤ ወበሥምረተ፡ ወልድ፡ ዋሕድ፤ ወሀብተ፡ መንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ጳራቅሊጦስ፤ ዕሩያነ፡ ንግሥ፡ ከመ፡ ትኩኖ፡ ማኅደሮ፡ ሎቱ። ‘*Our Ark of the Law, Zion, our Lady, who was founded before the world, in the mind of God, the Father, and by the joy of the only begotten Son, and by the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, [who are] co-equal in sovereignty to be dwelling for Him*’ [፩ 38, also partially in ፩ 69, 71, 75]; ጽዮን፡ ታቦተ፡ ሕግ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ ‘*Zion Ark of Law of the Lord*’ [፩ 75]; በእንተ፡ ጽዮን፡ ታቦትከ፡ ‘*About Zion, Your Ark*’ [፩ 78]; ለጽዮን፡ ታቦተ፡ አምላክ፡ እስራኤል፡ ‘*For Zion the Ark of God of Israel*’ [፩ 80]. These sections present the quality of Zion-Mary as the true Ark of the Lord.
- ወጸፍጸፈ፡ ቤትኒ፡ ዘተቀፍለ፡ በወርቅ፡ ንጽሐ፡ ሥጋሃ፡ ለእግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም። ‘*The floor of the Temple, covered with gold is the purity of the flesh of Our Lady Mary*’ [፩ 95]. DS text preserves various similitude on Ark-Mary parallelisms. For instance it relates the two Cherubim which are located on the Ark of the Covenant as the two fold virginity of Our Lady Mary. In the same way the gold covered floor of the Temple is the purity of her flesh as stated in this section.
- ወለጽዮንስ፡ ቅድስት፡ ዘሐንጽክዋ፡ በእደዮ፡ ወሣረርክዋ፡ እሬስያ፡ ማኅደረ፡ ስብሐትዮ፡ በመልዕልተ፡ ሰማያት። ‘*And for the Holy Zion, which I built and established by My hand, I will make Her the dwelling of My praise in the highest heavens*’ [§ 108]. This shows the preference of the Lord for Virgin Mary to be the Mother of His only begotten Son. It also tells that Zion is made by the pure hands of the Lord for His eternal glory.
- ዛቲ፡ ብእሲት፡ ዘርኢከ፡ እንተ፡ ኮነት፡ ሀገረ፡ ሕንጽተ፡ ጽዮን፡ ይእቲ፡ እንተ፡ በየማነ፡ ልዑል፡ ወትነብር፡ ለዓለም። ‘*This woman whom you saw [as a] fertile country is Zion, which is staying at the right of the Most High, forever*’ [፩ 120]. Personification of Zion is a phenomenon which occurs rarely in the entire text of DS. In this instance we see Zion as mother of all. We can also read the same prophesy in 4 Ezra 10:7. This type of personification of 4 Ezra and that of DS is also attested in Pauline theology as ‘*But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother*’ (Gal. 4:26).
- ሃሌ፡ ሉያ፡ ስብሐት፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ ዘአልአላ፡ ለጽዮን፡ እምኩሉ፡ ዓለማት። ... ወአነሃ፡ እብል፡ ከማሆመ፡ ሃሌ፡ ሉያ፡ ስብሐት፡ ለማኅደረ፡ በግዑ፡ ንጽሕት፡ ሃሌ፡ ሉያ፡ ለጽዮን፡ እምነ፡ ሥርጉት፡ በስብሐት፡ ሃሌ፡ ሉያ፡ ለዘኢትፈቅድ፡ ፀሐዮ፡ ለአብርሃታ፡ ወብርሃነ፡ በግዑ፡ ያዋኪ፡ ውስቴታ። ‘*Hallelujah, glory be to the Lord who elevated Zion more than the entire world.... As for me, I said like them: ‘Glory be to the pure habitation of His Lamb. Hallelujah to Zion Our Mother adorned by praise. Hallelujah for whom does not want the Sun for Her shining, and the light of His Lamb is shining inside Her*’ [፩ 124-125]. It shows the everlasting glory of Zion-Mary. She does not want the Sun for the light of her Son shines inside her. The author of DS himself glorified Zion as the Angels do always.

