LITURGICAL COSMOLOGY:

THE THEOLOGICAL AND SACRAMENTAL DIMENSIONS OF CREATION IN THE ETHIOPIAN LITURGY

By

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Abstract

This study mainly seeks to construct a liturgical cosmology according to the Ethiopian liturgical rite based on the conviction that the prayers (worship) of the church ground its beliefs. To achieve this goal, the thesis has primarily dealt with various themes of creation theology based on the biblico-liturgical texts of the Ethiopian Orthodox *Täwaḥədo* Church (EOTC). As a second method, the thesis has also analyzed the theological and cosmological presuppositions of the use of created matter in the Ethiopian liturgy. The eclecticism and complexity of the Ethiopic liturgical texts has led to the consultation of numerous biblical and apocryphal sources in the thesis, and this was mainly done to identify the sources of the EOTC's theology of creation as reflected in the liturgical texts and biblical exegesis of the church.

Having closely studied the EOTC's liturgical texts and its sacramental praxis, the thesis demonstrates that both the eucharistic and non-eucharistic services of the Ethiopian liturgy embody creation motifs and incorporate created elements. While the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*) serves as an *anamnēsis* of both creation and redemption, the

other sacramental rituals symbolically signify the transfiguration of the entire cosmos. Besides, the sacred liturgical space represents a transformed space where the heavenly and earthly beings praise God in unison. The Ethiopian liturgical tradition, thus, effectively provides elements for the making of a liturgical cosmology.

Acknowledgements

The process of writing this doctoral thesis has been tedious, marked by both apprehensive and exciting periods due to various reasons. While heading towards the end of the journey, primarily, I thank our Gracious and abundantly Merciful God for the grace bestowed on me: “For from him and through him and to him are all things, to him be the glory forever” (Rom. 11:36).

I am indebted to my thesis director, Prof. Jaroslav Skira, for his enlightening guidance and corrections since the inception of the writing of the thesis till its completion. Especially I thank Prof. Skira for the patience he showed at the time when I was not writing up to the standard he expected from me. Thanks are also due to my friends Dr. Girma Bekele and Fr. Dr. George Leylegian for the constructive comments they offered on the manuscript of the thesis. I am very grateful to His Grace Abuna Dimetros, EOTC’s archbishop of the diocese of Ontario, for providing me with valuable Ethiopic sources that are relevant to this study.

One of the challenges in the journey of writing this thesis was balancing the time that I committed to the research and to my family life. So many times, my daughter Yohanna mumbled: “no reading today, daddy,” urging me to pass quality time with her instead of locking myself in a carrel at Robarts Library. My son Samuel, who is two years old, as well has in many ways expressed his wish to have me in the house. In fact, whenever I left our kids at home and engaged in my research at the library, the burden of taking care of them was on my wife Helen. As a token of my gratitude for her understanding and diligence, thus, I dedicate this thesis to her.

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INTRODUCTION

In contemporary theological studies, a high value is placed on liturgy due to the powerful meaning that it conveys as a theological event. Even if the short form, *lex orandi - lex credendi*, is usually preferred to discuss the relation between theology and liturgy, the right meaning of the axiom can only be understood in its full form: *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*.[1] Kevin Irwin states that people who use this axiom still question "whether the church's prayer grounds belief, or belief grounds the formulas for liturgical prayer or a mutual influence is operative between prayer and belief."[2] In fact, it is not easy to determine the priority that should be given either to worship (liturgy) or belief.

Aidan Kavanagh emphatically argues that "a liturgical act is the act of primary theology *par excellence*."[3] That is to say that, the liturgical act *per se* is theology in the first instance, called *theologia prima*.[4] Kavanagh also contends that the academic aspect of theology should not be seen apart from its liturgical context. According to him, as the faith of the church in action, and by its regular encounter in faith with the divine, liturgy appears to be no less a reflective act of theology than any other sort of secondary theology.[5] Hence, the church's "lex credendi – rule of faith" is based on its liturgy or "lex orandi," which is what the church faithfully prays in its worship of God.[6]

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[1] Kevin W. Irwin, "The Sacramentality of Creation and the Role of Creation in Liturgy and Sacraments," *And God Saw That It Was Good*: *Catholic Theology and the Environment*, ed. Drew Christiansen and Walter Grazer (Washington, D.C. : United States Catholic Conference, 1996) 10.
[2] Ibid, 133.
[3] Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology: The Hale Memorial Lectures of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, 1981* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992) 96.
[4] Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology,* 74.
[5] Ibid*,* 8.
[6] Ibid.

Fundamentally, liturgy is a theological event in the sense that its statements and actions are addressed to God and are made about God.[7] It is not merely one *locus theologicus* among many theologies, but it is "the very condition of doing theology."[8] Highlighting the original meaning of the word *orthodox* as "right praise" (*ortho-doxia*), Irwin argues that liturgy is *orthodoxia prima* – the first order doxological address to and about God.[9] It is only in the secondary derived sense that *ortho-doxia* is understood to be right teaching. Since the experience of liturgy concerns direct address to God and encounter with God, the act of liturgy is primary theology, whereas any reflection on the act of liturgy (liturgical theology) is secondary theology (*theologia secunda*).[10]

As a reflection on liturgy, liturgical theology engages all the words, symbols, gestures, and rubrics used in liturgy. Even as the phrase itself indicates, liturgical theology means "using the liturgy as a source for systematic theology in the sense that the theological meaning of terms and concepts operate theologically in liturgy."[11] This is theology derived from liturgy since, for example, beliefs about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, redemption, salvation and sanctification can be explored from liturgy. Thus, in its various prayers and hymns, the liturgy of the church contains doctrines that can be explained by a theologian, who is able to interpret their meaning in the liturgy.

One of the various areas of doctrine that can be constructed from liturgy is liturgical cosmology − a reflection on the theology of the use of created elements in liturgy and on the theology of creation of a given liturgical rite, the latter of which mainly

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[7] Kevin W. Irwin, *Context and Text: Method in Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1994) 44.
[8] Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 89.
[9] Irwin, *Context and Text*, 44.
[10] Ibid, 45.
[11] Irwin, "The Sacramentality of Creation," 106.

deals with the protological and eschatological dimensions of creation. In the New Testament books of the apostles, the fallen nature of creation and its renewal through Christ's redemptive work are highlighted. Christ, the single head through whom both the heavenly and earthly beings are united (Eph. 1:10), has made the whole universe a new creation. Hence, the entire cosmos: heaven, earth, day, night, light, darkness, sun, moon, the choir of stars, including elements of the terrestrial world, such as water, air, fire, earth, sea, rivers, vegetation, the passage of time with the seasons, and the animal world join humans in praising God for salvation.[12] In liturgical services, the chanting of the *Sanctus*, which is an evocation of the heavenly world with its numberless angelic powers (Isa. 6:2-3, Ezek. 10:20, Rev. 4:4), signifies that humans as well join the angels in their celestial praise.

As an "*act of theology*" whereby the church makes statements about its belief, liturgy consists of creation, words, created objects, ritual gestures, and actions.[13] Considering creation as one of the significant aspects of liturgy, David Fagerberg says: "The subject matter of theology is God, humanity, and creation, and the vortex in which these three existentially entangle is liturgy."[14] Studies on the liturgical sources of the early church show that the church in its eucharistic services used wheat, grapes, honey, and milk in order to signify that the whole cosmos was offered up back to God. Also as a token of gratitude for God's divine providence, fruits such as figs, pomegranates, olives, pears, apples, mulberries, peaches, cherries, almonds, plums were blessed for the agape

[12]Marc Metzger, "Liturgy and Cosmos," *Liturgy and the Body*, eds. Louis Chauvet and François Kabasele Lumbala (New York: Orbis Books, 1995) 42. Also see Ps. 19:1-2, Ps. 148: 1-14.
[13] Irwin, *Context and Text*, 44.
[14] David W. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima: What is Liturgical Theology*? (Chicago: Hillenbrand, 2004) 39.

meal.[15] This is in addition to the fact that most of the early eucharistic prayers contain interesting creation themes.

In fact, the cosmos (created order) by itself serves as a liturgical source for theological reflection. In liturgical context, the word "cosmos" has a different connotation from its usage in astronomy or astrophysics. For instance, since the bread and wine used for eucharistic liturgy are products of a remarkable collaboration between a fruitful earth and human cultures, they represent the cosmos. As Gordon Lathrop notes:

> Christian rituals are also among the human rituals that construct a sense of world. Who and what we pray for, how we image earth and sky and all their creatures, what roles human beings are seen to have, how our social organization is seen to matter, how we share food, where God "is" – all these will leave us with a sense of "world," even if no mention is made of "cosmos."[16]

In its wider sense, thus, Christian liturgy is able to demonstrate essential cosmological aspects.

Creation themes and the use of created materials are the integral parts of a liturgical act, so that as a study on such themes and usage, liturgical cosmology is an exercise in liturgical theology. Moreover, liturgical cosmology, in a secondary sense is a theologian's reflection upon the liturgical event and upon the ways in which liturgy makes cosmological propositions. As Lathrop purports, in the Christian liturgy, "the images, like the hole in the heavens at the baptism of Jesus, the mention of the burning bush, of the leaves of the tree of life, the angels calling out God's protection for earth and sea and trees, and most importantly the powerful presence of the triune God that they proclaim," make liturgical cosmology a kind of liturgical theology.[17] In other words, the

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[15] As an example, see *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, trans. Burton S. Easton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934) 52.
[16] Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003) 13.
[17] Ibid, 20.

use of speech, gestures, and elements of nature; the symbols taken from nature and the word and sacrament enacted in an assembly for a liturgical service before the Holy One convey powerful cosmic meanings.[18]

These aspects of liturgical cosmology are clearly evident in the Ethiopian liturgy. Peculiar to the Ethiopian tradition, the liturgical year commences with the blessing of the wheat and grapes (raisins) from which the eucharistic bread and wine are made, the incense, lighted taper, and various liturgical objects. All these are to be used in the eucharistic services throughout the year. While the Ethiopian lectionary is structured according to the four Ethiopian seasons: *Mäẓäw* – መፀው (Spring), *Ḥagay* – ሐጋይ (Summer), *Ṣädäy* – ጸደይ (Autumn), and *Kərämət* – ክረምት (Winter),[19] there are liturgical times known as seed, flower, fruit, cloud, fog, dew, lightening, spring, sea, and rivers.[20] The naming of these liturgical times and all the references to creation in the Ethiopian liturgy are meant to offer thanks for God's beautiful gift of creation and continued sustenance.

In the Divine Liturgy of the Ethiopian Orthodox *Täwaḥədo* Church (EOTC), known as *Qəddase* (ቅዳሴ),[21] there are a number of intercessory prayers for God's blessings on the created order. For instance, at the beginning of *Qəddase* the chief deacon

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[18] Ibid, 217.

[19] Even though the lectionary follows the natural events of the seasons, the Liturgical Year, which commences on the first day of the Ethiopian month of *Mäsəkäräm* – መስከረም (corresponding to September 11 or September 12 in a leap year), is divided into four liturgical seasons: *Zämänä Yoḥannəs* – ዘመነ ዮሐንስ (Season of John [the Baptist]), *Zämänä Asətämaḥro* – ዘመነ አስተምሕሮ (Season of Supplication), *Zämänä Ṣom* – ዘመነ ጾም (Fasting Season), and *Zämänä Fasika* – ዘመነ ፋሲካ (Paschal Season). See Habtemichael Kidane, "Ethiopian (or Gəʿəz) Worship," *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship,* ed. Paul Bradshaw (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002) 171.

[20] *Mädəbäl Zä-maḫəlet* [Corpus of Liturgical Chants] (Asmara: Kokäbä Ṣəbaḫ Printing Press, 1988) 260. This book was published in 1980 Ethiopian calendar. For this and other Gəʿəz and Amharic sources used in this thesis, the dates are given in the corresponding Gregorian calendar.

[21] Literally *Qəddase* means "hallowing" or "praise." The word is equivalent to the Greek εύχαριστία (thanksgiving), and as it also means "sanctification" it signifies the consecration of the eucharistic elements and the sanctification of the attending congregation.

beseeches God for the abundance of rain; for the waters of the rivers; for the fruits and harvests of the earth; for those who are hungry and thirsty; for the prisoners and for those who travel by sea and by land; and for the peace of the whole world.[22] Likewise, shortly before the Gospel reading, the assistant priest recites a prayer for the living and departed members of the church; for the Creator's continued blessing on the rain and the waters of the rivers; the dew of the air and the fruits of the earth; for the safety of human beings and that of animals.[23]

In accordance with the biblical evidence (Ps. 148: 1-14), which signifies that all the heavenly and earthly created beings praise God, the Ethiopian Missal (*Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* – መጽሐፈ ቅዳሴ) elsewhere mentions this cosmic worship offered to God. For example, the anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers states that God is glorified by "Heaven and earth together with all their worlds, sea and rivers and all things that are in them."[24] As the Orthodox Divine Liturgy is heaven on earth service, humans join the angelic host in their heavenly praise. In the Ethiopic anaphora, named after Jacob of Serough, the celebrant priest having stated that the cherubim, seraphim, and all the hosts of angels glorify God, hallowing: "Holy, [H]oly, [H]oly, perfect Lord of hosts, heaven and earth are full of the holiness of thy glory," asks the people to praise God by chanting the hymn "together with [the angels]." Following the acclamation of the deacon: "answer ye" to respond to the celebrant, the people sing the *Sanctus*.[25]

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[22] See *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church*, trans. Marcos Daoud (London: Kegan Paul, 2005) 27-30.
[23] Ibid, 44-45.
[24] Ibid, 123, no. 15.
[25] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 222, nos. 17-19.

Theologically, most of the Ethiopian anaphoras[26] contain various creation themes. In the anaphoras, the whole of creation is presented as the work of the eternal and triune God. The anaphoras also affirm the goodness of creation that was created out of nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*). Elsewhere in the Ethiopian liturgy, God is addressed as *aḫaze kʷəlu* – አኃዜ ኵሉ [παντοκράτωρ – *pantocrator*], the one who holds the whole universe,[27] and the term signifies that the Creator continues to protect and provide for creation (*creatio continua*).[28] The universe is so dynamic, and it is sustained by the immanent work of the Holy Spirit who was hovering over the face of the waters at creation (Gen. 1:2).

As for the sacramental aspect of creation, while bread and wine, the products of human labour, are used in the Ethiopian *Qəddase*, the administration of the other sacraments[29] incorporates the use of various natural elements. Each sacrament is understood to be an effective and visible sign of grace through which God works invisibly. Baptism is administered by immersing the candidate in water (in the baptismal basin) that has been blessed. Then the newly baptized will be anointed with *Myron* (*Meron* – ሜሮን), fragrant oil made from pure olive oil and various kinds of incense, flowers, roots of sweet aromatic plants, as well as different oil and leaf extracts. *Myron* is also used for the consecration of a new church building, its ecclesiastical objects, and for

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[26] From the Greek verb αναφερω, meaning to carry up or offer up; hence, anaphora literally means "offering." Anaphora is a eucharistic prayer, which has various constituents, and it is considered to be the main part of the Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*). The Ethiopian equivalent word for anaphora is *Akkʷåtetä Qʷərban* (አኩፋተ ቍርባን), literally means "thanksgiving of the Eucharist." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase*: *Gəʿəz Ƒna Amarəñña Käʿnä-mələktu* [The Book of Liturgy: In Gəʿəz and Amharic with Chanting Notations] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1992) 82. On the suitability of the Ethiopian designation for anaphora, i.e. *Akkʷåtetä Qʷərban*, see Ernest Hammerschmidt's *Studies in the Ethiopic Anaphoras* (Berlin: GDR Printing Press, 1987) 38.

[27] See for example *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [Book of Liturgy] 16.

[28] For example see the description for God's providence in the Ethiopic anaphora of St. Epiphanius: *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 188-189, nos. 23-35.

[29] The Gəʿəz word for sacraments is *Məśəṭirat* (ምሥጢራት), which is in accordance with the early Christian writers' terms for liturgical rites, i.e. *mysterion* (Greek) and *mysterium* (Latin). For the Greek and Latin terminologies See Kenan Osborne, "Sacrament," *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship,* ed. Paul Bradshaw (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002) 413.

clerical ordination as well. In the sacrament of unction[30] of the sick (*Məśəṭirä Qänədil* – ምሥጢረ ቀንዲል), along with the intercessory prayers the sick are anointed with special oil called *Qəbəʿa Qəddus* – ቅብዓ ቅዱስ (Holy Ointment).

The Liturgy of Hours signifies the centrality of creation in liturgical services. In the Ethiopian matins known as *Səbəḥatä Nägəh* (ስብሐተ ነግህ), Psalm 148,[31] which is the praise for God's universal glory, is chanted:

> Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
> Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!
> Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!
> Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the heavens!
> Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created…
> Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!
> Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!...Young men and women alike, old and young together!
> Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.[32]

Moreover, the canticle of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, which highlights the thanksgiving offered to God by all the cosmic created beings, is sung as part of the matins. Interspersed with the phrase: "He is praised and highly exalted forever," the canticle enumerates that God the Creator is blessed and glorified by the heavens, angels, stars, the sun, and the moon up above; and by all rain and winds, dews, frosts and snows, birds, mountains, humans, and animals on earth.[33]

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[30] Here the word "unction" refers to the oil with which the sick are anointed (James 5:14). But the Gəʿəz terminology, *Qänədil*, which literally means "lamp," indicates the light that is lit during the administration of the sacrament.

[31] In this thesis all the biblical quotes are taken from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) unless otherwise mentioned.

[32] Yared (Saint), *Məʿəraf* [Hymnary] (Addis Ababa: Tənsaʾe Zä-Gubaʾe Printing Press, 1995) 47-48.

[33] Ibid, 47. See also the *Song of the Three Jews*, which is grouped with the deuterocanonical books, in the New Revised Standard Version.

The Ethiopian Horologium (*Sä'atat* – ሰዓታት), which is prayed during day and night, states that God is praised by all created beings at midnight.[34] It also consists of various contemplative prayers on the sovereignty of God over the universe. In the Horologium, God the almighty is glorified as the Holy One who resides over the heavens while watching the depth of the waters of the seas.[35] The Ethiopian Divine Offices as well, in accordance with the season of the liturgical year, are filled with a range of creation motifs and themes which are mainly focused on the praises of the heavenly and earthly created beings offered to God.