¹⁰⁵ 1 King. 2:12; 12: 1ff.

- The following sections narrate about Zion as the new city: ሀገር፡ ሐዳስ፡ ዘይሴፈውዋ፡ ለምጽአኑታ፡ ቅዱሳን፡ እለ፡ አንጽሑ፡ ነፍሶሙ፡ ዘትነግሥ፡ ሎሙ፡ ለዓለሙ፡ ዓለም፡... አመ፡ ትነግሥ፡ ጽዮን፡ ኦርያማዊት፡ መቅደስ፡ ‘The new country where saints had hoped her coming, those who cleansed themselves; who will reign for them forever... When Zion, the celestial Temple, reigns’ [፲፩፡128 and 130]. St. John states about the newly heaven (newly Jerusalem) in his Revelation (21:1-2).
- ወዘንተ፡ ርኢኩ፡ ዘይቤ፡ ዘካርያስ፡ ነቢይ፡ በሳምን፡ ወርኅ፡ በአምሳሊሃ፡ ለጽዮን፡ ቅድስት፡ እንተ፡ ይእቲ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ ድንግል፡ በ፪፡ ወፍካሬሁሰ፡ ከመዝ፡ ወእቱ፡ ተቅዋሙ፡ ማኅቶት፡ ዘወርቅ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ ይእቲ፡ ጽዮን፡ ታቦተ፡ ሕግ፡ ዘኪዳን፡ እለ፡ ተጋባእነ፡ ዮም፡ በበዓለ፡ ዚአሃ፡ ‘In the eighth month, I have seen the two fold Virgin, our Lady Mary in the image of Holy Zion’ says Prophet Zechariah. As for its explanation, it is like this: the golden pedestal is our Lady Mary Zion, who is the Ark of Law of the Covenant that we have been gathered today in the feast of Her’ [፲፩፡132]. This is the revelation of Prophet Zechariah (Zech. 4:2ff.) on the image of Zion.
- ወኩሎሙ፡ ነቢያት፡ ወደስዋ፡ ወአስተብጽእዋ፡ ለጽዮን፡ ሐመረ፡ ወርቅ፡ ‘And all prophets praised and glorified Zion, the golden ship’ [§ 133]. The Ship is an allegory for different things in Orthodox theology. As we read in this section, St Mary is equated with the golden ship. According to the book of Sä‘atal¹⁰⁶ Lord Jesus is stated as ሐመርነ፡ ዘኢይቆርቦ፡ ሞገድ፡ ‘Our Ship whom tempest does not approach’. Epistle of Clement mentions the Church as a Ship: ‘The Church is like a Ship; Christ is its ship-master [captain]; church hierarchies correspond with ship crew; the sea is the world, and the storm is its difficulties [lit. danger]; the ship brings to the port of Salvation’.¹⁰⁷
- ንግሥተ፡ ሰማያት፡ ወምድር፡ እንተ፡ ይእቲ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ እምነ፡ ‘Queen of Heavens and earth, our Mother, who is our Lady Mary’ [፲፩፡134]. This section mentions the true queen-ship of Our Lady.
- እምነ፡ ጽዮን፡ ታቦተ፡ ሕግ፡ እንተ፡ ይእቲ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ ትምክህተ፡ ሕፃናት፡ ወአዕሩግ፡ ‘Our Mother Zion, the Ark of the Law, who is Our Lady Mary, proud of children and elders’ [፲፩፡137]. Our Lady Mary is stated in much literature to be the pride and creation. For instance we read from the praise of Mary (on Tuesdays) that St. Mary is expressed as the pride of all the human races.

Generally speaking the DS text preserves various teachings on the Ark-Mary designations and her glories. The epithets vividly express the Mariological teachings of the EOTC.

The following paragraphs confirm Zion-Mary resemblances from *Zena Şayon* ‘News of Zion’¹⁰⁸ in brief. Some of the epithets are similar with that of the DS.

- እስመ፡ ሀገሩ፡ ለንጉሥ፡ አንቲ፡ ኦ፡ ቅድስት፡ ጽዮን፡ ንሕነኒ፡ ንስእል፡ ወናስተብቁዕ፡ ንቤኪ፡ ከመ፡ ንርኩብ፡ ምሕረተ፡ በስእለትኪ፡ በነብ፡ መፍቀሬ፡ ሰብእ፡ መነ፡ ይትናገር፡ ክብረ፡ ዚእኪ፡ ኦ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ ጽዮን፡ ደብተራ፡ ቅድስት፡ ቅድስት፡(sic) ዘሙሴ፡ ርኢሰ፡ ነቢያት፡ ‘For you are the city of the King, O! Holy Zion. For us, we seek and beseech you in order to receive mercy by your beseech from the Lover of mankind. Who shall speak your honor, O! Our Lady Mary Zion, the holy Tabernacle of Moses the head of the prophets’. It reiterates the intercession and honor of the Blessed St. Mary which is favored by God.

¹⁰⁶ Täsfä1989:122.

¹⁰⁷ Text Bausi 1992:26, translation Amsalu 2011:232.

¹⁰⁸ ‘Zena Zion’ is preserved in two MSS (NL-630 and EMM-8429), out of the ten MSS (Amsalu 2011:237-245 and 261-268).

- ወረሰዮ፡ ውስቴታ፡ ሰማዕታተ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ጽላተ፡ ኪዳን፡ ወትእዛዘት(sic)። ወተጽሕፉ፡ ውስቴቶም፡ ፲፡ ቃላት፡ ዘውእቶም፡ ስሙ፡ ለኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ። ዘውእቱ፡ ተሰብእ፡ እምኔኪ፡ ዘእንበለ፡ ውላጤ። ወወለድኪዮ፡ ወእንጽሐነ፡ እምኃጣውኢነ። ‘He made Tablets of the Pact ‘Martyrs of the Lord’ inside her. And the Commandments, which the Ten Words, were inscribed inside them are the name[s] of Jesus Christ. He is incarnated from you without change’. The paragraph tells us the parallelism of the Ark of the Covenant and St. Mary the bearer of the Lord.
- አንቲ፡ ይእቲ፡ አ፡ ማርያም፡ ድንግል፡ ልቡጥ፡ በስብሐተ፡ መለኮት፡ በአፍአ፡ ወበውላጤ። እስመ፡ አግባብኪ፡ ሕዝብ፡ ብዙኃነ፡ ለወልድኪ፡ አምላክ፡ በንጽሕናኪ። አንቲ፡ ታቦተ፡ ኪዳን፡ አ፡ ማርያም፡ ድንግል፡ ፍጽምት፡ ዘአግበርዋ፡ እምዕዕ፡ ዘኢይነቅዝ፡ ልቡጥ፡ በወርቅ፡ እምአፍአ፡ ወውስጥ። ‘O! Virgin Mary, you are overlaid by the praise of the Divine in the exterior and interior; for you brought many people to your Son – God in your Purity. O! Perfect Virgin Mary, You [are] the Ark of the Covenant, made up of unspoiled wood, overlaid with gold in the exterior and interior’. This makes clear that St. Mary is the two-fold Virgin (in soul and body) as the Ark was made up from the unspoiled wood and overlaid with gold in the exterior and interior.