In the Ethiopian tradition, there are also outdoor liturgical services that clearly reflect the cosmological dimension of liturgy. Like the Eastern Orthodox Church's ceremony of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, on September the 27th the EOTC celebrates the discovery of the Holy Cross by Queen Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine the Great. The celebration is known as *Dämära* (ደመራ), and it is celebrated in a chosen place. For example, in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, the celebration takes place at *Mäsəqäl Adäbabay* – መስቀል አደባባይ (Cross Square), which is located close to St. Stephen's Church. Liturgical chants are performed around a large cross, made from various woods and plants; and the clergy bless the four corners of the cross and the attending members of the church as well. This is a beautiful scene of liturgical cosmology.

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[34] The portion in the Horologium reads: "At this hour (midnight) all creatures diligently praise God: stars, trees, and waters stand still with one accord, and all the angelic host does service to God by praising Him, together with the souls of the righteous." See Giyorgis Zä-Sägla, *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* [Book of Hours/Horologium] (Addis Ababa: Täsfa Gäbrä-Səllasse Printing Press, 1991) 2. This concept is taken from Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* which states that at midnight all creation rests for a certain moment to praise the Lord. See *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, trans. Easton, 56.

[35] Giyorgis, *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* [Horologium] 12.

Another outdoor service is called *Ṭəmqät* – ጥምቀት (Epiphany),[36] the great blessing of waters. The service is held in a chosen pond or river as a symbol of the river Jordan where Jesus was baptized. The Ethiopian Epiphany service is seen in the personification of the water of Jordan drawn from the Psalms of David: "The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back" (Ps. 114: 3). As the River Jordan was sanctified by the Lord's baptism, symbolically the clergy, with their hand-crosses, bless the chosen rivers (ponds), and this symbolic practice signifies the cosmic transfiguration of creation through the coming of Christ and his redemptive work.

THESIS STATEMENT

It is the task of this thesis to construct a liturgical cosmology based on the praxis (symbols, gestures) and the texts of the Ethiopian liturgy. Using the word liturgy in its broadest sense, the study will show that both the eucharistic and non-eucharistic services of the Ethiopian liturgy embody creation themes and incorporate created elements, so that they effectively provide paradigms for the making of a liturgical cosmology in the Ethiopian tradition. The exposition of this liturgical cosmology also includes the study of the theology of creation according to the Ethiopian liturgical texts, which will be related to trinitarian theology, apophaticism, the theology of redemption, and eschatology.

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[36] "Theophany" can also be a synonym for *Ṭəmqät*, though in Gəʿəz the word *Ėpifanya* (ኤጲፋንያ), the variant of Epiphany, is known and synonymously used with *Ṭəmqät*. Also *Ėpifanya* is interchangeably used with the Gəʿəz word *Asətärəʿyo* – አስተርእዮ [Revelation], which has the same meaning as "Theophany," since the revelation of the triune God at the river Jordan is mainly commemorated – in addition to the Nativity of Christ – during the *Asətärəʿyo* season. See Kidane-wold Kifle, "ኤጲፋንያ – Ėpifanya," *Mäṣəḥafä Säwasəw Wå-gəs Wå-mäzəgäbä Qalat Ḥaddis* [New Book of Grammar and Dictionary] (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing Press, 1956) 250.

IMPLICATIONS

There are a few studies on the Ethiopian liturgy, mainly from a historical perspective. In his book, *The Divine Liturgy According to the Rite of the Ethiopian Church*,[37] Paulos Tzadua presents a historical introduction to the origin and development of the Ethiopian liturgy. Tzadua also succinctly deals with the authorship of the Ethiopian anaphoras, and offers a brief examination of the structure of the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*). As the title indicates, Samuel Mercer's book: *The Ethiopic*[38] *Liturgy*: *Its Sources, Development, and Present Form*[39] thoroughly analyzes the sources and factors that contributed to the evolution of the Ethiopian liturgy. The book also deals with the various developments which the Ethiopian liturgy has undergone.

Ernst Hammerschmidt's book, *Studies in the Ethiopic Anaphoras*,[40] is a scholarly work on the origin, authorship, structure and characteristic features of the Ethiopian anaphoras. In accordance with its scope, the study seeks to establish the origin and authorship of various Ethiopian anaphoras that often appear under pseudonyms. Moreover, realizing the "surprising exuberance of theological thought and liturgical poetry" which the anaphoras contain, Hammerschmidt suggests that the anaphoras should be given more attention than they have been accorded.[41] In his article, Ernest Horton[42]

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[37] Paulos Tzadua, *The Divine Liturgy According to the Rite of the Ethiopian Church* (Addis Ababa: Wien Ltd., 1973).

[38] Liturgical scholars and Ethiopicists, such as Samuel Mercer and Ernst Hammerschmidt prefer the designation "Ethiopic Liturgy" to "Ethiopian Liturgy" in order to relate the liturgy to its classical language, Gəʿəz, which is also known as Ethiopic.

[39] Samuel A. B. Mercer, *The Ethiopic Liturgy*: *Its Sources, Development, and Present Form* (London: A. R. Mowabray, 1915).

[40] Ernst Hammerschmidt, *Studies in the Ethiopic Anaphoras* (Berlin: GDR Printing Press, 1987).

[41] Ibid, 166.

[42] Ernest Horton, "Major Concepts of the Ethiopian Liturgy," *http://www.glendale.edu/philosophy/ethiopic.htm.* Accessed May 2010.

enumerates the major themes found in the Ethiopian liturgy, and offers a brief reflection on the themes. Considering the Ethiopian liturgy as "a treasure chest of precious stones," Horton states that "[t]here is much more to discover in the Ethiopic liturgy. The Ethiopic liturgy is like a distant continent beckoning us to explore it further."[43]

This thesis is the first study on the creation theology of the Ethiopian liturgical tradition. The study is significant because it contributes to the ongoing research on the sacramental praxis and theological aspects of the Ethiopian liturgy. There are various theological motifs, such as eucharistic theology, the theology of redemption, pneumatology, and mariology that can be explored in the Ethiopian liturgy. Hence, this thesis can serve as a model for further theological studies on the Ethiopian liturgical rite.

METHODOLOGY

As far as the method of conducting the thesis is concerned, it will be based on the axiom: *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* with the conviction that the prayers (worship) of the church ground its beliefs. Considering every liturgical celebration of the EOTC as a theological act, an attempt will be made to draw a secondary theology upon them. Hence, there will be a comparative and analytical study of the ritual enactments of the Ethiopian liturgical services, focusing on the theological meaning they convey. While dealing with the words, symbols, and gestures of both the eucharistic and non-eucharistic services of the Ethiopian liturgy, I will present their contextual interpretation. I will also limit my study to the words, hymns and rituals, which have cosmological aspects and also demonstrate a substantive theology of creation.

[43]Ibid.

As for the liturgical texts of the EOTC, historical critical method will be used in order to provide the appropriate context and background to their authenticity and historical origin. Since the Ethiopian liturgy is firmly based on the Bible,[44] the various creation themes of the liturgical texts will be studied in light of the Ethiopian biblical commentaries. While using primary sources in the Gəʿəz (ግእዝ)[45] language, I will offer my own English translation, comparing them to those of others where they exist. In order to demonstrate the centrality of creation in the Ethiopian liturgy, I will closely study the various creation themes of the liturgical texts and the cosmic dimension of the sacred space in the EOTC. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the modern scientific cosmogonies and the cosmographic studies that deal with the intricate origin and expanse of the universe. Thus, the study will be limited to themes of creation theology (the protological, soteriological, and eschatological dimensions of creation) according to the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition and the theological presuppositions of the use of the created elements in the Ethiopian liturgical rite.

[44] Scripture is the root of the Ethiopian liturgy. The basic Christian doctrines of the Ethiopian liturgical texts are based on the Bible, and as we will see throughout this thesis, the traditional commentary on the Ethiopic Missal [*Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta*] mainly relies on Scripture for the exposition of the theological themes of the anaphoras and other liturgical sources. Highlighting the biblical foundation of the Ethiopian literature in general, Augustus Dillmann wrote that the Ethiopic Bible was "the foundation of all Abyssinian [Ethiopian] literature and the standard to which all other writers conformed their style of writing." See Dillmann, *Lexicon,* Prolegomena, vii quoted in J. M. Harden, *An Introduction to Ethiopic Christian Literature* (Maidstone: Oriental Orthodox Library, 2007) 25. See also the preface (in Latin) in Dillmann's Ethiopic (Gəʿəz) and Latin lexicon: *Lexicon Linguae Aethiopicae Cum Indice Latino* (Lipsiae: T. O. Weigel, 1865) Prolegomena, vii.

[45] Also known as Ethiopic, Gəʿəz is an ancient language that belongs to the Semitic group. Though it is no longer spoken in Ethiopia, it serves as a literary and liturgical language of the EOTC.

CHAPTER 1

THE ETHIOPIAN LITURGY: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Characteristic of the Orthodox Church of Ethiopia is the formation of its traditions firmly based on the culture of the country. Having lived in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, for so many years as the rector of St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Colin Battell observes that "The Ethiopian Orthodox [C]hurch is deeply rooted in the culture of the people."[46] It is quite impossible, hence, to fully understand the peculiar traditions of the EOTC without being familiar with the cultural and linguistic heritage and context in which the faith has developed over the centuries. This familiarity helps understand the unique traditions of the EOTC that are mainly the result of the Ethiopian cultural traits.

One of the traditions of the EOTC that has evolved as the fruit of the indigenous Ethiopian culture is the Ethiopian liturgy. Confirming this fact, in his short article, Claude Sumner offers a striking impression on the Ethiopian liturgy:

> [The Ethiopian liturgy] is a witness to life. It is marked with a long history and in it the faith of praying generations has been crystallized. It may be considered as a fruit of the rich Ethiopian cultural soil, and hence may enlighten us on some of the characteristics of the aesthetic religious background of the people. In the Ethiopian liturgical text there is a beauty, which is nearly unknown to the outside world except for a narrow circle of scholars.[47]

The Ethiopian liturgy, despite its Alexandrian origin, has developed to be an independent rite as a result of the work of the *Mäməhran* – መምህራን (doctors) of the EOTC. As the current liturgical books of the EOTC and the celebrations of the various Ethiopian sacramental rites demonstrate, the doctors were able to adapt liturgical sources and rituals

[46] Colin Battell, "The Ethiopians," *Light from the East: A Symposium on the Oriental Orthodox and Assyrian Churches*, ed. Henry Hill (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1988) 81.
[47] Claude Sumner, "The Ethiopic Liturgy: An Analysis," *Journal of the Ethiopian Studies*, 1 (1963) 40.

from Alexandrian and Syrian rites into a particular cultural milieu. Furthermore, these local *Mäməhran* composed various anaphoras[48] and liturgical formularies which signify their own unique way of theologizing. While presenting glimpses into the origin and development of the Ethiopian liturgy, this chapter focuses on the factors that contributed to the distinctive aspects of the Ethiopian liturgy.

I. Origin and Development

Liturgical scholars usually treat the Ethiopian liturgy under the Alexandrian liturgical rite.[49] However, this is an oversimplification that does fail to see the unique development of Ethiopian liturgy which can be classified into four major phases. The first was the Aksumite Period (4th – 7th C.) that saw the translation of liturgical formularies from Greek to Gəʿəz and the composition of hymnaries by St. Yared (*ca*. 505 – 580), the Ethiopian hymnologist. The second phase was from the restoration of the so-called Solomonic dynasty in 1270 to the end of the 14th century, when various Arabic and Coptic liturgical sources were adapted to the Ethiopian tradition. This was followed by

[48] The 14 officially acknowledged anaphoras of the EOTC are: Anaphora of the Apostles; A. of the Lord; A. of St. John, the Son of Thunder; A. of Mary, said to be composed by *Abba* Ḥərəyaqos (Cyriacus) of Bəhənsa; A. of the 318 Nicene Fathers; A. of St. Athanasius of Alexandria; A. of St. Basil of Caesarea; A. of St. Gregory of Nyssa; A. of St. Epiphanius of Cyprus; A. of St. John Chrysostom; A. of St. Cyril of Alexandria; A. of St. Jacob of Serough; A. of St. Dioscorus of Alexandria, and A. of St. Gregory of Neo-Caesarea. There are some other 6 additional anaphoras that appear in manuscripts in some Ethiopian monasteries and foreign museums: Anaphora of St. Mark; A. of St. James the Brother of the Lord; A. of our Lady St. Mary by *Abba* Giyorgis of Gasəčča (*Mäʿaza Qəddase* – መዓዛ ቅዳሴ)*;* A. of St. Mary by Gregory of Nazianzus; A. of St. Mary by Gregory the Armenian (the illuminator), and A. of St. Cyril (II). The Vatican Printing Press in Rome published the Ethiopic anaphoras of St. Mark, James the Brother of the Lord, and that of *Abba* Giyorgis of Gasəčča (*Mäʿaza Qəddase*) together with the 14 official anaphoras. See *Missale Ethiopicum* [Ethiopian Missal] (Rome: Vaticano Printing Press, 1945). For a detailed study on the origin and authorship of the Ethiopian anaphoras see Ernst Hammerschmidt's scholarly work: *Studies in the Ethiopic Anaphoras* (Berlin: GDR Printing Press, 1987). See also Mebratu Kiros, "Anaphoras of the Ethiopian Church: A Historical Introduction," *Ephrem's Theological Journal*, 5/2 (2001) 203-220.

[49] For example, see Irénée-Henri Dalmais, *Eastern Liturgies* (New York: Hawtorn Publishers, 1960) 56. See also "Egyptian Rite," *Ancient Liturgies: Being Reprint of the Texts, Either Original or Translated, of the Most Representative Liturgies of the Church from Various Sources,* ed. C. E. Hammond and F. E. Brightman (New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2006) 769-824.

the Golden Period (early 15th century to the first quarter of the 16th century) when a number of local anaphoras were composed as a result of theological controversies in Ethiopia. Finally, the Gondar Era (16th – 17th centuries) led to further growth of the Ethiopian literature due to the christological disputes between the Portuguese missionaries and Ethiopian doctors. Also in this final phase, additional hymnaries of the Ethiopian Divine Offices were composed by local Ethiopian doctors.[50]

In the earliest times of Christianity, the Aksumite Kingdom had close ties with the Roman Empire. The rulers of the kingdom were familiar with Greek civilization, and since they presented themselves as the powerful rulers of Ethiopia,[51] who had sovereignty over the Red Sea and some islands of the Arabian Peninsula, they were considered by the Roman Emperors as "competitors to be taken seriously."[52] Aksum,[53] the kingdom's capital, with its harbour of Adulis on the Red Sea was a trading center for Christian

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[50] See Getatchew Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," *African Zion*: *The Sacred Art of Ethiopia*, ed. Roderick Grierson (Milan: Amilcare Pizzi, 1993) 51; Lanfranco Ricci, "Ethiopian Christian Literature," *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, ed. Aziz S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991) 978; E. Cerulli, "Ethiopic Languages and Literature," *New Catholic Encyclopedia,* Vol. 5, eds. Catholic University of America Editorial Staff (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967) 592.

[51] As Ethiopia, from the Greek αιθιοπια (*aithiopia* = burnt face) was known to be "the land of the black people," whenever ancient sources refer to Ethiopia, they mean by that a land which is much larger than the modern size of Ethiopia. Ancient Ethiopia, also known as *Cush* in Hebrew, was a land located to the South of Egypt, extending to Southern Arabia. See A. H. M. Jones and Elizabeth Monroe, *A History of Ethiopia,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955) 7; Franz Amadeus Dombrowski, *Ethiopia's Access to the Sea* (Köln: E. J. Brill, 1985) 4; John Panicker, "Ethiopian Orthodox Church: A Historical Introduction," *Ephrem's Theological Journal,* 3/1 (1999) 72. Ethiopian sources assert that the word "Ethiopia" was derived from "*Ethiopis*," the son of *Cush,* who lived in the land of *Cush* encompassed by river Gihon (Blue Nile) – Gen. 2:13. The country was also known as *Abyssinia*, a term derived from "*Abis*," who was one of the descendants of Cush. See "አቢስ − Abis" and "ኢትዮጵያ − Ityoṗəya (Ethiopia)" in Kifle's *Mäṣəḥafä Säwasəw Wå-mäzəgäbä Qalat* [Book of Grammar and Dictionary] 199, 248. But Ayele Bekerie states that the term Abyssinia was "coined at the height of nineteenth century European imperialism," and is related to the Arabic word *Habash,* which means "mixture of races." See Ayele Bekerie, "Ethiopia: Some Historical Reflections on the Origin of the Word Ethiopia," *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, 1/2 (2004) 113.

[52] Ewald Hien and Brigitte Kleidt, *Ethiopia – Christian Africa: Art*, *Churches and Culture*, trans. John M. Deasy (Retingen: Melina-Verlag, 1999) 17.

[53] In some writings Aksum is spelled as "Axum." But as the word etymologically originates from *A-k^{W}əšəm* (አኽሹም), which means "land of the tribes of Cush," in this thesis, the spelling "Aksum" is preferred to "Axum." On the etymology of Ak^{W}əsəm (አኽስም) see Kifle, *Mäṣəḥafä Säwasəw Wå-mäzəgäbä Qalat* [Book of Grammar and Dictionary] 219.

merchants from Greece and Syria. It is not known whether these Christian merchants were able to win few converts in Ethiopia. However, the Ethiopian eunuch, official of Queen Candace of Ethiopia, whose account of belief in the Lord Jesus and baptism is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles 8: 26-41, contributed to the proclamation of Christianity in Ethiopia. Eusebius, the church historian, confirmed this when he wrote: "He (the eunuch) was the first to receive the divine Word from Philip by revelation, and the first to return to his native land and preach the Gospel."[54]

Though the eunuch had implanted the seed of Christianity in the first half of the first century, Christianity did not become a state religion in Ethiopia until after the second quarter of the 4th century (*ca*. 330) when Kings Abrəha and Aṣəbha (Ezana and Saizana) [55] were converted to Christianity. Their conversion can be proved by the inscriptions and the coins of King Ezana which bear the signs of the Cross.[56] Nothing is known as to what was the motive of their conversion, but it can simply be presumed that

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[54] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Eusebius: The Church History, A New Translation with Commentary*, trans. Paul L. Maier (Baltimore: Kregel Publications, 1999) 59.