- ወካዕበ፡ አንቲ፡ አ፡ ማርያም፡ ፱አዕላፋት፡ ወትእል[ፊ]ተ፡ አዕላፋት፡ ይጸልሱኪ፡ ወትረ። ወይሴብሐቱ፡ ለፈጣሪሆሙ፡ እንዘ፡ ውእቱ፡ ውስተ፡ ከርሥኪ። ወውእቱ፡ ነሥአ፡ አምሳሊነ፡ ዘእንበለ፡ ውላጤ። አፋሆሙ፡ ለጠቢባን፡ መተርጉማን፡ ይትናገሩ፡ በእንተ፡ ክብርኪ። ‘Once more, you o! Mary, ten thousands and thousands of thousands [Angels] are hovering over you always; they praise their Creator, while He was in your womb. He took our image without change. The mouths of wise interpreters speak about your glory’. It shows how the Virgin Mary, the Mother of the Lord, is honored and praised by multitudes of Angeles, for she gave birth to the Creator of all.
- አ፡ ማርያም፡ ጽዮን፡ አስተማሰሉኪ፡ በምሥዋዕ፡ ዘይጸልሉ፡ ላዕሌሁ፡ ኪሩቤል። ዘውእቱ፡ በከመ፡ ትርጓሜሁ፡ ዘይጸውዑ፡ መካነ፡ [ለ]ጎድጎተ፡ አበሳ፡ ወኃጣውኢነ። O! Zion Mary, they equated you with an altar over which Cherubim are hovering an altar over which Cherubim are hovering. This is according to the tradition [that] they call the place: ‘remission of debt and our sins’. Here we are told that St. Mary is equated with an altar over which Cherubim are hovering for she is the true Ark. Both the altar and the womb of St. Mary are the true habitation of the Lord, where He accepts the prayers of all creatures. In both cases, the holy Angeles worship the Lord.
- Let’s examine the following paragraph on the Incarnation of the Logos and the purity of St. Mary as፡ ለኪ፡ ይደሉ፡ ከመ፡ ንጸውዕ፡ ስመኪ። መሶበ፡ ወርቅ፡ ዘመና፡ ኅቡዕ፡ ውስቴቱ፡ ወውእቱ፡ ረሰዮ፡ ረሰዮ (sic)፡ ውስተ፡ ደብተራ፡ ስምዕ፡ ለደቂቀ፡ ጿራኤል፡ በእንተ፡ ዘአክበርሙ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ አምላክ፡ በደብረ፡ ሲና። አንቲ፡ ካዕበ፡ አ፡ ማርያም፡ ጾርኪ፡ በውስተ፡ ከርሥኪ፡ መና፡ ልቡና፡ ዘወጽአ፡ እምአብ። ወወለድኪዮ፡ ዘእንበለ፡ ደነስ። ወወሀበነ፡ ሥጋሁ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ወደሞ፡ ክቡረ። ወአሕዮወነ፡ እስክ፡ ለዓለም። ...በመሶበ፡ ወርቅ፡ ዘአክበርዎሙ፡ ውስተ፡ ደብተራ፡ አስተማሰሉኪ፡ አ፡ ማርያም፡ ጽዮን፡ ዘነበረ፡ ውስቴትኪ፡ መና፡ ኅቡዕ፡ ዘውእቱ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ኅብስተ፡ ሕይወት።

'You deserve that we call your name. The golden basket which contains the Manna hidden in it. And He made the children of Israel inside testimony in the Tabernacle about which God the Lord honored them on Mount of Sinai. And besides you, O! Mary bore the Manna inside your womb, intelligence which came out from the Father; and you delivered Him without impurity; and He gave us His Holy Flesh and Honorable Blood; and He saved us forever ... O! Zion Mary, they equated you, with the golden basket which they put inside the Tabernacle. The one who was inside you was the secret Manna - Jesus Christ the Bread of Life'. The typology of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the golden basket which contains the hidden Manna is stated in this paragraph. Her true Manna Christ is the eternal life of the World.

- በአማን፡ አንቲ፡ አ፡ ማርያም፡ ጽዮን፡ ተቅዋም፡ ዘወርቅ፡ ብርሃነ፡ መለኮት፡ ዘምሉዕ፡ ውስቴትኪ፡ ፀዳለ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ሠናይኬ፡ መዓዛኪ፡ አ፡ ማርያም፡ ድንግል፡ ወይፈደፍድ፡ እምነሉ፡ ጾና፡ ስሒን፡ ... ወጾርኪ፡ ዕፍረተ፡ ሰማያዊ፡ ዘውእቱ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ መርዓዊ፡ ሰማያዊ፡ ዘበአማን፡ ጌና፡ መዓዛሁ፡ መልዓ፡ ውስተ፡ ከሉ፡ መካን፡ 'O! Zion Mary, truly you are the Golden stand [for the] Divine Light, the holy radiance of which is full inside you. How nice is your odor, o! Virgin Mary, and it exceeds all the odor of the incense, for it is truly [you are] the golden censer ... And you carried the heavenly perfume, who is Jesus Christ, the heavenly bridegroom, truly His fragrant odor fills everywhere'. In this paragraph, we read how the odor of the Mother of Emmanuel is fragrant, for she is the true censer. The divine light is shone inside her.
- ስብሐትኪ፡ ይትሌዓል፡ ጥቀ፡ እምሰማይ፡ ወክብርኪ፡ እምድር፡ ወእምእለ፡ የሐድሩ፡ ውስቴታ፡ አንቲ፡ ዘበአማን፡ ተንከተም፡ ዘትበጽሕ፡ እስከ፡ ሰማይ፡ ለበሰኪ፡ ትፍሥሕተ፡ አ፡ ወለተ፡ ጽዮን፡ ወከደንኪዮ፡ ለአዳም፡ ልብሰ፡ ጸጋ፡ ወአግባዕኪዮ፡ ዳግመ፡ ኅበ፡ ገነተ፡ ትፍሥሕት፡ 'Your praise is much higher than the heaven and your glory than the earth, and those who are in her. Truly, you are the ladder which reaches heaven. O! Daughter of Zion, you wore joy and covered Adam [with] a cloth of grace and brought him back to the Paradise of joy'. Here the glory of the Theotokos-Mary is reflected as it exceeds that of heavenly Angels and earthly men. It also shows that the Virgin Mary is the true ladder which reaches to heaven. It reminds us of the incident concerning Jacob on his way towards Haran: 'And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it' (Gen. 28:12).

Zena Zion, the addendum of DS text, also reflects the profound thoughts and facts on the Blessed Virgin Mary.

From *Mülkä'a Şəyon 'Images of Zion'*,¹⁰⁹ we shall cite the following praises and epithets of St. Mary: ንግሥተ፡ ሰማይ፡ ወምድር፤ 'The Queen of Heaven and Earth'; እመ፡ መለኮት፤ 'Mother of the Divine'; ሥንቀ፡ ርሁባን፡ ጽዮን፡ ንግሥተ፡ ላዕሉ፡ ወታሕቱ፤ 'Zion – provision for those who are hungry, Queen for above and below; አፍጣኒተ፡ ረድዔት፡ ጽዮን፡ ባላሂተ፡ አዳም፤ 'Zion, accelerator of help, savior of Adam'; እመ፡ ዘእኑ፡ ጽዮን፡ ወጽዮን፡ እመ፡ ዋሕድ፤ 'Zion-our mother and the Mother of the One'; መራዓቱ(sic)፡ ለክብ፤ 'the bride of the Father'; አቀራሪተ፡ አበሳ፡ ወኃጢአት፤ '[you are] the one who cools debt and sin'; እመ፡ ብዙኃን፡ ወእመ፡ ፈጣሪ፡ ፀባዖት፤ 'Mother of many and mother of the Creator, Lord of the Hosts';

¹⁰⁹ The Printed text of DS, pp. 281-286 (Amsalu 2011: 293-302 [text] , 302-313[translation]).