[55] While Ethiopian sources usually refer to the regime of the brother kings, Abrəha and Aṣəbha (Ezana and Saizana), some writers mention only Ezana as the king who ruled during the introduction of Christianity to Ethiopia. See for example the historical account on the ordination of Frumentius (*Abba* Salama) and his role in the spread of Christianity in Ethiopia in *Abba* Giyorgis' book "Maṣḥafa Mesṭir" [Book of Mystery] where the two brothers are mentioned: Giyorgis Zä-Sägla, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515. Tom. 89, ed. Yaqob Beyene (Louvain: Aedibus E. Peeters, 1990) 121. Bairu Tafla in his article "Ethiopian Orthodox Church," *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, ed. Aziz S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991) 996 mentions only Ezana as the king who ruled Ethiopia from A.D. 327-357. A. Jones and Elizabeth Monroe state that in A.D. 356 Constantius, the Arian emperor, had written a letter to then Ethiopian Kings, Aeizanas and Sazanas, urging them to send Frumentius (*Abba* Salama) to Alexandria to be examined by the Arian bishop, George of Cappadocia, who usurped the see of Athanasius as Patriarch of Alexandria. As the real adherents of the Nicean faith, the kings reportedly rejected the request of Constantius. See Jones and Monroe, *A History of Ethiopia,* 28. Jones and Monroe also mention the name of the father of the two brotherly kings (Aeizanas and Sazanas) as Ella Amida whereas in other sources Ella Amida is known as Ousana bisi Gisene. See Hien and Kleidt, *Ethiopia – Christian Africa,* 17.

[56] Mercer, *The Ethiopic Liturgy,* 84.

it was caused by the ministry of Frumentius[57] (*Abba* Salama), the first bishop consecrated for the Ethiopian Church by St. Athanasius of Alexandria.[58]

The episcopal consecration of Frumentius paved the way for the introduction of liturgical formularies and sacramental rites to Ethiopia. It is believed that Frumentius at least brought the *Ordo Communis* of the Alexandrian rite; the Apostolic Tradition (*Traditio Apostolica*),[59] which is known as the *Egyptian Church Order*;[60] and the anaphora of St. Mark that was the liturgy of the Patriarchate of Alexandria.[61] Some

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[57]Rufinus of Aquileia, based on the report he heard from Aedesius, the brother of Frumentius, recounts that while the two young brothers were sailing to India with Meropius, a philosopher of Tyre, Meropius' ship was attacked and he was killed by the Barbarians. The brothers were taken to the king (of Ethiopia) who made Aedesius his cupbearer, and assigned Frumentius on his accounts as he observed his intelligence and prudence. When the king died, his kingdom was left to his wife, who served as a regent, and to her young child. Frumentius and Aedesius wanted to return to their country, but the queen begged them to help her in governing the country; especially she counted this on Frumentius. Having the helm of the kingdom, Frumentius supported the Roman merchants in their Christian activities. When the royal child reached maturity, Aedesius returned to Tyre. But, concerned about the root of Christianity in Ethiopia, Frumentius went to Alexandria and asked St. Athanasius, who was consecrated as Pope in A.D. 328, to send a bishop to Ethiopia. With these words of confirmation: "What other man can we find like you, in whom is God's Spirit as in you, and who could achieve such things as these?" Athanasius ordained Frumentius as a bishop, and sent him back to Ethiopia. See *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia,* Books 10 and 11, trans. Philip R. Amidon, S.J. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) Book 10:9-10, pp. 18-20. On Rufinus' geographical description regarding the aforementioned historical account, see the translators' note on page 46.

[58] While the initiative for the ordination of Frumentius by St. Athanasius is usually given to Frumentius himself, Donald Crummey states that Frumentius was appointed by St. Athanasius as Ethiopia's first bishop at the request of Ezana, then King of Ethiopia. See Donald Crummey, "Church and Nation: The Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Century," *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, ed. Michael Angold, Vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 457.

[59] The Apostolic Tradition, a third century church order, is attributed to Hippolitus of Rome though scholars disagree as to who this Hippolytus was. See Enrico Mazza, *The Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer*, trans. Ronald E. Lane (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1995) 96. See also *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome, Bishop and Martyr*, ed. Gregory Dix (London: SPCK, 1968) xxxvii.

[60] Paulos Tzadua, *The Divine Liturgy According to the Rite of the Ethiopian Church* (Addis Ababa: Wien Ltd., 1973) 11.

[61]R. C. D. Jasper and G. J. Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*: *Early and Reformed* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990) 52. The original anaphora of St. Mark was revised by St. Cyril of Alexandria (+ A.D. 444), and so it is known in the Coptic Orthodox Church as the Liturgy of St. Cyril. See Antonios Rofail, "The Eucharistic Liturgy in the Coptic Orthodox Church," *The Logos*, 9/2 (1996) 6-11. In his brief study, Abba Takla-Maryam Semharay Selim stated that the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Mark had been used in antiquity in the Ethiopian Church. See A. T. M. Semharay Selim, "Notae circa liturgiam aethiopicam: Liturgia S. Marci Evangelistae et S. Iacobi Apostoli in lingua gheez," *Ephemerides Liturgicae,* 42 (1928) 441. Though the original anaphora of St. Mark is thought to be one of the earliest liturgical sources brought to Ethiopia, ironically for an unknown reason it is not part of the Ethiopian Missal (*Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase*)

archeological discoveries and inscriptions indicate that during the Aksumite period, besides Gəʿəz, the official language of the Aksumite Kingdom, Greek was used as a written language.[62] Hence it is quite probable that the *Ordo Communis* of the Alexandrian rite whose language was Greek, the Greek anaphora of St. Mark, and the anaphora of the Apostolic Tradition were translated to Gəʿəz[63] in the fourth century.[64] In accordance with this assumption, Enrico Cerulli, one of the renowned authorities on the Ethiopian languages and literature, says that among the Gəʿəz literature translated in the 4th century from Greek sources, such as the Bible, and some ascetical and doctrinal works, we also find "a number of anaphoras for the Divine Service."[65] Among the translated anaphoras, the Greek liturgy of St. Mark gradually became crystallized in Ethiopia in the beginning of the 5th century.[66]

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which consists of 14 official anaphoras. Hammerschmidt presumed that some kind of opposition to the Alexandrian Church from Ethiopia (for not allowing the Ethiopian Church to ordain bishops from her children for so many centuries) might have prevented wide circulation of the Alexandrian liturgy of St. Mark. See Hammerschmidt, *Ethiopic Anaphoras,* 44.

[62]Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 47.

[63] Frumentius (*Abba* Salama) is credited for assigning vocal signs to the Gəʿəz language. See Hien and Kleidt, *Ethiopia – Christian Africa*, trans. Deasy, 19. Also since Frumentius came from Tyre, where Greek was the spoken language, presumably he took the initiative for the translation of the Greek liturgical texts to Gəʿəz. The translation from the Greek sources can be verified by the presence of some Greek words, such as *Kyrie eleison, prosphora, enfora* [a corrupt form of anaphora], *eulogios*, *agios*, *gerios* [a corrupt form of *kyrios*] in the Ethiopian missal. See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 19, 27, 61 and *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 13, 17, 20, and 48.

[64] See "The Anaphoras of the Ethiopic Liturgy," *Translations of Christian Literature*, Vol. III: Liturgical Texts, trans. J. M. Harden (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1928) 2.

[65]Enrico Cerulli, "Ethiopic Languages and Literature," 591. Since the introduction of Christianity to Ethiopia in the 4th century until about the 7th century, translations were mainly made from Greek to Gəʿəz. The Ethiopic (Gəʿəz) Old Testament was translated from the Septuagint version, and the "Lucianic text," among the several Greek recensions, was used for the translation of the Gəʿəz New Testament that was later revised based on Arabic versions. Translation of deuterocanonical works, such as *Mäṣəḥafä Henok* – መጽሐፈ ሄኖክ (The Book of Enoch) and *Mäṣəḥafä Kufale* – መጽሐፈ ኩፋሌ (The Book of Jubilees) was also made from the Greek originals. In this period, the doctrinal work known as *Qerəlos* – ቄርሎስ (The Book of Cyril), a collection of homilies mainly belonging to Cyril of Alexandria (+ 444), and the monastic writing: *Səraʿat Wå-təʿzaz Zä-abba Ṗakʷəmis* – ሥርዓት ወትእዛዝ ዘአባ ጳኩሚስ (The Rule of Pachomius) were also translated. See Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 47-48; Ricci, "Ethiopian Christian Literature," 976.

[66] Mercer, *The Ethiopic Liturgy*, 141.

The Hippolitan Apostolic Tradition is extant in the Gəʿəz *Sinodos* (ሲኖዶስ),[67] also known as the *Ethiopian Church Order*, and it consists of the Canons of Hippolytus under the name *Qänona Abulidis* (ቀኖና አቡሊዲስ).[68] The anaphora of the Apostolic Tradition was later expanded and named *Qəddase Ḥäwaryat* – ቅዳሴ ሐዋርያት (Anaphora of the Apostles), which is the principal anaphora of the EOTC.[69] Based on the assumption that the Apostolic Tradition was known in Ethiopia only through the Arabic translation (14th C.) of the Coptic *Sinodos*, Irénée-Henri Dalmais contended that the eucharistic prayer of

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[67] *Sinodos* is a canonico-liturgical collection which mainly deals with ecclesiastical regulations. Besides the 27 ecumenically accepted canonical books of the New Testament, the EOTC recognizes 8 books, namely *Tə'əzaz* (ትእዛዝ), *Gəṣəw* (ግጽው), *Abəṭəlis* (አብጥሊስ), *Sərə'ata Ṣion* (ሥርዓተ ጽዮን), *Mäṣəḥafä Kidan* – መጽሐፈ ኪዳን [Testament of the Lord] I and II, *Qälemənṭos* – ቀሌምንጦስ [The Book of Clement], and *Didəsqəlya* – ዲድስቅልያ [The Ethiopic translation of the *Didascalia Apostolorum*] as parts of the N.T. Canon. The first 4 books are found in the *Sinodos,* and Roger Cowley calls these 8 books the "Ethiopian Octateuch." See R. W. Cowley, "The Identification of the Ethiopian Octateuch of Clement, and its Relationship to the Other Christian Literature," *Ostkirchliche Studien,* 27 (1978) 43. The introduction to the book of *Sinodos* mentions unidentified 8 books, ascribing them to St. Clement of Rome. See "Il Senodos Etiopico Canoni pseudoapostolici: Canoni dopo l'Ascensione, Canoni di Simone Cananeo, Canoni Apostolici, Lettera di Pietro," *CSCO,* Vol. 552, Tom. 101, Scriptores Aethiopici, ed. Alessandro Bausi (Lovain: In Adeibus Peeters, 1995) 3. In the 81st statutes of the book of *Abəṭəlis*, the apostles are said to have notified St. Clement of Rome that the number of the canonical books of the Bible was 81, including the 8 books of Clement. See "Il Senodos Etiopico," 228 and 231. Based on this source, the EOTC accepts 81 books of the Bible as canonical. Forty-six of them (the 39 books of the O.T., and additional 7 books that are known as deuterocanoncial books in the Eastern Orthodox Churches: *The Book of Enoch, The Book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus (Book of Sirach), The Book of Judith, The Book of Tobias (Ṭobit), II Book of Ezra (Esdras),* and *Maccabees* [I-III counted as one]) belong to the Ethiopian Old Testament Canon. The rest 35 (the 27 books of the N.T. and the 8 books of Clement [the Ethiopian Octateuch] stated above) are parts of the Ethiopian New Testament Canon. The church orders found in the book of *Sinodos* are enumerated by Paulos Tzadua as follows: Apostolic canons, canons of Clement [of Rome], canons of Hippolitus of Rome, the canons of the ecumenical council of Nicea, and that of the synods of Ancyra, Neocaesarea, Gangra, Sardes, Antioch, and Laodicaea. See Tsadua, *Ethiopian Church Rite,* 4. Bausi divides the contents of the Ethiopic *Sinodos* as "the pseudo-apostolic-clementine sections; the canons of the councils; and the homiletic sections." See Alessandro Bausi, "The Critical Edition of the Ethiopic Sēnodos: Some Preliminary Remarks," *Études éthiopiennes,* Vol. 1, ed. Claude Lepage (Paris: Société française pour les etudes éthiopiennes, 1994) 346.

[68] Habte-Maryam Worqneh, *Ṭənətawi Yä-Ityoṗəya Sərəʿatä Təməhrət* [The Ancient Education of Ethiopia] (Addis Ababa: Bərhan əna Sälam Printing Press, 1970) 226.

[69] E. Bishop compares the anaphora of the Apostolic Tradition with the Ethiopian anaphora of the Apostles, which he calls the "Abyssinian Normal Liturgy," and concludes that the former is the basis for the latter. He also says the "latter simply is the former enlarged, enriched, and brought up to the level of (Greek-Eastern) Catholic practice." See E. Bishop, "Liturgical Comments and Memoranda iv-vii," *Journal of Theological Studies,* 12 (1911) 399. Based on the findings of Bishop, Hammerschmidt considers the anaphora of the Apostles to be the original liturgy of the Ethiopian Church derived from one or several copies of the Egyptian Church Order brought to Ethiopia by Frumentius (the first bishop of Ethiopia) from Alexandria at the "beginnings of the Ethiopian Christendom," i.e. 4th century. See Hammerschmidt, *Ethiopian Anaphoras*, 41-42.

Hippolitus could not have been adapted in Ethiopia as the Anaphora of the Apostles before the 14th century.[70] However, as this anaphora is the standard eucharistic prayer of the Ethiopian Church, which usually appears with the Ethiopian Common Order,[71] it is unlikely to presume that the EOTC did not have an *Ordo Communis* until the 14th century.[72] One can also say that if the anaphora of the Apostles were known only after the 14th century, it could not get precedence over the other anaphoras, such as that of the Lord, St. Mark, and St. James, which were brought to Ethiopia between the 4th and 5th centuries.

Furthermore, the fact that the EOTC considers the Apostolic Tradition and the Testament of the Lord as the authentic books of the New Testament indicates that the church knew these sources from early times.[73] As such, the anaphora of the Apostolic Tradition is one of the earliest liturgical formularies known in Ethiopia. Dalmais' presupposition could be understood only in the sense that the liturgical corpus, known as *Sinodos* in Ethiopia, was complied in the 14th century consisting of earliest eucharistic prayers like the anaphora of the Apostolic Tradition along with other canonical sources that were brought to Ethiopia much later than the Apostolic Tradition.[74] This point can be

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[70] Irénée-Henri Dalmais, "The Eastern Liturgical Families," *The Church at Prayer: Principles of the Liturgy*, I, eds. Irénée-Henri Dalmais, Pierre Marie Gy, Pierre Jounel, and Aimé Geoges Martimort, (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1987) 43.

[71] For example see "The Ethiopic Liturgy," *Ancient Liturgies*, eds. Hammond and Brightman, 769 and 774.

[72] See "The Anaphoras of the Ethiopic Liturgy," trans. Harden, 2.

[73] Tzadua, *Ethiopian Church Rite*, 5. See also Hammerschmidt, *Ethiopic Anaphoras*, 42.

[74] Allan Bouley points out the differing assumptions of some liturgical authorities on the date of the Ethiopian anaphora of the apostles. While Bernard Botte, J. Hanssesn, J. Harden and S. Mercer suggest that since the anaphora was derived from the "*Sinodos* where the *Apostolic Tradition* is joined with the *Canones of the Apostles*" it came into use in Ethiopia after the translation of the Ethiopian version of the *Sinodos* in the 14th century, Hammerschmidt argues for the early date of the anaphora (4th century). For Bouley, Hammerschmidt's position "seems more acceptable" because the association of the title of the anaphora with the apostles and with their canons "may merely reflect a common tendency to lend apostolic authority to the liturgy and need not depend on its later association with the *Canons of the Apostles*. In addition, the importance of this anaphora as the normal Ethiopian formulary suggests an early origin." See Allan Bouley,

elucidated in relation to a similar activity which is the translation of the Ethiopic Bible. Though *Abba* Salama II, the Coptic Metropolitan who lived in Ethiopia from 1348-1388, is usually known as "*Abba* Salama *Mätärəg*^{W}*əm* – አባ ሰላማ መተርጉም" [the translator of the Scriptures] this does not mean that the Scriptures were not translated into Ethiopic until the 14th century. What happened during the episcopate of *Abba* Salama *Mätärəg*^{W}*əm* was "a revision of the existing Bible translations" – an activity "which is usually connected with the name of the Metropolitan Salama, Translator of the Holy Scriptures."[75] Likewise in the 14th century, then existing liturgical sources, including the anaphora of the Apostles and other church orders that had been translated from Greek were compiled under the name *Sinodos*.

The other influence on the Ethiopian liturgy came from the Antiochian (West Syrian) liturgical rite. Dalmais asserts that despite its Alexandrian origin, the Ethiopian liturgy demonstrates more Syrian elements than Alexandrian.[76] This influence probably resulted from the Syriac sources brought by the Nine Saints,[77] who came from Roman Syria to Ethiopia in the 5th century (*ca*. 480) fleeing the Justinian persecution. The saints stayed in Ethiopia, and they were instrumental in the translation of the Syriac sources,[78] such as the Testament of the Lord (*Testamentum Domini*),[79] and the anaphora of St.

From Freedom to Formula: The Evolution of the Eucharistic Prayer from Oral Improvisation to Written Texts (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1981) 219.

[75] Edward Ullendorff, *Ethiopia and the Bible* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968) 35.

[76] Irénée-Henri Dalmais, *Eastern Liturgies* (New York: Hawtorn Publishers, 1960) 55.

[77] In Ethiopian sources the names of the Nine Saints are known as: *Abba* Alef, *Abba* Arägawi (Zämika'el), *Abba* Afṣe, *Abba* Liqanos, *Abba* Gärima (Yəsəḥaq), *Abba* Gubba, *Abba* Yəmə'ata, *Abba* Ṗänṭelewon, and *Abba* Ṣəhma. See Gorgorios (Bishop), *Yä-Ityoṗəya Orətodokəs Täwaḥədo Betäkərəstyan Tarik* [History of the Ethiopian Orthodox *Täwaḥədo* Church] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1999) 24. These saints have immensely contributed to the formation of monasticism in Ethiopia.

[78] Lanfranco Ricci states that the translation of the Syriac sources into Ethiopic was made by "religious men" who came from the Church of Syria. See Ricci, "Ethiopian Christian Literature," 976.