አንቀጸ፡ ገነት፤ ‘Gate of the Paradise’; ጽዮን፡ ታቦተ፡ ሙሴ፡ ወኢያሱ፤ ‘Zion, Ark of Moses and Joshua’; ንግሥተ፡ ኦርያም፤ ‘Queen of the Highest’; ማህቶተ፡ ዓለም፤ ‘Light of the World’; ንግሥተ፡ መላእክት፤ ‘Queen of the angels’; ጽዮን፡ ወለተ፡ ሐና፤ ‘Zion-daughter of Ann’; እመ፡ ማኅየዌ፤ ‘Mother of the Life-giver’; ነቅዓ፡ መድኃኒት፤ ‘Fountain of medicine’; ለመድኃኔ፡ ዓለም፡ ማህደሩ፤ ‘[You are] the dwelling of the Savior of the World’; ማርያም፡ እምየ፡ ደብረ፡ ፀሐይ፡ ወሰላም፤ አጥፍኢ፡ ወዘርዘሪ፡ ምክረ፡ ዲያብሎስ፡ ኢግሩም፤ ‘My Mother Mary, mountain of Sun and peace, Make to perish and disperse the dishonorable counsel of the Devil’; ኦግኢት፡ ጽዮን፤ ‘Zion the Liberator’; አንቀጸ፡ ገነት፡ ጽዮን፡ እመ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፤ ‘Zion the gate of Paradise, the Mother of Jesus Christ’; ሠረገላ፡ ኤልያስ፡ ጽዮን፡ ወትንቢተ፡ ኢሳይያስ፤ ‘Zion, the chariot of Elijah and the prophesy of Isaiah, [who is] the son of Amos’; ጽዮን፡ መንበረ፡ ጸባዖት፡ ወጽዮን፡ መንበረ፡ መለኮት፤ ‘Zion the throne of the Lord of Hosts, and Zion the throne of the Divine’; ትዕግሥተ፡ ኦብርሃም፡ ወኢዮብ፤ ‘[You are] the endurance of Abraham and Job’; ተስፋ፡ መላእክት፡ ጽዮን፡ ወተስፋ፡ ዕደው፡ ወአንስት፤ ‘Zion-the hope of the Angels and the hope of men and women’; ፀሐየ፡ ፀሐየት፡ እምነ፡ ወእመ፡ ምሕረት፡ ወሣህል፤ ‘Our Mother, the sun of suns and the Mother of mercy and clemency’; ስብሐት፡ ለኪ፡ ጽዮን፡ እመ፡ አዶናይ፤ ‘Praise to you, Zion, the Mother of Adonay’.

Miracle of Zion:¹¹⁰ The following colophon of EMMML 8823 lauds St. Mary as the true shield and shelter for all mankind. The text goes as follows:

ዝንቱ፡ ኩሉ፡ ኮነ፡ በኃይለ፡ ጸሎታ፡ ለፀወነ፡ ዓለም፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ቅድስት፡ ድንግል፡ በክልኤ፡ ማርያም፡ ጥዕምተ፡ ስም፡ ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ፤ ጸሎታ፡ ወበረከታ፡ ወምሕረቱ፡ ለፍቅር፡ ወልዳ፡ የሃሉ፡ ምስለ፡ ለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ አሜን፤ ወአሜን፡ ለይኩን፡ ለይኩን።
 አ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ ፀወነ፡ ብዙኃን፡ አእላፍ፤
 ረድኤቶሙ፡ አንቲ፡ ለእለ፡ ውስተ፡ ባሕር፡ ወጸድፍ፤
 ርድእኔ፡ ጊዜ፡ ወዲቅ፡ ወአንሥእኔ፡ በክንፍ፤
 እስመ፡ አነ፡ ገብርኪ፡ አፈቅረኪ፡ እምውሳጤ፡ ልብየ፡ ወአኮ፡ በአፍ፤
 ለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ አሜን።

‘All this was done by the power, prayer, shield of the world, our Lady the Virgin Mary, the two fold Virgin, the flavor of name, bearer of the Lord. Let her prayer and blessings; and the mercy of her beloved Son be with Forever and ever amen, and amen, let it be, let it be’.

*‘O! Our Lady Mary, the shield of many, the multitude;
 You are the helper of those who are at sea and precipices;
 May you help me at the time of falling and raise me by your wing;
 For me, your servant loving you from the bottom of my heart, not
 only in my mouth’*

In the miracles of Zion, various wonders and prodigies of Mary-Zion are registered.

¹¹⁰ MS from Båbbäks Däbrä Gännät St. Mary Church, EMMML 8823, dated 19th AD. For the edition and translation, Amsalu (2011:245-252 [text], 253-261 [translation]).