[79]Miguel Arranz contends that though F. X. Funk in his extensive and critical study (*Das Testament unseres Herrne und die verwandten Schriften*) dated the *Testament of the Lord* to the fifth century, some features in

James the brother of the Lord.[80] An expanded form of the anaphora of the Testament of the Lord (*Mäṣəḥafä Kidan* − መጽሐፈ ኪዳን)[81] appears in the Ethiopian Missal (*Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* − መጽሐፈ ቅዳሴ) under the name *Qəddase Ǝgəzi'ə* − ቅዳሴ እግዚእ (The Liturgy of the Lord). Also the euchology of the Testament of the Lord is known in the EOTC as *Kidan* − ኪዳን (Testament), and being divided into three equal parts it is used daily in the matins, vespers, and midnight prayers.

The usage of the aforementioned Alexandrian and Syrian liturgical sources in Ethiopia indicates their adaptation to the Ethiopian culture rather than their mere

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the *Testament* such as its anaphora and the general structure of the Mass suggests an earlier date, probably third century like the *Apostolic Tradition.* According to Arranz, it was the final recension of the *Testament* that took place in the fourth or fifth century. See Miguel Arranz, "The Functions of the Christian Assembly in the Testament of the Lord," *Roles in the Liturgical Assembly: The Twenty-third Liturgical Conference, Saint Serge,* trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1976) 31.

[80] Tzadua, *Ethiopian Church Rite*, 12 and 14. The Ethiopian anaphora of St. James the Brother of the Lord (*Akk^{W}åtetä Q^{W}ərban Zä-Qəddus Ya'əqob Ǝḥ^{W}əhu Lä-Ǝgəzi'ənä* - አኩቴተ ቍርባን ዘቅዱስ ያዕቆብ እኁሁ ለእግዚእነ) is a direct translation of the Jerusalem Liturgy of St. James which is one of the earliest ever known liturgical sources. Nevertheless, for an unknown reason the Gəʿəz translation of this anaphora is not part of the Ethiopian Missal, nor is it used by the EOTC. It is simply grouped by liturgical scholars with the other apocryphal Ethiopian anaphoras. On the anaphoras of the early church see R. C. D. Jasper and G. J. Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1990).

[81] The Ethiopic Testament of the Lord [*Mäṣəḥafä Kidan*] has been edited and translated into French by Robert Beylot. Its Syriac original was translated into English by James Cooper and Arthur John Maclean. Despite minor omissions and interpolations − for example, the "Charismata" that deals with those who have the gift of healing is missing in the Ethiopic Testament of the Lord − the Ethiopic text appears to be a direct translation of the Syriac. Cf. *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Robert Beylot (Louvain: Peeters, 1984) 104 and James Cooper and Arthur John Maclean, *The Testament of Our Lord: Translated into English from the Syriac with Introduction and Notes* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902) 114. Among other things, the *Testament of the Lord* deals with the criteria for clerical ordination, which are accompanied by prayers of ordination; pastoral duties; the role of the widows and virgins in the church; and the baptism of the catechumens. A number of liturgical prayers of the Testament of the Lord have been adapted to the Ethiopian Liturgy. For instance, the *Bä'əntä Qəddəsat* − በእንተ ቅድሳት [Concerning Holy Things], which the deacon recites at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy; *Bä-sämay Yähalu Ləbəkmu* − በሰማይ የሀሉ ልብክሙ [Let Your Heart be in Heaven], the admonition recited by the deacon when the Ethiopian anaphora of the Lord is celebrated; the anaphora of the Lord and its post-communion prayer [*Ḥadafe Näfəs* − ሐዳፌ ነፍስ (Pilot of the Soul)]; the prayer recited by the faithful after partaking of the Holy Communion [*Qəddus, Qəddus, Qəddus, Śəlus Zä-iyətnnäggär* − ቅዱስ ቅዱስ ቅዱስ ሥሉስ ዘኢይትነገር (Holy, Holy, Holy, Ineffable Trinity]; the short midnight, morning, and evening prayers known as *Kidan Zä-Mänəfäqä Lelit, Zä-Nägəh,* and *Zä-Śärək* (ኪዳን ዘመንፈቀ ሌሊት፡ ዘነግህ፡ ወዘሠርክ)*;* the Mystagogia [*Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* − ትምህርተ ኅቡኣት], chanted at the vigil service of the feast of Epiphany [*Ṭəmqät*]; and a prayer of exorcism [*Ǝgəzi'abḥer Zä-bərhanat* − እግዚአብሔር ዘብርሃናት (God of Lights)], used rarely when catechumens are baptized, are taken from *Mäṣəḥafä Kidan* [Testament of the Lord]. See the Gə'əz text in *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 34, 35-39, 42, 43, 45-61, 71-74, 79-84, and 117-121.

existence as replicas of foreign writings. This is in general the norm for any kind of foreign literature translated to Gəʿəz. Noting this fact, Lanfranco Ricci, the Italian scholar of Ethiopian literature, writes: "It is worthwhile to recall the fact that now and then the Ethiopic translations of foreign works either offer a version of their own, different from the one extant in other literatures, or append original Ethiopian contributions to the body of the translated work, thus producing new pieces of purely local literature."[82] As we will see later, for instance, even if there is conformity in "sacerdotal ceremonies"[83] between the Coptic and Ethiopian Eucharistic Liturgies, we find various local additions in the latter, unknown to the former. Moreover, the differences between the Coptic and Ethiopian anaphoras are surprisingly great. While there are only three anaphoras – that of St. Basil, of St. Cyril (adaptation of the old anaphora of St. Mark), and that of St. Gregory the Theologian – in the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian liturgical rite comprises 14 official and 6 apocryphal anaphoras[84] whose structures and contents are totally different from that of the Coptic ones.

Among the 14 official Ethiopian anaphoras that appear on the Ethiopian missal,[85] three of them (the anaphora of the Apostles, of the Lord and that of St. Basil) are translations from foreign sources. The rest are believed to be of local origins, which demonstrate Ethiopian theology and poetic beauty.[86] As genuine Ethiopic literature, these

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[82] Ricci, "Ethiopian Christian Literature," *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 977.

[83] William Macomber, "Ethiopian Liturgy," *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, ed. Aziz S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991) 988.

[84] For the names of these anaphoras and references for studies on them, see footnote no. 49 on page 15 above.

[85] See *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church,* trans. Marcos Daoud (London: Kegan Paul, 2005).

[86] Hammerschmidt, *Ethiopic Anaphoras,* 166. A close reading of the local Ethiopian anaphoras shows that they look more like theological treatises than eucharistic prayers. As we will see later, this is because the anaphoras were composed by rival groups in Ethiopia during the 14th and 15th centuries as responses to their varied positions on theological controversies such as the nature of the Trinity, the unknowability of God, the observance of the Sabbath, the veneration of St. Mary and that of the Holy Cross. See the articles

eucharistic prayers exhibit varied anaphoral structures accompanied by unique liturgical components[87] and rubrics which have no parallels in any of the Christian liturgical rites. Instead of depending on translated liturgical sources, the local doctors who enriched the Ethiopian liturgy were quite interested in the formation of their own liturgical rite. The first great contribution to such formation was made in the mid 6th century when St. Yared, the Ethiopian exegete and hymnologist, composed various liturgical hymnaries.

The hymnaries that are ascribed to St. Yared: *Dəgg^{W}a* (ድጓ), *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* (ጾመ ድጓ), *Mə'əraf* (ምዕራፍ),[88] *Zəmmare* (ዝማሬ) and *Mäwaśʿət* (መዋሥእት), comprise numerous chants usually used in the Liturgy of Hours and the Divine Offices of the EOTC. *Dəgg^{W}a*, the antiphonary for the year, contains chants for the eve of the various feasts,[89] and its four main divisions: *Yoḥannəs* (ዮሐንስ), *Asətämaḥro* (አስተምሕሮ), *Ṣom* (ጾም), and *Fasika* (ፋሲካ) have become the basis for the seasonal divisions of the Ethiopian liturgical year as *Zämänä Yoḥannəs* – ዘመነ ዮሐንስ (Season of John), *Zämänä Asətämaḥro* – ዘመነ

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of Getatchew Haile, "Religious Controversies and the Growth of Ethiopic Literature in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *Oriens Christianus*, 65 (1981) 102-136 and "Ethiopic Literature," 47-55. Hammerschimidt as well is supportive of the indigenous origin of the Ethiopian anaphoras. Surprisingly, however, Marcos Daoud, the Coptic priest who translated the 14 official anaphoras from Gəʿəz to English, offers misleading information that cannot be confirmed. In his words: "It is said by the Ethiopian Church authorities that they received their liturgy of fourteen Anaphoras from the Church of Egypt. The Church of Egypt confirms this but has, unfortunately, lost most of the fourteen." See the "Foreword" of his translation: *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church* (London: Kegan Paul, 2005). Daoud's claim contradicts the features of the Ethiopian anaphoras whose local composition is evident in their own texts. Also it is very unlikely to prove the Coptic origin of all the 14 Ethiopian anaphoras as Daoud claims. An article written by a Coptic scholar states that only three anaphoras (that of St. Basil, Cyril, and Gregory Nazianzus) are known in the Coptic Orthodox Church. See Antonios Rofail, "The Eucharistic Liturgy in the Coptic Orthodox Church," *The Logos*, 9/2 (1996) 6-11.

[87] For example see the intercessory prayer *Bäʾəntä Bəẓuʾə* – በእንተ ብፁዕ [For the sake of the Blessed]; the sub-deacon's intercessory chant: *Mäḥäromu Ǝgəziʾo* – መሐሮሙ እግዚኦ [Lord have mercy upon them]; the chant which accompanies the fraction of the consecrated host: *Habänä Nəḫbär Bä-zäziʾakä Mänfäs Qəddus* – ሀበነ ንኅበር በዘዚአከ መንፈስ ቅዱስ [Grant us to be united by Your Holy Sprit], interchangeably sung by the celebrant and the people; the *Śärawitä Mäläʾəktihu* – ሠራዊተ መላእክቲሁ [The hosts of the angels]; and the post-communal prayers, known as *Haddafe Näfəs* – ሐዳፌ ነፍስ [Pilot of the Soul]. See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 56, 58, 61, 62, and 72.

[88] See Bernard Velat's studies on *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* (ጾመ ድጓ) and *Mə'əraf* (ምዕራፍ): "Ṣoma Deggua," *Patrologia Orientalis*, Vol. 32 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1966) and "Études sur le Me'erāf: commun de L'office Divin Éthiopien," *Patrologia Orientalis*, Vol. 33 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1966).

[89] Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 53.

አስተምሕሮ (Season of Supplication), *Zämänä Ṣom* – ዘመነ ጾም (Season of Fasting), and *Zämänä Fasika* – ዘመነ ፋሲካ (Paschal Season). *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* [Fasting Hymnary] is derived from *Dəgg^{W}a*, and as its name indicates it is chanted during the Lent. *Mə'əraf is* a collection of the Psalms of David and various other biblical canticles. It consists of *Mäwäddəs* – መወድስ (Sunday Office); *Səbəḥätä Nägəh* – ስብሐተ ነግህ (matins); *Ṣälot Zä-Śärək* – ጸሎት ዘሠርክ (vespers); and *Kəsätät Aryam* – ክስተት ዓርያም, a special office for the various feasts of the saints.[90] While the *Zəmmare* is chanted during communion in the Divine Liturgy, the *Mäwaś'ət* is used as intercessory prayer for the funeral service.

Nothing is known about the development of the Ethiopian Liturgy in the seventh century when the decline of the Aksumite Empire began. As the Persian power got the upper hand in the Arabian Peninsula in A.D. 619, Aksum's sovereignty was significantly limited.[91] Also when the Muslims gained control over the Red Sea after the rise of Islam in the late seventh century, Ethiopia was isolated from the rest of the civilized Middle East.[92] Nonetheless, since the mid fourth century the Alexandrian Church was sending Coptic bishops to Ethiopia as the metropolitans of the Ethiopian Church, the relationship of the two churches was not interrupted. But it was limited to some extent after Egypt had fallen under Islam in the first quarter of the seventh century.

Conversely, during this period Islam was not a threat to Ethiopia at all. It is said that as the Aksumite kings had given asylum to the exiled followers of Muhammad,[93]

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[90] Habtemichael Kidane, "Ethiopian (or Gəʿəz) Worship," *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship,* ed. Paul Bradshaw (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002) 171. Yared (St.), *Mə'əraf* [Hymnary] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1995) 38, 115, 133.

[91] Hien and Kleidt, *Ethiopia – Christian Africa,* 18.

[92] Robert Hess, *Ethiopia* (Illinois: Northwestern University, 1970) 32.

[93] J. S. Trimingham, *Islam in Ethiopia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952) 44.

Ethiopia was spared from Islamic invasion for several hundred years.[94] The main challenge for the Aksumite Kingdom came from home when the *Agaws* of the Cushitic tribes from the Southern part of Ethiopia attacked the kingdom.[95] The disruption of trade on the Red Sea routes and the attack from within highly weakened the Aksumite Kingdom in the subsequent centuries, and further contributed to the isolation of the kingdom from the rest of the world. In addition, the influence of the Muslim rulers on the Coptic Patriarchate left the EOTC without bishops from A.D. 918 – 1002.[96] At the end of the 10th century Judith (known in Ethiopia as *Yodit Gudit* – ዮዲት ጉዲት), the Queen of the *Falasha*,[97] persecuted Anbesa Wedem, who was the last surviving Aksumite King,[98] and ransacked the Ethiopian Church during her 40-year-reign by burning the biblical and liturgical books. For these reasons, there was no development in the Ethiopian liturgical tradition during the Dark Ages of the 7th – 11th centuries.[99]

The Zagwe Dynasty (1137-1270), which followed the disastrous Dark Ages, is known only for the famous monolithic rock-hewn churches of *Lalibela*[100] in North Ethiopia.[101] During the period of the dynasty, there had not been a significant work to restore the destroyed literary heritage of the EOTC. A renaissance of Ethiopic literature, however, was inaugurated in A.D. 1270 with the restoration of the so-called Solomonic Dynasty. Under this dynasty significant works of local origin as well as translations were

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[94] Hess, *Ethiopia*, 32.
[95] Hien and Kleidt, *Ethiopia – Christian Africa*, 19.
[96] Zemene Abuhay, *Brief Introduction to the History of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church* (San Jose, California: Mekane Rama Qidus Gabriel EOTC, 2005) 76.
[97] The *Falasha* are minority people who live in the North-Western part of Ethiopia, practicing Judaism.
[98] Gorgorios, *Yä-Ityopəya Betäkərəstyan Tarik* [Ethiopian Church History] 30.
[99] Abuhay, *EOTC History,* 76.
[100] These churches are believed to be built by Emperor *Lalibela* (ላሊበላ), one of the saintly kings of the Zagwe Dynasty who reigned from 1181-1221.
[101] Hien and Kleidt, *Ethiopia – Christian Africa*, 21.

made. When Greek ceased to be the language of the Coptic Orthodox Church, miscellaneous liturgical and ascetical writings were translated from Arabic to Gəʿəz by the Coptic metropolitan, *Abba* Salama II (1348-1388). Among these sources we find: the Ethiopic *Didascalia* (*Didəsqəlya* – ዲድስቅልያ);[102] the Coptic liturgy of St. Basil;[103] *Gəbrä Ḫəmamat* (ግብረ ኀማማት), a lectionary for the Passion Week that consists of homilies, prayers, and biblical readings; the Coptic *Horologium* (Book of Hours), which was later replaced by the *Mäṣəḥafä Säʿatat Zä-mäʿalt Wå-zälelit* – መጽሐፈ ሰዓታት ዘመዓልት ወዘሌሊት (Book of the Day and Night Hours), authored by *Abba* Giyorgis *Zä-Gasəčča* (ዘጋስጫ) or *Zä-Sägla* – ዘሰግላ (1365-1425);[104] *Mäṣəḥafä Gənzät* (መጽሐፈ ግንዘት), a book for funeral rituals; *Wəddase Maryam* – ውዳሴ ማርያም (Praise of Mary), derived from the Copto-

[102] The Ethiopic Didascalia (*Didəsqəlya* – ዲድስቅልያ) is not a direct translation of the *Didascalia Apostolorum* which was originally composed in Greek in the middle of the third century. Sebastian Brock states that the translation of the Syriac Didascalia into Ethiopic "depends on Books 1-6 of the Apostolic Constitutions." See "Textual Tradition," *The Liturgical Portions of the Didascalia,* ed. Sebastian Brock and Michael Vasey (Bramcote: Grove Books, 1982) 5. However, the various additions to the Ethiopic *Didascalia* that are not found in the Syriac *Didascalia*, and the former's close agreement with the Arabic *Didascalia* suggests that the Ethiopic *Didascalia* is a translation of the Arabic text of the same name. See Harden, *Introduction to Ethiopic Literature,* 58. The Ethiopic *Didascalia* has 43 chapters. Chapters 1-32, with minor variations, correspond to the total 27 chapters of the Syriac *Didascalia Apostolorum*, and the rest chapters (33-43) are additions from the sixth and seventh books of the Apostolic Constitutions. The 33rd chapter consists of the Apostolic Creed (from book VI: 11 of the Apostolic Constitutions), which is still recited in the Ethiopian Liturgy instead of the Niceo-Constantinopolitan Creed when the anaphoras of the Apostles, the Lord's, St. Mary's, and that of John the Evangelist are celebrated. Chapters 35-43 correspond, in an abridged form, to numbers 1-17 and 27-46 of the seventh book of the Apostolic Constitutions. J. Harden states that numbers 18-26 of the seventh book were omitted accidentally. See "The Ethiopic Didascalia," *Translations of Christian Literature,* Vol. IV: Oriental Texts, trans. J. M. Harden (London: SPCK, 1920) vii. While Harden's translation of the *Ethiopic Didascalia* is complete, Thomas Platt's translation contains only the first 23 chapters. See *The Ethiopic Didascalia or the Ethiopic Version of the Apostolical Constitutions Received in the Church of Abyssinia,* trans. Thomas Pell Platt (London: Richard Bentley, 1834). For the outline of the Ethiopic (Gəʿəz) *Didascalia* see W. Wright, *Catalogue of the Ethiopic Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: NPG, 1877) 214. See also the outline and content of the seventh book of the Apostolic Constitutions in *The Work Claiming to be the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles Including the Canons: Whiston's Version Revised from the Greek with a Prize Essay at the University of Bonn upon Their Origin and Contents,* trans. Irah Chase (New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1848) xxix-xxx; 163-195. For the outline of the *Didascalia Apostolorum* with chapter-headings see Alistair Stewart-Sykes, *The Didascalia Apostolorum: An English Version with Introduction and Annotation* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009) 95-101.

[103] Referring to S. Euringer, Hammerschmidt indicates that the Coptic liturgy of St. Basil had first been translated from Greek to Arabic, and then from Arabic to Gəʿəz. See Hammerschmidt, *Ethiopic Anaphoras,* 43.

[104] Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 49.

Arabic *Theotokias* of the *Psalmodia* and now used in the daily matins and vespers of the EOTC.[105]

A. Liturgical Reform During the Golden Period in Ethiopia.

The time from the early 15th century until the first quarter of the 16th century can be considered as a Golden Period when the Gəʿəz literature reached its peak. This is especially true for the Ethiopian liturgical heritage, which saw significant reform through the composition of several anaphoras as a result of the local theological controversies among then Ethiopian *Mäməhran* (doctors). As Haile rightly argues, the abundance of local literary works in this period indicates the indigenous origin of Gəʿəz literature which is usually thought to be dependent on foreign sources.[106] Unfortunately, most of the works appear under pseudonyms, so that other than verifying the local aspect of the writings, it is quite difficult to identify the names of their authors. Some of the names known to the scholars of Ethiopian literature are: *Abba* Giyorgis of *Gasəčča*; *Rətuʿa Haymanot*;[107] Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob, who reigned from 1434-1468;[108] *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos,

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[105] Ricci, "Ethiopian Christian Literature," 976.

[106] Getatchew Haile, "Religious Controversies and the Growth of Ethiopic Literature in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *Oriens Christianus*, 65 (1981) 103.

[107] It is not clear who this *Rətu'a Haymanot* ([A man of] Orthodox faith) was. He employed this "*nom de plume"* to hide his identity. See Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 49. The writings of *Rətu'a Haymanot*, especially his homilies on *Bäʿalat Abbäyt* – በዓላት ዐበይት (Great Feasts) are theologically significant. These homilies are microfilmed by the *Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (EMML), Addis Ababa and the Monastic Manuscript Library, Collegeville*. See for example EMML, Project Numbers 2375 and 7028. For the impact of these homilies on the growth of Ethiopic literature, see Haile, "Religious Controversies," 109, 111, and 114.

[108]Zär'a Yaʿəqob (1434-1468) was a priestly king who brought unity between church and state in Ethiopia after the church as a moral and political force independently had enjoyed an active literary and spiritual development prior to his regime. For this purpose he wrote books such as *Mäṣəḥafä Bərhan* – መጽሐፈ ብርሃን [Book of Light]; *Mäṣəḥafä Milad* – መጽሐፈ ሚላድ [Book of Nativity]; and homilies in honour of the Archangel St. Gabriel, of the Apostles, of Saturday; *Täʾaqəbo Məsṭir* – ተዐቅቦ ምሥጢር [Keeping Mystery]; *Mäṣəḥafä Baḥrəy* – መጽሐፈ ባሕርይ [Book of Nature]; *Raʿəyä Täʿammər* – ራዕየ ተአምር [Revelation of Miracle], and hymns for St. Mary. See the series in *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orienatalium,* Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 235, Tom. 43 (1963) and Vol. 261, Tom. 51 (1965); Taddesse Tamrat, "Some Notes on the Fifteenth Century Stephanite 'Heresy' in the Ethiopian Church," *Rassegna Di Studi Etiopici*,

Zämika'el, Gämaləyal, Fəre Maḫəbär, and Aṣəqä who all were against the theological position of Zär'a Yaʿəqob, and so were deemed as heretics by him.

Abba Giyorgis, also known as the "Ethiopian Cyril"[109] for his valuable doctrinal treatises, was a prolific writer who took pain to defend the Orthodox teachings of the church of his time. His most significant work is *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir* – መጽሐፈ ምሥጢር [Book of Mystery], which refutes the classic trinitarian and christological heresies, such as Arianism, Sabellianism, Nestorianism, Apollinarianism, Docetism, and Dyophysitism. The work also deals with the heterodox teaching of a local teacher, Bitu, who denied the coming of God the Father with the Son for judgment.[110] Besides its doctrinal value, the liturgical aspect of *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir* is indicated in its classification for readings on major feasts and liturgical seasons, such as Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Eastertide (the Easter Season), Ascension, Pentecost, and Transfiguration. This reflects the real intention of *Abba* Giyorgis to strengthen the Orthodox faith among the laity and clergy. Furthermore, the rubric for the reading of this doctrinal work during the liturgical times signifies the author's awareness of the interdependence of theology and liturgy.

Vol. 22 (Rome: Istituto Per L'Oriente, 1966) 103; Getatchew Haile, "A Preliminary Investigation of the *Tomarä Təsbaʿt* of Emperor Zär'a Ya'əqob of Ethiopia," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 43/2 (1980) 212.

[109]Giyorgis Zä-Sägla, "*Fəkare Haymanot* or the Faith of *Abba* Giyorgis Säglawi," *Le Muséon Revue D' études Orientales*, trans. Getatchew Haile, 3 (1981) 235.

[110]See Giyorgis Zä-Sägla, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, Vols. 515 and 532, Scriptores Aethiopici, Tom. 89 and 97, ed. Yaqob Beyene (Louvain: Aedibus E. Peeters, 1990 and 1993). Some other works of *Abba* Giyorgis include: *Fəkare Haymanot* – ፍካሬ ሃይማኖት [Exposition of Faith], *Arəganon* – አርጋኖን [Organ], *Wəddase Mäsəqäl* – ውዳሴ መስቀል [Praise of the Cross], *Mäṣəḥafä Səbḥat* – መጽሐፈ ስብሐት [Book of Praise], *Mäʿaza Qəddase* – መዓዛ ቅዳሴ [A Pleasant Perfume of Thanksgiving], and *Wəddase Ḥawaryat* – ውዳሴ ሐዋርያት [Praise of the Apostles]. For a brief description of these works see Sergew Hable-Sellassie, "Giorgis Zegasitcha: Teacher and Author," *The Ethiopian Journal of Education,* 3/1 (1975) 15-26.

Abba Giyorgis' direct contribution to the development of Ethiopian liturgy is further evidenced in his liturgical works such as *Sä'atat* [*Horologium*], which is also called *Mäṣəḥafä Səbḥat* – መጽሐፈ ሰብሐት[111] [Book of Praise], and eucharistic prayers. *Sä'atat* was written to replace the Coptic *Horologium*[112] which appeared to be a little more than the repetition of the Psalms of David.[113] Conversely, *Abba* Giyorgis' *Horologium* contains various hymns that reflect God's glory and omnipotence.[114] He prepared this book in two parts: *Horologium* of the night and the day to be used as a hymnary during the 24 hours of the day.[115] This is still practised in most Ethiopian monasteries, although its usage in parish churches is reserved for Lent and the fast of the Assumption of St. Mary. *Abba* Giyorgis' *Gädəl* – ገድል (hagiography), written in his honour, states that he was asked by *Abuna* Bärtälomewos, the Coptic metropolitan who lived in Ethiopia from 1398-1436, to compose anaphoras.[116] This indicates, as Haile rightly states, that there was an urgent need for the composition of liturgical books, which

[111] Hable-Sellassie, "Giorgis Zegasitcha: Teacher and Author," 24.

[112] See *The Coptic Orthodox Horologion: The Book of the Seven Nocturnal and Daylight Canonical Prayers,* trans. Fayek M. Ishak (Toronto: Coptologia Spiritual Publications, 1992). See also its Gəʿəz translation: *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* – መጽሐፈ ሰዐታት [Book of Hours] (Rome: Vaticano Printing Press) 1952. A comparison of these sources shows that some modifications were made on the latter. For instance all the Psalms of the matins in the *Coptic Horologion* do not appear in the Gəʿəz *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat*; Psalms 25, 27, 63, 67, 70, 113, and 143 are omitted from the Gəʿəz text and replaced by St. Yared's *theotokia* known as *Anəqäṣä Bərhan* – አንቀጸ ብርሃን [The Gate of Light] which venerates St. Mary for the especial favour (grace) conferred on her and deals with the mystery of the incarnation of the *Logos*.

[113] Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 49.

[114] For example the hymn known as *Nəsebḥo* – ንሴብሖ (Let us thank Him) says: "Holy, Holy, Holy God, the one who resides in the highest and sees the depth of the waters; He is mighty in his abode, and so the Cherubim cannot see his face [glory]; they cover themselves by the wings of fire lest the divine fire should burn them." See *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-kʷəlu Ẓäwatəwihu Məsälä Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Book of Hours/Horologium with All Its Components and Computus] ed. Mogas Equba-Giyorgis (Asmara: Kokäbä Ṣəbaḥ Printing Press, 1967) 20.

[115] Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 49.

[116] See "Vie de Georges de Sagla [Life of Giyorgis Zä-Sägla]," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orienatalium,* Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 492, Tom. 81, ed. Gerard Colin (Lovain: In Aedibus E. Peeters, 1987) 25. See also Hable-Sellassie, "Giorgis Zegasitcha: Teacher and Author," 25; Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia: 1270-1527* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1972) 223.

could satisfy both the rival groups: members of the established church, and that of the dissidents who differed from the mother church on theological issues.[117]

As discussed below, various theological controversies that took place between the 14th and 15th centuries in Ethiopia have resulted in the composition of indigenous anaphoras and other liturgical texts. Nonetheless, one should note that though the theological disputes led to the composition of liturgical texts, this does not overshadow the primary status of the *lex orandi* over the *lex credendi* in the Ethiopian tradition. In order to support their theological positions, the opposing groups were quoting from other liturgical sources that were received in Ethiopia much earlier than the time when the controversies broke out. For instance, *Abba* Giyorgis referred to the Ethiopic book of *Sinodos,* a canonico-liturgical source, to support his belief on the immortality of the soul in his apologetic book: *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir.*[118] *Rətu'a Haymanot* as well, in his homiliary, quoted from the book of *Qälemənṭos* – ቀሌምንጦስ (Clement [of Rome]),[119] another canonico-liturgical source.[120] Moreover, *Fəkare Mäläkot* – ፍካሬ መለኮት [Exposition of Divinity], the theological treatise which was written during the Ethiopian scholars' theological debates with Jesuit missionaries in the 17th century,[121] has numerous quotes[122] from the various local anaphoras that were received by the church after the invasion of

[117]Haile, "Religious Controversies," 128.
[118] See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistro: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orienatalium*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 199-200.
[119] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos* [the Book of Clement {of Rome}] is one of the canonical books compiled in the Ethiopic *Sinodos* which is also known as the Ethiopian Church Order.
[120] See *Rətu'a Haymanot*'s Homily on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord in *Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa and the Monastic Manuscript Library, Collegeville,* EMML, Project Number 2375, f. 26a.
[121] Leonardo Cohen, *The Missionary Strategies of the Jesuits in Ethiopia (1555-1632)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009) 8.
[122] For instance see "Fəkare Mäläkot [Exposition of Divinity]," *Scritti teologici etiopici dei secoli XVI-XVII: Tre Opuscoli de Mikaeliti*, Vol. 1, ed. Enrico Cerulli (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1958) 22-37.

the Muslim Imam, Ahmed ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi[123] (1524-1542).[124] All these show that, in the EOTC, the church's liturgical sources establish its beliefs.

One of the theological controversies, which broke during the time of *Abba* Giyorgis and seriously continued after the accession of emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob to power in 1434, was the dispute whether the triune God has the same *mälkəʹ* – መልክዕ (form, figure, image) as humans. There was also a clear difference between the rival groups on what kind of analogies to use in order to explain the Persons of the Trinity. The splinter group argued that the Persons of the triune God are not the same as the figures or images of humans, and thus the image of God cannot be likened to that of humans. *Abba* Giyorgis, by contrast, representing the established church contended that the triune God had a *mälkəʹ* (form, figure, image) which resembled the form of humans.[125] In his *Mäṣəḥafä Məsṭir* [Book of Mystery] *Abba* Giyorgis extensively quoted from the Scripture to prove his position,[126] for he saw a Sabellian heresy in the dissidents' stand.

The writer of the dissident group, who seems to be as systematic as *Abba* Giyorgis in his theological exposition, is known only in his pseudonym: *Rətuʿa Haymanot*. The writer might have been *Abba* Giyorgis' contemporary, and his homiliary on *Bäʿalat Abbäyt* – በዓላት ዐበይት (Great Feasts)[127] provides very important clues on how

[123] In the Ethiopian literature he is nicknamed as Ahmed *Gəraññ* (the left handed).
[124] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 133; Cohen, *The Missionary Strategies,* 18.
[125] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 128.
[126] See his homily on *Səbkät* – ስብከት (Advent), written against Sabellianism. Having quoted various scriptural references, which show that God hears and has hands, *Abba* Giyorgis says: "Thus [you need to] believe that God has hands, shoulders, and fingers." And he concludes this homily, writing: "Behold, we have brought you testimony from the scriptures [to prove] that God has a perfect human form." See Giyorgis Zä-Sägla, "Il Libro del Mistro: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 23 and 25.
[127] The great feasts which the homiliary deals with are: Nativity of our Lord, Baptism of our Lord, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Ascension of the Lord, Feast of the *Paraclete* (Pentecost), Transfiguration, Feast of the Apostles, Feast of the Blessed Virgin, and Feast of the Cherubim. See Rətuʿa Haymanot, "Dərsanat Zä-Bäʿalat Abbäyt [Homilies on Great Feasts]," *Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa and the Monastic Manuscript Library, Collegeville*. EMML, Project Numbers 2375 and 7028.

he differed from *Abba* Giyorgis. According to *Rətu'a Haymanot*, "the divine being has neither right nor left, neither front nor back" and thus it is not appropriate to liken the Creator to creatures.[128] This was a clear objection to the theology of *Abba* Giyorgis, which envisioned the Persons of the Trinity in a physical sense, insisting that the forms of these Persons are identical to that of humans. *Rətu'a Haymanot* and *Abba* Giyorgis also differed in the analogies which they suggested for understanding the Persons of the Trinity. While the former proposed the idea of one object with three attributes, the latter insisted on three equal and similar objects, each having all attributes similarly and equally. For instance, the analogy of the sun was used differently by both. *Rətu'a Haymanot* quoted from the book of *Qälemənṭos*: "Listen to what our Lord has said, [in the *Qälemənṭos*], 'My Father is sun, I his light, and the Holy Spirit his heat.'"[129] *Abba* Giyorgis vehemently rejected this analogy, and suggested an alternative analogy of three suns that had one light in an attempt to provide a better imagery of the Persons of the Trinity and their essence.[130]

The analogy used by *Rətu'a Haymanot* is found in the official Ethiopian anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers.[131] One can assume, therefore, that in its original stage the anaphora had been composed and used by the dissident groups who promote the teachings of *Rətu'a Haymanot*. Also as Haile presumes, the anaphora might have received its name from a group of dissidents called *Rətu'ana Haymanot* – ርቱዓነ ሃይማኖት

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[128] See *Rətu'a Haymanot*'s homily on the Ascension of our Lord in *EMML,* Project Number 2375, f. 91a.
[129] See *Retu'a Haymanot*'s Homily on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord *EMML,* Project Number 2375, f. 26a.
[130] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 113. See also *Abba* Giyorgis' usage of analogy in his homily on the advent where he says: "As the Father is sun that shines always, so is the Son that shines on the saints; the Holy Spirit is the sun which beautifies the church." Giyorgis, "Il Libro Del Mistero [Maṣḥafa Mesṭir]," *CSCO*, Vol. 515, Tom. 89, 31.
[131] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 127, no. 47.

([Those who are] Orthodox in Faith), and "only later the name was interpreted to mean the Orthodox Fathers of Nicea."[132] The possibility of attributing the composition of anaphoras to the user of the nom de plume *Rətu'a Haymanot* is reflected in one manuscript of *Abba* Giyorgis' *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir*.[133] The anaphora is mentioned as *Akk^{W}åtetä Q^{W}ərban Zä-Rətu'a Haymanot* – አኩቴተ ቍርባን ዘርቱዓ ሃይማኖት (Anaphora of *Rətu'a Haymanot*), and *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir* quotes from this anaphora.[134] The same quote is found in the official Ethiopian anaphora named after St. Cyril of Alexandria.[135] The designation of this anaphora is spurious, since it is completely different from the Coptic anaphora adapted by St. Cyril,[136] and based on the proof in the *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir* the anaphora can be attributed to none other than the dissident groups of the 15th century Ethiopia who called themselves *Rətu'ana Haymanot*.

On the other hand, *Abba* Giyorgis' theological stand that God has a perfect human form is echoed in the Ethiopic anaphora named after Gregory of Nyssa, which refers to the Persons of the Trinity as "three men."[137] This anaphora might have been composed by *Abba* Giyorgis, and then ascribed to Gregory of Nyssa. The importance of using a pseudonym to get credibility by the Ethiopian Church can be seen in the fact that while most of the anaphoras that appear under pseudonyms have been accepted by the church,

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[132] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 124.
[133] Ibid, 123.
[134] Haile states that what is quoted in *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir* is the first verse of the preface of *Rətu'a Haymanot's* anaphora. The quote in Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium's version of *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir* reads: "*Wånəhnäsä nä'amən kämä Ab hləw məsəlä wåldu wä-məsəlä Mänəfäs Qəddus* – ወንህነሰ ነአምን ከመ አብ ሀልው ምስለ ወልዱ ወምስለ መንፈስ ቅዱስ" [We believe that the Father exists with His Son and with the Holy Spirit]. See "The Homily on *Lədät* – ልደት [Christmas]" in Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO,* Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 133. For the portion of the preface from the anaphora of *Retu'a Haymanot* see Haile, "Religious Controversies," 123, footnote no. 79.
[135] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 218, no. 92.
[136] See "The Divine Liturgy of St. Cyril the Great," *The Divine Liturgies of Saints Basil, Gregory, and Cyril* (Colleyville, TX: Coptic Orthodox Church Diocese of Southern USA, 2001) 294-355; "The Anaphora of St. Cyril," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 209-220.
[137] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 175, no. 24.

the anaphora known as *Mäʿaza Qəddase* (መዓዛ ቅዳሴ) which bears the name of *Abba* Giyorgis was rejected.[138] Even though this anaphora was printed by the Vatican printing press in 1945 together with the other Ethiopic anaphoras, it never appeared in any of the versions of the official missal (*Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase*) printed by the EOTC.

Another controversy that led to the composition of a strange anaphora was the dispute over the observation of the Sabbath. The controversy originated during the regime of Emperor Yəkuno Amlak (1270-1285), and by the time Emperor Amdä Ṣəyon (1314-1344) ascended to the throne it became so divisive as to potentially cause schism within the church. The proponent of the schismatic group was an educated cleric, Ḥəywåt Bənä Bä-ṣeyon,[139] who argued that both the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday)[140] and Sunday should be observed as days of rest. On the other hand, the established church insisted that Christians are obliged to observe only the Lord's Day, Sunday.