5. Conclusion

Mariology, the glorification and veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is predominantly expressed in the Ethiopic Marian texts. *Dərsanä Şəyon* is one amongst these source texts extolling the glory of the Theotokos. Essentially, the DS preserves Zion-Mary symbolisms in various ways. The Blessed Virgin is foreshadowed in the OT episodes. The text is full of allegories on Mariology. The Virgin Mary is glorified and lauded in the entire text of the DS.

This article endeavors to present renowned epithets and the glorification of our Lady according to the Marian hymnodies. Special emphasis is given to doxologies of Zion-Mary in the DS. Virgin Mary described with marvel in DS, and the annexed other Marian texts. We find allegorical descriptions of the Virgin in the DS as: *the Celestial Zion, the Ark of Law, the Pure Virgin, habitation of the Lord, the country of the great King, Bride of Lebanon, Zion the gate of Paradise, the golden ship, the Mother of Jesus Christ* etc. Furthermore, the text recounts praises, prodigies and miracles performed by the Virgin Mary.

Let's see the following expressions, which are eminent in symbolisms from *Zena Şəyon*: *'Zion Mary, you are equated with the golden basket which they put inside the Tabernacle. The one who was inside you was the secrete Manna - Jesus Christ [who] is the Bread of Life. ... How sweet is your odor, O! Virgin Mary, and it exceeds all the odor of the incense, for truly [you are] the golden censer.... And you carried the heavenly perfume, who is Jesus Christ, the heavenly bridegroom; truly His fragrant odor fills everywhere'*. These clearly reflect why EOTC gives a special position to the devotion of St. Mary and her eternal glory.

In the images of Zion (*Mälkä'ä Şəyon*), St. Mary is referred as *'the gate of the Paradise, the one who cools debt and sin, the light of the world, fountain of medicine, mother of the Life-giver, Zion-the liberator'*, etc. The text preserves such Marian epithets almost in every line. In the *Tä'ämmärä Şəyon* too, wonders and prodigies of Mary-Zion are presented.

We can summarize the findings of this study in five points:

1. Mariology is one of the constituent elements of Orthodox theology and is profoundly expounded in the EOTC Marian texts. One exemplary text-DS is presented as a model for this theme.
2. DS is arranged in four forms: an independent text (DS 'proper'), a composite text with KN, a miscellaneous text in *Dərsanä Maryam* (DM) and a multiple text.
3. DS has other annexed Marian texts called *Zena Şəyon*, *Tä'ämmärä Şəyon* and *Mälkä'ä Şəyon*. This study attempts to present the core teachings on Mariology from all these texts.
4. All the epithets cited above manifest the Ark-Zion-Mary designations as a high level of exegesis.
5. As a result we can conclude that *Dərsanä Şəyon* (DS) is full of Zion-Mary allegories which preserve theological and hermeneutical as well as philological values. Furthermore, the profound exegetical approach of the text is beneficial for the Mariological studies of Orthodox Theology in general and to the Ethiopian ecclesiastical studies in particular.

Even though we suppose that Ethiopia possesses numerous Marian Ge'ez texts, only a few have been studied so far. Evidently the texts preserve Marian glories and they can enrich Mariology at large, if they are explored and systematically studied. The author of this article modestly recommends that other researchers engage in similar tasks, in order to make the mariological teaching of the EoTC better known by others.

TRANSCRIPTION (based on EAE - garamond convention)**1) Consonants**

h ሀ	r ረ	t ተ	ᶈ ኸ	ž ገፍ	ፑ ጠ	f ፈ
l ለ	s ሰ	č ቸ	k ከ	y የ	č ጭ	p ፐ
ḥ ሐ	š ሸ	ḥ ጎ	w ወ	d ደ	p ጸ	q ^w ቁ
m ጠ	q ቀ	n ነ	ᶊ ዐ	ḡ ጂ	ፍ ጸ	ḥ ^w ኸ
ś ሠ	b ቤ	ñ ኸ	z ዘ	g ገ	ś ፀ	k ^w ኸ
						g ^w ገ

2) vowels

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ä	u	i	a	e	ə or no vowel	o
bä = ቤ	bu = ቤ	bi = ቤ	ba = ቤ	be = ቤ	bə, b = ቤ	bo = ቤ