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[138] Haile stated that the composition of this anaphora by *Abba* Giyorgis at the request of the Coptic bishop Bärtälomewos (1398-1436) had aroused opposition from the members of the established church. See Haile, "Religious Controversies," 129. Also when the opponents of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob composed anaphoras that reflected their theological stand, their move was strongly reprimanded by the emperor. See "Il Libro Della Luce Del Negus Zar'a Yāʿqob (Maṣḥafa Bərhān)," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, Vol. 261, Tom. 51, Scriptores Aethiopici, ed. Conti Rossini, (Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus, 1965) 41. This shows the reluctance in the EOTC to accept locally composed writings as authentic liturgical sources.

[139] Abuhay, *EOTC History*, 92.

[140] There are a number of Jewish elements in the tradition of the Ethiopian Church that resulted from the practice of Judaism in Ethiopia before the introduction of Christianity. See Edward Ullendorff, "Hebraic-Jewish Elements in Abyssinian (Monophysite) Christianity," in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 1 (1957) 216-256. Elaborating the biblical story about the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon (I Kings 10: 1-10) the *Kəbrä Nägäst* – ክብረ ነገሥት (Glory of Kings), a historical book which was translated from Arabic to Gəʿəz in the 14th century, contains detailed narrative of her journey to Jerusalem and her relationship with King Solomon. According to *Kəbrä Nägäst,* the Queen of Sheba (Ethiopia), also known as *Makəda,* paid a visit to King Solomon, and she bore a son by him. She named her son *Bäyna Ləhkem* (*Mənyələk*). At the age of 25 the son visited his father who offered him a royal welcome. When Solomon decided to send 20 men of his army with his son *Bäyna Ləhkem* to Ethiopia, it was very difficult for the men to leave the Ark of the Covenant behind and live in Ethiopia where the worship of the God of Israel was unknown. Thus instigated by Azaryas, the son of Zadok the priest, they plotted to steal the Ark of the Covenant. They did so, and settled in Ethiopia practicing their Jewish rituals. See *The Kebra Nagast: The Queen of Sheba and Her only Son Menyelek,* trans. E.A. Wallis Budge (Maidstone: The Oriental Orthodox Library, 2007) 126-218. This story shows the entrance of Judaism to Ethiopia much earlier than the introduction of Christianity, and thus the issue of observing the Jewish Sabbath at the end of the 13th century was not surprising. Ḥəywåt Bənä Bä-ṣeyon was simply insisting on the observation of an established ritual that came to be discarded.

After the death of Ḥəywåt Bənä Bä-ṣeyon a monk from the northern part of Ethiopia, named *Abba* Ewəsṭatewos (1273-1352), followed his footstep and brought the controversy to the level where it divided the church and the nation. Thus, a decree came from the ecclesiastical and political authorities of the country in favour of the group who argued for the observation of the Christian Sabbath only.[141] *Abba* Ewəsṭatewos and his followers were attacked by their opponents; consequently *Abba* Ewəsṭatewos fled to Egypt to report his cause. However, as the Coptic Orthodox Church observes only the Christian Sabbath, his reception in Egypt was not favourable. Finally he took shelter in Armenia where he died in 1352.[142] The issue was again raised during the reign of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob (1434-1468), and eventually the EOTC decided in favour of the observation of the two Sabbaths at the council of *Däbrä Məṭəmaq* (ደብረ ምጥማቅ) in 1450.

The Sabbath controversy had a clear liturgical outcome in the EOTC. Prior to the resolution of the controversy in 1450, a new anaphora was composed in order to repudiate the position of the two Sabbath adherents. The anaphora personified and revered the Christian Sabbath (Sunday) as the first day of creation and the last day for this temporal world.[143] The composer of the anaphora spuriously ascribed it to St. Athanasius of Alexandria. Based on the similarity of the language used in the anaphora and in the *Sä'atat* (*Horologium*) of *Abba* Giyorgis,[144] the composition of this anaphora

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[141] Getatchew Haile, "Ethiopian Heresies and Theological Controversies," *The Coptic Encyclopedia,* Vol. 3, ed. Aziz S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991) 985.

[142] Abuhay, *EOTC History,* 93.

[143] For example see the expressions in the anaphora: "O the holy Sabbath of Christians, offer prayer and supplication towards the Lord our God on behalf of us, world without end" and "Oh, this day is the first [the first day of creation]…Oh, this day is the last which exists for ever…Oh this day is that in which the old ceased and the new confirmed." *Ethiopian Liturgy,* trans. Daoud, 153, no. 160; and 144, nos. 61, 67.

[144] For example expressions in the anaphora, such as "pray for us, intercede for us" can be found elsewhere in *Abba* Giyorgis' *Sä'atat* [Horologium]. See for instance the chant: *Sä'ali Länä Maryam Ǝmənä* – ሰአሊ ለነ ማርያም እምነ [Pray for us, Mary our Mother] in the *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 23. Also see additional comparisons between the anaphora and *Abba*

can probably be attributed to him.[145] Presuming the reason why the alleged author ascribed the anaphora to St. Athanasius, Haile mentions the similarity between the anaphora and the so-called *ṭomar zäwärädät emsämayat laʿälä ədä Atənatewos bäʿälätä əḥud* – ጦማር ዘወረደት እምሰማያት ላዕለ እደ አትናቴዎስ በዕለተ እሑድ [epistle that came down from heaven to Athanasius on Sunday] in exhorting the laity and clergy to observe the Christian Sabbath.[146]

We also find two liturgical litanies, which resulted from the dispute on the veneration of icons in Ethiopia. This controversy had originally been raised during the regime of Emperor Yagəbəʾa Ṣəyon (1285-1294).[147] It is not known whether this controversy had any relation with the Iconoclasm of the Byzantine tradition. As the Ethiopian emperors are known for suppressing any kind of dissent that could divide the nation, the controversy did not have a lasting influence until the rise of *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos (born 1394), the energetic and highly intellectual monk. After he had joined the monastery of *Abba* Samuel of *Qoyäsa* (ቆየሳ) in North Ethiopia, he was assigned to copy

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Giyorgis' *Säʿatat* in Haile's article "Religious Controversies," 131. Based on the parallel between the immense veneration given to the Sabbath in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Athanasius and the song of Solomon Ben Moses Halevi Alkabez that hails the Jewish Sabbath as the bride of Israel, Hammerschmidt suggests that the anaphora might have Jewish origin or at least it could be related to the prayer books of the *Falashas* (Ethiopian Jews). See Hammerschmidt, *Ethiopic Anaphoras,* 81-82. See also the unidentified work *Dərsanä Sänbät* [Discourse on the Sabbath] trans. Gabra-Kidan Bazabih and Gabra-Iyesus Basamu (Addis Ababa: Täsfa Gäbrä-Səllasse Printing Press, 1954) for the similarities between this discourse and the Ethiopic anaphora of St. Athanasius.

[145] Taddesse Tamrat states that *Abba* Giyorgis was educated at Däbrä Hayq monastery, which was the "citadel of the pro-Egyptian and anti [Jewish] Sabbath party until 1404." According to Tamrat, however, toward the end of his life *Abba* Giyorgis converted to be a "protagonist of the Sabbath," who argued for the legitimacy of observing the Jewish Sabbath together with the Lord's Day (the Christian Sabbath). See Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia,* 224. Thus *Abba* Giyorgis might have composed the anaphora of Athanasius, which revers the Christian Sabbath (Sunday), before his conversion to the "two Sabbaths group" while he was among the supporters of the "one Sabbath (only Sunday) group" as per his educational background.

[146] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 131.

[147] Haile, "Ethiopian Heresies," 984.

manuscripts.[148] His job as a calligraphist gave him the chance to read various writings of the church. Based on his readings and on the practice of his time, he questioned whether it was biblical to venerate the Holy Cross and prostrate in front of the icons of the saints.

Being accused by the monastic community he belonged to, *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos finally appeared at the court of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob. While facing the emperor, he did not pay the due royal respect to the emperor by prostrating himself as was customary in that time.[149] When he was asked what made him to differ from the other members of his monastic community, he boldly claimed that he received his education from the books of the prophets and the apostles, and realized that his fellow monks had abandoned their pledge to God.[150] Resentful for not receiving a royal respect (by prostration) from *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos, the emperor ordered his loyalists to flog him. The followers of *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos as well were severely persecuted as the enemies of the Holy Cross and that of St. Mary.[151]

Going to the other extreme, in contrast to the stand of *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos, emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob introduced a cult of St. Mary from a foreign *Mu'allaqa* rule,[152] and added the account of various miracles of St. Mary in the already translated book of *Täʿammärä Maryam* – ተአምረ ማርያም (Miracle of Mary).[153] Furthermore as a direct opposition to the theological stand of *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos and his followers, two litanies: *Mästäbqʷəʿ Zä-*

[148] Tamrat, "Notes on the Fifteenth Century Stephanite Heresy," 105.
[149] When *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos was charged with disrespect to the emperor, he declared that "the name of the King counted for much less than that of the Holy Church." See Tamrat, "Notes on the Fifteenth Century Stephanite Heresy," 108.
[150] Ibid, 109.
[151] *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos clearly said: "I worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost [Spirit] and I prostrate before this. I shall not add [anything more] to this…for the love of the rulers of this world." This declaration was interpreted as showing disrespect to St. Mary and the Holy Cross because prostrating oneself to them was the issue at stake, and thus *Abba* Ǝsṭifanos and his followers were considered enemies of St. Mary and the Cross. See Tamrat, "Notes on the Fifteenth Century Stephanite Heresy," 111.
[152] Haile, "Ethiopian Heresies," 984.
[153] The book is one of the various Arabic sources translated to Gəʿəz in the 14th century.

ʾIgzəʾtənä Maryam − መስተብቍዕ ዘእግዝእትነ ማርያም (Litany of our Lady Mary) and *Mästäbqʷəʾ Zä-Qəddus Mäsqäl* − መስተብቍዕ ዘቅዱስ መስቀል (Litany of the Holy Cross) were composed. While the former litany highlights that St. Mary deserves honour and praise here on earth and in heaven as well,[154] the composers of the latter say: "Our Fathers the Apostles have ordered us to prostrate ourselves to the [Holy] Cross and the Virgin Mary."[155] As part of the matins of the EOTC, the litany of St. Mary is still chanted on her feast days and on other great feasts, whereas the litany of the Cross is reserved for the feast of the Saviour and that of the Cross.

One of the most significant outcomes on the Ethiopian liturgy resulted from the controversy of the Zämika'elites[156] with Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob. This controversy, particularly, was on the "anthropomorphization of the [P]ersons in the Trinity,"[157] that is to say whether the triune God had the same *mälkəʾ* (form, figure, image) as that of humans. As aforementioned, the controversy had originally been raised much earlier than the coming of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob to power in 1434, so that both groups (the Zämika'elites and the emperor) were arguing based on the positions of the literary heritage which they inherited − that of the *Rətuʿana Haymanot* and *Abba* Giyorgis respectively.[158]

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[154] See "MästäbqʷəʾZä-ʾIgzəʾtənä Maryam [Intercession of our Lady Mary]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 219.

[155] See "MästäbqʷəʾZä-mäsqäl [Litany of the Cross]," *Mäṣəḥafä Säʿatat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] 292.

[156] On the Zämika'elites, dubbed as heretical groups by emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob, see *Il libro etiopico dei Miracoli di Maria e le sue fonti nelle letterature del Medio Evo latino*, ed. Enrico Cerulli (Rome: Dott. Giovanni Bardi, 1943) 107-121.

[157] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 128. On the "anthropomorphite" tendency of Zär'a Yaʿəqob and his group see Ephraim Isaac, *A New Text-Critical Introduction to Maṣḥafa Berhān with a Translation of Book I* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973) 58.

[158] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 128.

Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob accused his opponents of denying the distinct Persons of the Trinity. In his *Homily in Honour of John the Evangelist*, the emperor reported that Zämika'el,[159] the leader of the Zämika'elites, had said: "God had no form, and man is not formed after God's image."[160] Moreover, considering the position of the Zämika'elites on the image of God as erroneous, Zär'a Yaʿəqob quoted from their service book (horologium): "Holy, Holy, Holy, is God; he is not likened to the image of the creatures."[161] However, a close look at the Zämika'elites' treatise reveals that the emperor misrepresented their theological perspectives while referring to them in his writings.

In their treatise, entitled *Fəkare Mäläkot*, the Zämika'elites clearly confessed that they believed in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit "who are distinct as *akalat* – አካላት (hypostases or persons) and united in the one divine *baḥrəy* – ባሕርይ (ousia/essence)."[162] Having stated this belief which they share with Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob , they further explained their position: "But when we speak about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit or attribute names and persons to them like man [*sic*], the speaking animal whose age is limited and dies when his time is over, it is not as if they were creatures."[163] Moreover, while the emperor took pain by quoting extensively from the canonical books of the Bible and from the O.T. apocrypha to support his position, which signified the likeness of

[159] In his apologetic work Zär'a Ya'əqob also mentions other members of the dissident group such as Gämaləyal, Fəre Maḫəbär, and Aṣəqa. See for example, Zär'a Ya'əqob, "Il Libro Della Luce [Maṣḥafa Berhān]," *CSCO,* Vol. 261, Tom. 51 (1965) 40, 85, 125.

[160] See "The Homily of Zär'a Ya'əqob in Honour of St. John the Evangelist," trans. Getatchew Haile, *Oriens Christianus,* 67 (1983) 164.

[161] See Zär'a Ya'əqob, "Il Libro Della Luce [Maṣḥafa Berhān]," *CSCO,* Vol. 261, Tom. 51 (1965) 126. See also *Il libro etiopico*, ed. Cerulli, 124.

[162] See "Fəkare Mäläkot [Exposition of Divinity]," *Scritti teologici etiopici,* 3.

[163] Ibid.

humans' form or image to that of the triune God in physical sense,[164] the Zämika'elites demonstrated a better understanding of his quotations. In their treatise they said that based on the biblical references to God's eyes, ears, and hands one might think that God had the same physical form as humans.[165] But the references are figurative expressions.[166] Though the triune God has three Persons, these Persons are incomprehensible to our mind. "We think of these Persons in our mind without approaching the mystery of their eternity; [they are] intangible and transcendent in nature."[167]

The real nature of the debate, thus, between the emperor and his opponents was not whether or not God had three persons, but rather how to interpret the creation of humans in the image and likeness of God, and what kind of analogies should be used to express the Persons of the Trinity. Following the trinitarian thought of *Abba* Giyorgis, Zär'a Yaʿəqob presented the analogy of three distinct suns, each representing one Person of the Trinity. But for the Zämika'elites this was tantamount to saying three gods, and so they instead preferred the example of one sun: "its disc representing the Father, its light the Son, and its heat the Holy Spirit."[168]

With the intention of adapting their thoughts to the standard doctrinal teachings of the Ethiopian Church, the Zämika'elites composed anaphoras that demonstrated their trinitarian stand. In his homily, Zar'a Ya'əqob complained about their attempt: "they established Eucharistic anaphoras, too, on their initiative leaving aside the anaphora of our Lord which was written in the Testament of our Lord and the anaphora of the apostles

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[164] See Zär'a Yaʿeqob, "Il Libro Della Luce [Maṣḥafa Berhān]," *CSCO,* Vol. 261, Tom. 51, 127-128. Some of the quotes include Gen. 1:26-27; 3:22; Gen. 18; from *Mäṣəḥafä Kufale* – መጽሐፈ ኩፋሌ (Jubilees), the Gəʿəz O.T. apocrypha, and from the Ethiopic Didascalia.
[165] See "Fəkare Mäläkot [Exposition of Divinity]," *Scritti teologici etiopici,* 15.
[166] Ibid, 47.
[167] Ibid, 58.
[168] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 108.

which was written in the *Synodicon* [the Church Order known as *Sinodos*]."[169] The emperor's complaint indicates that the only two anaphoras officially accepted by the Ethiopian Church until the mid 15th century were the anaphoras of the Lord and that of the apostles.

The analogy and theological thought of the Zämika'elites are found in two current official anaphoras of the EOTC. The content and context of the anaphoras suggest that they were composed either by the Zämika'elites or by their predecessors (the *Rətu'ana Haymanot*). In the anaphora named after St. Mary we read:

> The Father is sun, the Son is sun, and the Holy Spirit is sun; the sun of righteousness which over all is one. The Father is fire; the Son is fire, and the Holy Spirit is fire. The fire of life from the highest heaven is one.[170]

Haile contended that this quote was modified by a member of the established church after the anaphora had been received by the church; but in its original state the quote suited the theological stand of the Zämika'elites. The modification is clear in the contradiction within the quote that while three suns are likened to the Persons of the Trinity, the quote ends with one sun of righteousness: "the sun of righteousness which over all is one." According to the official teaching of the established church, however, though three suns can analogously be used for the three divine Persons, the unity of the Persons is represented not by one sun, but by the one (common) "light of righteousness, which comes forth from the three suns."[171] As preserved in Vatican MS 15, f. 186rv and Vatican MS 18, ff. 72v-73r, the text of the quotation in the original anaphora of St. Mary is significantly different from the one in the church's standard book of the Divine Liturgy. The quote in the manuscripts, which without any confusion supports the position of the

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[169] See Zär'a Ya'əqob, "Il Libro Della Luce [Maṣḥafa Berhān]," *CSCO,* Vol. 261, Tom. 51 (1965) 41.
[170] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 111, no. 73.
[171] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 118.

Zämika'elites, reads: "The Father is sun; the Son is the light, and the Holy Spirit is the heat; the sun of righteousness is one."[172]

Besides this analogy, the Ethiopic anaphora of Mary reflects the Zämika'elites' theological stand that downplays anthropomorphism. Stating clearly that "the God-head has no stature like man,"[173] the anaphora says:

> The Deity has neither breadth nor length,….neither left nor right, but he[174] always fills all things. The Deity has not place wherein to stretch or contract himself but he fills every place….The Deity has neither chest nor back by which he can be seen, and through which he can be limited, but he is covered with the flame or fire and he himself is the flame of fire.[175]

This expression explicitly resonates the Zämika'elites' teaching that the Persons of the triune God can by no means be likened to the physical form of humans,[176] and additionally proves the composition of the anaphora by the Zämika'elites.

The theology of the official Ethiopian anaphora named after St. John Son of Thunder[177] as well is supportive of the Zämika'elites' teaching on the divine attributes of God. Based on the Gospel of John: "No one has ever seen God" (Jn. 1:18) the Zämika'elites taught that God had no physical person as tangible and visible as humans. As reported by Zär'a Yaʿəqob in his apologetic works, *Mäṣəḥafä Bərhan* – መጽሐፈ ብርሃን

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[172] Ibid. This quote, whose Gəʿəz original reads: "*Ab Ẓäḥay; Wå-wåləd Bərhan; Wå-mänfäs Qəddus Waʾəyu. Aḥadu Wəʿətu Ẓäḥayä Ṣədəq Zäyabärəh Läk^{W}əlu* – አብ ፀሐይ፡ ወወልድ ብርሃን፡ ወመንፈስ ቅዱስ ዋዕዩ፡ አሐዱ ውእቱ ፀሐየ ጽድቅ ዘያበርህ ለኵሉ," is also mentioned as an alternative analogy in the anaphora of St. Mary (*Qəddase Maryam* – ቅዳሴ ማርያም) that appears in the Ethiopic missal published by the Vatican. See "Akk^{W}åtetä Q^{W}ərban Zä-Ǝgzəʿtənä Maryam – አኩኋቴተ ቍርባን ዘእግዝእትነ ማርያም [Anaphora of our Lady Mary] *Missale Ethiopicum* [Ethiopian Missal] (Rome: Vatican Printing Press, 1945) 79.

[173] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 109, no. 48.

[174] Inclusive language is unknown in the Ethiopian liturgical texts. Thus, the masculine third person pronouns to God that are quoted in this thesis are not meant to disregard the inclusive language policy of the Toronto School of Theology but to be in consonance with the usage in the Ethiopian liturgical texts which the thesis engages.

[175] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 109, nos. 49-53.

[176] See "Fəkare Mäläkot [Exposition of Divinity]," *Scritti teologici etiopici,* 95. See also Cerulli, *Il libro etiopico*, 124.

[177] The designation: "Son of Thunder" is attributed to John, the beloved apostle, based on Mk. 3:17 where Jesus called John and his brother James *Boanerges* (sons of thunder).

[Book of Light] and *Homily in Honour of John the Evangelist*, two teachers among the Zämika'elites (named Zämika'el and Gämaləyal) held a heretical doctrine stated as: "God is invisible and has no image which man [*sic*] may know; He alone knows His image."[178] For Zär'a Yaʿəqob, who was too concerned about the physical aspect of the Persons of the Trinity, the above quote sounded heretical. However, the so-called heretical point of view is found in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. John the evangelist: "and no one knows you, and no one is able to see you; you alone know yourself."[179] This signifies that the Zämika'elites originally composed an anaphora based on the idea they got from the Johannine Gospel (Jn. 1:18), and accordingly named it after St. John the Evangelist.

The various quotes in *Fəkare Mäläkot* [Exposition of the Divinity] that are taken from the official anaphoras of the EOTC also suggest the possibility of ascribing the composition of these anaphoras to the Zämika'elites. Regarding the unknowable nature of God,[180] the treatise says: "none was before him [God], none will be after him, none is like him and none knows what his being is."[181] This was taken from the anaphora of St. John Chrysostom,[182] currently used by the EOTC. Also the quote in the treatise: "There is no beginning of his [God's] being, there is no end of his existence…So invisible is [H]e that

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[178] Zär'a Yaʿəqob, "Il Libro Della Luce [Maṣḥafa Berhān]," *CSCO,* Vol. 261, Tom. 51 (1965) 128; "The Homily of Zär'a Yaʿəqob in Honour of St. John the Evangelist," trans. Haile, 159.

[179] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 89, no. 4.

[180] The theological method which deals with the unknowability of the essence of God is called apophaticism. In contrast to the positive way of theologizing (Cataphasis), apophaticism promotes the way of knowing by unknowing (ἀγνώσια), and is focused on affirming the limit of our language in expressing the nature of God. The above quotes from the treatise of the Zämika'elites demonstrate the apophatic way of thinking. Apophatic expressions are also found in the *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣṭir* of *Abba* Giyorgis. For example, the introductions of his homilies on *Səbkätä Genna* – ስብከተ ጌና (Advent) and on the second and third Sundays of the Paschal season address the Almighty God as: "immovable, unknowable in essence, invisible, unsearchable, incomprehensible, and transcendent." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 1; Vol. 532, Tom, 97 (1993) 2 and 13. On the apophatic thought of the Eastern Orthodox tradition see Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: James Clarke and Co. Ltd., 1957).

[181] See "Fəkare Mäläkot, [Exposition of Divinity]," *Scritti teologici etiopici,* 22.

[182] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 189, no. 4.

none can find him by thought; so high is [H]e that none can understand him"[183] is found in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Epiphanius of Cyprus.[184] The anonymous writer of the treatise, who belongs to the Zämika'elites, extensively quotes from these anaphoras of the church to support his theological view. This indicates that the treatise was written after the anaphoras were officially accepted by the church, following the end of the Zämika'elite controversy.[185] Nevertheless, the selection of the quotes from these anaphoras and their conformity with the theology of the Zämika'elites, which highlights the incomprehensibility of the divine essence, denote the composition of the anaphoras either by the Zämika'elites or their predecessors (*Rətu'ana Haymanot*).

Here it can be questioned as to why the composers of the Ethiopian anaphoras named their works after the names of the apostles and that of the church fathers. Liturgical studies show that in the early times of Christianity ascribing liturgical formularies to the doctors and fathers of the church was common. For instance, the Coptic anaphora of St. Gregory was attributed to St. Gregory of Nazianzus who did not really write the anaphora.[186] The educated writers of the golden period in Ethiopia seem to be aware of this tradition. The other apparent reason is that, it was clear to the authors

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[183] See "Fəkare Mäläkot [Exposition of Divinity]," *Scritti teologici etiopici,* 22.

[184] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 185-6, nos. 4-7. The quote in the Ethiopian anaphora named after Gregory of Neo-Caesarea (The Miracle Worker): "We believe in the Father who sent, and in the Son who was sent, and we believe in the Holy Spirit, the life-giver" is a shortened quote from the anaphora of St. Mary, which reads: "We believe that the Father who sends is Father in his nature. We believe that the Son who is sent is Son in his nature. We believe that the life-giving Holy Spirit is Holy Spirit in his nature". Cf. *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 108, no. 54 and P. 240, no. 13. The similarity of the trinitarian confession found in these anaphoras hints that the anaphora of Gregory of Neo-Caesarea as well was the composition of the *Rətu'ana Haymanot,* i.e. the dissident groups. Also on pages 37-39, *Fəkare Mäläkot,* the treatise of the dissident groups, contains the same quotes as those found in the anaphoras of St. Mary and that of the 318 Nicene Fathers. These quotes are found on P. 109, nos. 47-56 and PP. 123-124, nos. 13-21 of *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church* translated by Marcos Daoud. As discussed above, this additionally supports the composition of the anaphoras of St. Mary and that of the 318 Nicene Fathers by the dissident groups (*Rətu'ana Haymanot*).

[185] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 133.

[186] Hammerschmidt, *Ethiopic Anaphoras,* 41.

that if they revealed their identity their works would be rejected.[187] Thus they ascribed their anaphoras to the apostles and the fathers of the church for the sole purpose of enhancing the credibility of their works.

B. The Final Phase of the Development of the Ethiopian Liturgy

Shortly after the golden period that saw the composition of various local anaphoras, the EOTC suffered from another setback. Ahmed ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi, an Ethiopian Imam, aided by a Turkish military contingent invaded the country and ransacked the Ethiopian Church for fifteen years (1527-1542). Comparable to the severity of the war of the *Falasha* Queen *Yodit* (Judith) in the 10th century, numerous churches were destroyed and books were burned. Also a great number of Christians were killed, and some others were forcibly converted to Islam.[188] The war of the Muslim Imam ended after Emperor Gälawədewos (1540-1559) asked for the help of the Portuguese government. With the Portuguese help the Imam was killed in 1542, and the church was reestablished. At this time, the church did not have any other option than collecting all the remaining doctrinal and liturgical books, including the anaphoras of the Zämika'elites of the 15th century that had erroneously been deemed as heretical by Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob.[189]

Even though the Portuguese soldiers helped to free the country and the church from Muslim occupation, they also caused another problem. They stayed in Ethiopia and brought Jesuit missionaries who tried to convert the Ethiopian Church to Catholicism. As

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[187] Getatchew Haile, "On the Identity of Silondis and the Composition of the Anaphora of Mary Ascribed to Hərəyaqos of Bəhənsa," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 49/2 (1983) 354.

[188] Bairu Tafla, "Ethiopian Orthodox Church," *Coptic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, ed. Aziz S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991) 996.

[189] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 133.

this provoked a public upheaval, Emperor Gälawədewos was forced to banish the Portuguese. But they finally succeeded when Pedro Paez, the Jesuit missionary, arrived in Ethiopia shortly after 1600. Living in the northern part of Ethiopia, Paez began teaching children and translating books.[190] He also managed to convert Emperor Susənyos (1607-1632) to Catholicism. After the death of Paez in 1621, a Catholic bishop, named Afonso Mendes, was sent to Ethiopia.[191] This instigated a civil war that lasted for about six years and led to the abdication of Emperor Susənyos who was succeeded by his son Fasilädäs. Emperor Fasilädäs (1632-1667) expelled all the missionaries.[192]

After the Jesuit missionaries had left the country, christological controversies that "gave a local colour to Catholicism in Ethiopia"[193] broke out within the clerics of the Ethiopian Church. The controversies were mainly centered on the attributes and unity of the humanity and divinity of Christ. There were three Christological positions: *Täwaḥədo* – ተዋሕዶ (Union), *Qəb'at* – ቅባት (Unction) and *Ṣäga* – ጸጋ (Adoptionism).[194] As the official representatives of the church, the first group (*Unionists*) taught that Christ is the natural Son of God by the union of his divinity and humanity. According to the second

[190] Tafla, "Ethiopian Orthodox Church," 996.
[191] Gorgorios (Archbishop), *Yä-Ityoṗəya Betäkərəstyan Tarik* [Ethiopian Church History] 51.
[192] Leonardo Cohen stated that in an effort to convert the EOTC to Catholicism, the Jesuit missionaries held theological debates with the Ethiopian scholars. Moreover, during the second and third decades of the seventeenth century, the missionaries were engaged in translating liturgical texts "in order to replace the Ethiopian with the Latin liturgy." Particularly, in his letter of February 18, 1624 to the General of the Jesuit Society, Father António Fernandes mentioned that "he had already translated ten [anaphoras], which had been recited in the church of Gännätä Iyäsus, and was in the process of introducing more. In May 1633 …Afonso Mendes informed the pope that the Roman liturgy had been translated into the Ethiopian language." See Cohen, *The Missionary Strategies*, 109-110. However, it is not clear whether the missionaries' work of translation had exerted any influence on the Ethiopian Liturgy.
[193] Haile "Ethiopian Heresies," 986.
[194] For details on the three factions (*Täwaḥədo* [Union], *Ṣäga* [Adoptionism], and *Qəb'at* [Unction]) in the EOTC, see Getatchew Haile, "Materials on the Theology of *Qəb'at* or Unction," *Ethiopian Studies: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference* 6 (1996) 205-250; "The Faith of the Unctionists in the Ethiopian Church (Haymanot Mäsiḥawit), *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium,* Vol. 518, Tom. 92, Scriptores Aethiopici, trans. Getatchew Haile, (Louvain: Aedibus E. Peeters, 1990); Mebratu K. Gebru, *Miaphysite Christology: An Ethiopian Perspective* (Piscataway, New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2010) 36-42.

group (*Unctionists*), on the contrary, it was through the unction (anointment) of the Holy Spirit that Christ became the natural Son of God. The third group (*Adoptionists*) agreed with the Unionists that Christ is the Son of God by the union of his divinity and humanity. Nevertheless, they fell into the adoptionist heresy as they brought the idea of a third birth for Christ during his baptism – in addition to his eternal birth from God the Father, and from the Blessed Virgin at the fullness of time – when "he was, in his humanity, adopted as the Son of God by the unction of the Holy Spirit."[195]

The christological controversies of the 17th century resulted in "an intensive movement of literary and intellectual revival in Ethiopia,"[196] since the members of the factions were expressing their positions in writing. Fortunately, however, there was no influence on the Ethiopian liturgical heritage either from the heresy of the *Unctionists*, which reflects that "Christ at a given time was solely human,"[197] or from that of the *Adoptionists*. When a council was summoned by Emperor Yoḥannəs IV (1872-1889) at *Boru Meda* – ቦሩ ሜዳ (in the province of Wollo, North Ethiopia) in 1878, in addition to making a final decision on the factions, the council corrected an error in a liturgical text. The council decided in favour of the *Täwaḥədo* group, endorsing the tenet that "Christ's divinity was from eternity and that the inseparable union of his divinity and humanity took place at the time of incarnation."[198] Also realizing that the sentence in the *Mästäbq^{W}ə' Zä-ʃgzə'tənä Maryam* (Litany of our Lady Mary): "worship and prostration

[195] Haile "Ethiopian Heresies," 986.
[196] John Panicker, "Ethiopian Orthodox Church: A Historical Introduction," *Ephrem's Theological Journal,* 3/1 (1999) 77.
[197] Haile "Ethiopian Heresies," 986.
[198] Ibid.

are meet to [Mary] together with her Son" was theologically erroneous, the council corrected it as: "Worship and prostration are meet to her Son."[199]

While the christological controversies were at stake, the doctors of the Gondar Era (16th – 17th centuries) contributed to the liturgical reform according to the Ethiopian tradition. They revised the *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* (Missal),[200] and inserted numerous rubrics in it – one of the factors that made the celebration of Ethiopian *Qəddase* distinctive. The doctors also added to the *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* various hymns, such as *Ǝmənä bäḥa Qəddəst Betäkərəstyan* – እምነ በሓ ቅድስት ቤተክርስቲያን [Greetings our Mother, the Holy Church]; *Mäsəqäl Abərəha Bäkäwakəbt* – መስቀል አብርሀ በከዋክብት [The Cross has shined on the stars]; *K^{W}əlu Zägäbra Läṣədq* – ኩሉ ዘገበራ ለጽድቅ [The one who practices righteousness] and *Śärawitä Mäla'əktihu* – ሠራዊተ መላእክቲሁ [The army of his angels] from the hymnaries of St. Yared.[201] Adding to the complexity of the Divine Offices, the local doctors also composed a festive hymnary called *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wå-mäzəmur* – መጽሐፈ ዚቅ ወመዝሙር [Book of Hymnody], which contains numerous hymns and songs that are chanted on Sundays and during major feasts.[202] Moreover, in this period, while the *Mäṣəḥafä Kərəstəna* – መጽሐፈ ክርስትና [Book of Baptism][203] and *Mäṣəḥafä Śimätä*

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[199] Ibid, 987.

[200] Tzadua, *Ethiopian Church Rite*, 7.

[201] For example see the chant "*k^{W}əlu Zägäbra Läṣədq* [The one who does righteousness] added from the *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* to the *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* (Book of Liturgy). Cf. Yared (St.), *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* [Fasting Hymnary] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 2002) 10; *Yä-Ityoṗəya Orətodokəs Täwaḥədo Betäkərəstyan Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church Missal] (Los Angeles: Fidäl Printing House, 2003) 2.

[202] Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 51.

[203] The *Mäṣəḥafä Kərəstəna* – መጽሐፈ ክርስትና [Book of Baptism], currently in use in the EOTC, contains prayers such as "prayer on the Holy Chrism," "prayer for those registered for baptism," and "prayers while anointing and laying on of hands" that are adapted from the book of *Sinodos*, the canonico-liturgical corpus. Cf. *Mäṣəḥafä Kərəstəna* [Book of Baptism] trans. Mikre-Sellassie G/Ammanuel and Getachew Gudie (Addis Ababa: Tinsae Publishing House, 2001) 109-116 with "Translation of the Ethiopic Text," *The Statutes of the Apostles or Canones Ecclesiastici,* trans. G. Horner (London: Williams and Norgate, 1904) 161-178. The adaptation of the Ethiopic book of baptism from *Mäṣəḥafä Sinodos* is confirmed by emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob (1434-1468). Complaining about his opponents, the emperor wrote: "they compiled

Kəhnät – መጽሐፈ ሢመተ ክህነት [Book of Clerical Ordination] that originated from the book of *Sinodos* were revised, other service books, such as *Mäṣəḥafä Täkəlil* መጽሐፈ ተክሊል [Book of Matrimony], *Mäṣəḥafä Nuzaze* – መጽሐፈ ኑዛዜ [Book of Confession], and *Mäṣəḥafä Qänədil* – መጽሐፈ ቀንዲል [Book of Anointing of the Sick] were composed.[204]

II. Celebration and Structural Pattern of the Ethiopian *Qəddase*

The various factors that contributed to the development of the Ethiopian liturgical rite have been discussed above. Also emphasis was made on the literary works of the Ethiopian fathers of the Medieval Period who shaped the Ethiopian liturgy according to their own context and theological thought. In this section, I will focus on the peculiarities of the Ethiopian *Qəddase* (Eucharistic Liturgy) in order to highlight the works of the doctors of the Ethiopian Church that made the Ethiopian *Qəddase* distinctive, far from being a replica of the Coptic Liturgy.

Peculiar to the Ethiopian *Qəddase*, we find the integration of Jewish, Coptic, and Syrian elements in it that contributed a great deal to its richness and exuberance. Dalmais rightly asserts that, in terms of tradition and literature, the Ethiopian Church has firmly established "an enthusiastic and fanciful piety, nourished on judaizing and apocalyptical legends," that made its liturgy very distinctive.[205] Due to the Ethiopian doctors' ability to adapt foreign liturgical elements to their own context and to construct an indigenous

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a new book of baptism, leaving aside the one written in the book of *Sinodos.*" See Zär'a Yaʿəqob, "Il Libro Della Luce [Maṣḥafa Berhān]," *CSCO,* Vol. 261, Tom. 51, 40. The Ethiopic Book of Clerical Ordination as well consists of various prayers excerpted from the Ethiopian Church Order (*Sinodos*). Cf. *Mäṣəḥafä Śimätä Kəhnät* [Book of Clerical Ordination] (Toronto: Tana Printing Press, 2007) 1-40 with *The Statutes of the Apostles,* ed. Horner, 133-145. Short prayers for the episcopal, priestly, and diaconal ordinations are also found in the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord*. See *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 24, 63, and 88.

[204] Tzadua, *Ethiopian Church Rite*, 7.
[205] Dalmais, *Eastern Liturgies*, 25.

liturgical ritual, the Ethiopian *Qəddase* has a number of peculiarities. Unlike the monastic and austere features of the Coptic liturgy,[206] which is its root, the Ethiopian *Qəddase* demonstrates an equally exuberant liturgical splendor[207] like that of the Byzantine Divine Liturgy and the Syrian Holy *Qurbana*. Among other things, the prevalence of biblical symbolism; "the clearly exhibited note of joy; a sense of unity; a sacrificial aspect and a contemplative character;"[208] the procession of the gorgeously attired priests, preceded by deacons who carry beautiful Ethiopian processional crosses; the loud and joy-spirited acclamations and chants of the attending faithful, frequently sung in variable melodies signify the typical beauty of *Qəddase* – the heaven on earth service.

Structure of the Ethiopian *Qəddase*

Qəddase has three main parts: the preparatory service (*proskomedia* in the Byzantine Liturgy); the Liturgy of the Word (ordinary of the liturgy – *ordo communis* or *synaxis*), which is called *Sərə'atä Qəddase* – ሥርዓተ ቅዳሴ; and the anaphora (*Fəre Qəddase* – ፍሬ ቅዳሴ) or the liturgy of the faithful. The preparation of the eucharistic bread (*Ḫəbəst* – ኅብስት) and wine takes place at *Betäləḥem* (ቤተልሔም),[209] a small room situated in the eastern part of the churchyard. Meanwhile, in the sanctuary,[210] the celebrant priest begins the preliminary prayers by reading a short exhortation that encourages the

[206] Ibid, 54.
[207] Hammerschmidt, *Ethiopic Anaphoras*, 166.
[208] Sumner, "The Ethiopic Liturgy: An Analysis," 41.
[209] *Betäləḥem* (Eng. Bethlehem), derived from two Hebrew words: *bäyət* (house) and *ləḥem* (bread), literally means "house of bread."
[210] The liturgical space of a typical Ethiopian church building has three main parts, divided by three ambulatories in concentric circles. The *Qəddəstä Qəddusan* – ቅድስተ ቅዱሳን [Holy of Holies] or sanctuary is located at the center, and only the clergy have access to it. The second part, found in the second ambulatory, is called *Qəddəst* – ቅድስት [Holy] where the laity partake of the Holy Communion. *Qəne Maḥəlet* (ቅኔ ማሕሌት), found in the first ambulatory while entering the church, is reserved for the cathedral offices of the *Kahənatä Däbtära* – ካህናተ ደብተራ (cantors). While these three parts are maintained, most of the modern Ethiopian church buildings are built in the form of Western basilicas, consisting of nave and narthex.

attendees not to leave the church before *Qəddase* is completed.[211] Then the celebrant recites the 25th, 61st, 102nd, 103rd, 130th, and 131st psalms from the psalter. Subsequently, acknowledging his unworthiness to serve at the holy altar, he reads three short prayers.[212] These are followed by the prayers over the ecclesiastical objects (vessels):[213] paten, chalice, cross-spoon, coverings, and *Mäsobä Wårəq* (መሶበ ወርቅ).[214] Having completed these prayers, the celebrant washes his hands (*lavabo*), reciting Ps. 51:7: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow" and Ps. 26: 6: "I will wash my hands in innocence, and I will compass your altar."[215]

After the three loaves of eucharistic bread and wine have been prepared at *Betäləḥem*, the three deacons with the assistant priest enter the sanctuary in a ceremonious manner. At this moment, the commencement of the *Qəddase* is announced by the ringing of the bell five times from the bell-tower. The celebrant declares the solemn and awe-inspiring aspect of the eucharistic service: "How [awesome] is this day and how marvelous this hour [when] the Holy Spirit descends from heaven and overshadows this sacrifice. Stand in [silence] and fear, and pray that the peace of God be

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[211] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 7-8, nos. 2-10.

[212] These prayers are ascribed to Gregory (unidentified), Basil of Caesarea, and John Chrysostom. See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 9-10, note 2. The authenticity of these prayers is not clear; nor are they found in the Coptic euchologion (missal).

[213] In the Coptic rite, these prayers are recited by the bishops only when the ecclesiastical objects are consecrated for church services, not at every single eucharistic celebration as in the Ethiopian *Qəddase.* See William Macomber, "Ethiopian Liturgy," *The Coptic Encyclopedia,* Vol. 3, ed. Aziz S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991) 999. There is also a clear difference between the preparatory services of the Ethiopian and Coptic Divine Liturgies. While the former consists of various prayers on the ecclesiastical objects and prayers for the sanctification of the celebrant, the latter comprises an incense prayer. See *The Divine Liturgies of Saints Basil, Gregory, and Cyril* (Colleyville, TX: Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Southern USA, 2001) 1-74.

[214] *Mäsobä Wårəq* is a decorated, round and hollow dish which is used to contain the loaves of the eucharistic bread.

[215] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 15.

with me and with all of you."[216] Then he goes around the altar, hovering his hands over the *Mäsobä Wåräq* and reciting the prayer of the offertory which begins with: "Remember, O Lord, those who offered to you this offering, and those for whom it was offered."[217]

Having blessed both the eucharistic bread and wine with the sign of the cross, the celebrant sings the doxology: "one is the Holy Father, one is the Holy Son, one is the Holy Spirit" with great solemnity.[218] In response to this, the people profess their belief in the triune God. Following the prayer of thanksgiving (*Ṣälotä Akʷätet* − ጸሎተ አኩቴት) and the prayer of oblation (*Ṣälotä Ǝnäfora* − ጸሎተ እንፎራ), the curtain that covers the sanctuary will be drawn aside. At *Qäddäst* (ቅድስት), the second ambulatory of the church, the assistant priest reads the prayer of the absolution of the Son (*Fätäḥat Zä-Wåläd* − ፍትሐት ዘወልድ). This is immediately followed by the intercessory prayer known by its incipit as *Bä'äntä Qäddäsat* − በእንተ ቅድሳት [Concerning Holy Things],[219] which is read by the chief deacon, interspersed with the "*Kyrie eleison* − Lord have mercy" of the people.

The second part, the liturgy of the word, begins with the incense prayer (*Ṣälotä*

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[216] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 18. Both William Macomber and Peter Fink state that this announcement of the celebrant at the beginning of the liturgy is the same as the diaconal announcement before the epiclesis in the Syrian liturgies. See Macomber "Ethiopian Liturgy," 988; Peter Fink, "Liturgical Traditions in the East," *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*, ed, Peter Fink (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990) 1270. In fact, one of the differences between the *ordo communis* of the Coptic and Ethiopian Eucharistic Liturgies is the addition of various prayers and acclamations to the latter.

[217] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, Daoud, trans., 19.

[218] Ibid, 22.

[219] While the "prayer of thanksgiving" and "the prayer of oblation" are translations from the Coptic liturgy, the intercessory prayer (*Bä'äntä Qäddäsat*) is an Ethiopian addition, unknown to the Alexandrian rite. See *The Divine Liturgies of Saints Basil, Gregory, and Cyril*, 89-97. By reciting this prayer, the deacon implores for the well-being of the clergy; for the steadfastness of the virgins; for the safety of those who travel; for those who are hungry, sick, and in detention; for a favourable climate and abundance of the harvest. Though it is not known when this intercessory prayer was adapted to the Ethiopian *Qäddase,* the prayer is found in the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord* [*Mäṣəḥafä Kidan*]. See *Testamentum domini éthiopien*, trans. Beylot, 79-84. Since in the *Testament of the Lord* the prayer begins with a short admonition for the departure of the catechumens and those who are slothful, in the English translation of the Syriac text the prayer is called "Admonition of the Deacon." See *The Syriac Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 99.

Ǝḥtan – ጸሎተ ዕጣን). The lections consist of selected readings according to the liturgical season from one of the epistles of St. Paul, Catholic (general) epistles,[220] and from the Acts of the Apostles read by the chief deacon, sub-deacon, and the assistant priest respectively. Sections from the *Synaxarium*[221] are not read in *Qəddase* as they are in the Coptic Divine Liturgy. The *Trisagion*; *Məsbak* (ምስባክ);[222] the litany for the gospel and the homily that follows the gospel reading by the celebrant; the dismissal of the catechumens;[223] the three great litanies for the peace of the church, for the church fathers, and for the laity; the Niceo-Constantinopolitan Creed, and the *lavabo*[224] are parts of the liturgy of the Word (*Sərə'atä Qəddase*) which ends with the kiss of peace.[225]

The third part, the liturgy of the faithful, which is also called *Fəre Qəddase*, comes after the kiss of peace. This is the most solemn part of the Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*) in which the consecration of the bread and wine takes place. In accordance with the importance of the day, the celebrant selects one of the 14 Ethiopian official

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[220] The epistles of Saints Peter and John; the epistle of James, and of Jude. And rarely, readings are selected from the Apocalypse (Revelation of St. John) as well.

[221] Derived from the Greek verb *synagien*, to bring together, *Synaxarium* (Gəʿəz: *Sənkəsar* – ስንክሳር) is a collection of the lives of the saints (hagiographies).

[222] Three verses chosen from the Psalms of David in accordance with the importance of the day; they are similar to the *antiphons* in the Byzantine Liturgy. *Məsbak* is alternately sung by the chief deacon and the attending people.

[223] The deacon's announcement: "go you catechumens" is not found in the Coptic liturgy. According to Macomber, this shows that the Ethiopian liturgical order is more ancient than the Coptic. See Macomber, "The Ethiopian Liturgy," 988. However, Macomber's idea does not sound tenable, because despite some later additions, originally the liturgy of the Word (liturgy of the catechumens) of the Ethiopian missal was a translation of the Coptic Liturgy. Hence regarding the dismissal of the catechumens in the Coptic Liturgy one can only presume that the dismissal was taken out of the Coptic missal at later times when there were no more catechumens in the church.

[224] It is the celebrant's ceremonial washing of hands. According to the Ethiopian tradition, at the end of the second part of *Qəddase* the celebrant washes his hands, reciting a cautionary advice to the laity to repent of their sins before partaking of the Holy Communion.

[225] In the early church, the catechumens who were dismissed by the deacon used to leave the church, greeting the other members with the kiss of peace. In modern liturgies, the "kiss of peace" is meant to serve as an expression of making peace between the attendants, who should be reconciled to each other, before they proceed to partake of the Holy Eucharist. This is in consonance with the order of our Lord Jesus Christ in Mt. 5:23-24: "if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

anaphoras, which is commenced by the dialogue[226] between him and the faithful. The anaphora of the Apostles, the principal anaphora of the EOTC, has the following structure.[227]

Following the dialogue, the celebrant reads the preface that begins with: "We thank you O God in your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus." The preface is interrupted by the intercession (diptychs),[228] sung and recited by the chief deacon. What comes next is the prayer of benediction (*Ṣälotä Burake* – ጸሎተ ቡራኬ), which is followed by the second part of the preface. Leading the attending people to the chanting of the *Sanctus*, the celebrant reads a brief description of the heavenly hosts, the innumerable six-winged angels who hallow (praise) God unceasingly. Then the celebrant says: "receive also our hallowing which we utter unto you: Holy, [H]oly, [H]oly, Perfect Lord of hosts," to which the people respond by chanting the *Sanctus*: "Holy, [H]oly, [H]oly, Perfect Lord of hosts, heaven and earth are full of the holiness of thy glory."[229]

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[226] In almost all the dialogues of the Ethiopian anaphoras, when the celebrant says: "The Lord be with you all," the people respond: "And with your spirit." He then says: "Give thanks to our Lord," to which the people respond: "It is right, it is just." Finally when he says: "Lift up your hearts," they respond to him saying, "We have lifted out hearts unto the Lord our God." See the dialogues of the anaphoras in *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud. But in the Ethiopian apocryphal anaphora of St. Mark and that of St. Basil (both are of Coptic origin), the *sursum corda* (Lift up your hearts) and its response come before "Give thanks to our Lord." The dialogues in these two anaphoras are the same as the dialogue found in the anaphora of the Ethiopic Church Ordinances (Ethiopian Church Order) which was expanded and named the anaphora of the Apostles. See "The Anaphora of the Ethiopic Church Ordinaces," *Ancient Liturgies of the East,* eds. Hammond and Brightman, 769. But for an unknown reason the pattern of the dialogue in the Ethiopian anaphora of the Apostles differs from that of the dialogue in the anaphora of the Ethiopian Church Order. Cf. *Ancient Liturgies of the East,* 808; *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 56.

[227] For a comparison between the structures of the Ethiopian anaphoras see Hammerschmidt, *Studies in the Ethiopic Anaphoras,* 53-76.

[228] The place of the diptychs in the Ethiopian anaphoras varies. While in most of the anaphoras the diptychs interrupt the preface, in the anaphora of St. John Son of the Thunder, they come after the preface is completed. In the anaphora of Gregory of Nyssa the diptychs come shortly after the institution narrative. The Ethiopian anaphora of St. Basil, which is a translation of the Coptic liturgy of St. Basil, has both the standard diptychs of the local Ethiopian anaphoras and the longer diptychs of the Coptic liturgy. Both diptychs are located after the Epiclesis. See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 97,167-8, 178-9.

[229] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 58-59.

After the Sanctus, the celebrant briefly narrates the salvation history,[230] to be immediately followed by the institution narrative. While reading the institution narrative, the celebrant elevates the eucharistic bread, whereas the assistant priest takes the wrappings off the paten in response to the request of the chief deacon: "priests raise up your hands."[231] At this time, the people profess their belief saying, "….we believe, we believe that this is truly your body …we believe, we believe that this is truly your blood,"[232] and this is followed by the *anamnesis*. Then the celebrant recites the *epiclesis* for the transformation of the eucharistic elements by the work of the Holy Spirit. After the epiclesis, the celebrant consigns the body with the blood – an act that leads to the fraction of the consecrated host (*Sərə'atä Fätəto* – ሥርዓተ ፈትዎ), which is accompanied by the prayer of fraction (*Ṣälotä Fätəto* – ጸሎተ ፈትዎ). In response to the injunction of the chief deacon: "pray," the people recite the Lord's Prayer, which precedes the embolism[233] and doxology. Here it should be noted that the laity actively participate in the Ethiopian *Qəddase*, having frequent responses to the prayers, instructions, and hymns of the priests and deacons.

What comes following the doxology is the chant known as *Śärawitä Mäla'əktihu* (The Army of His Angles), alternately sung between the deacons and the people. After the chant, the deacon orders the people to prostrate themselves, and then the celebrant recites the Absolution or Prayer of Penitence (*Ṣälotä Nəsəḥa* – ጸሎተ ንስሐ). With his

[230] In some Ethiopian anaphoras, such as the anaphora of the 318 Orthodox Fathers, Epiphanius' and John Chrysostoms' the salvation history is preceded by beautiful creation narratives. In the third chapter of this thesis, I will show the significant place given to creation in the Ethiopian liturgy.
[231] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 59.
[232] Ibid, 60.
[233] Literally, "embolism" means "insertion." It is an expansion of the two last clauses of the Lord's Prayer, said by the celebrant in the Divine Liturgy. The embolism in the Ethiopian Liturgy ends with a doxology: "to You with Him and with the Holy Spirit be glory and dominion, both now and ever and unto the ages of ages, Amen." *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 62. See also Jose L. Bandres, "The Ethiopian Anaphora of the Apostles: Historical Considerations," *Proche Orient Chrétien*, 36/1-2 (1986) 11.

proclamation: "Holy for the Holies," the celebrant signifies that the Holy Eucharist is for the sanctified members of the church. To this the people respond, expressing their trinitarian belief: "one is the Holy Father, one is the Holy Son, and one is the Holy Spirit."[234]

Shortly before the distribution of the Holy Communion, there is a grand invocation: "O Christ have mercy on us"[235] (*Ǝgəziʾo Mäḥaränä Krəstos* – እግዚኦ መሐረነ ክርስቶስ), repeated 41 times alternating between the celebrant and the people. Then the celebrant proclaims his belief in the Holy Eucharist as the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The officiating clergy take the holy mysteries in the sanctuary whereas the people partake of them in the second part of the church, known as *Qəddəst*. According to the Ethiopian tradition, the eucharistic elements are separately administered without intinction.[236]

The post-communion consists of short thanksgiving hymns, sung by the chief deacon, and the prayer, Pilot of the Soul (*Ḥädafe Näfəs* – ሐዳፌ ነፍስ), recited by the celebrant in praise to God the Father of Jesus Christ for granting us participation in the holy mysteries. Returning back to the sanctuary the celebrant performs ablution, that is, the washing of the paten and chalice. Following the benediction given by the celebrant, the deacon dismisses the congregation, saying: "go in peace." Finally, the celebrant confers blessings on each of the attendees by placing his crossed-hands on their foreheads and uttering the biblical words of blessing: "May the Lord bless you and shine His face

[234] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 65.
[235] Ibid.
[236] From the Latin *Intingo* (I dip in). In some liturgical traditions, intinction is the action of dipping the bread into the wine so that the two can be administered jointly.

upon you" (Numbers 6:24-25). The celebration of *Qəddase* lasts for 2-2½ hours, depending on the length of the anaphora chosen.[237]

III. Administration of the Sacraments

Besides the sacrament of Holy Eucharist (*Qəddus Q^{W}ərban* – ቅዱስ ቍርባን), which is celebrated in *Qəddase*, the EOTC administers the sacraments of Baptism (*Təmqat* – ጥምቀት), Confirmation (*Meron* – ሜሮን), Holy Orders (*Kəhnät* – ክህነት), Matrimony (*Täkəlil* – ተክሊል), Repentance (*Nəsəḥa* – ንስሐ), and Unction or Anointing of the Sick (*Qändil* – ቀንዲል). Collectively, these are called *Məśṭiratä Betäkərəstyan* – ምሥጢራተ ቤተክርስቲያን (Mysteries of the Church). The sacramentary for baptism, *Mäṣəḥafä Kərəstəna* – መጽሐፈ ክርስትና (Book of Christening/Baptism), is derived from the Ethiopian Church Order that contains the Apostolic Tradition.[238] Also while those who are baptized in the EOTC are mostly infants,[239] the sacramentary has various prayers that beseech for the removal of the remains of idol worship and all the works of Satan from the hearts of the candidates for baptism.[240] This shows that the prayers were originally prepared for adult catechumens. Besides the reference to catechumens,[241] the antiquity of the Ethiopic Book of Baptism is reflected in the rubric it contains to "give milk without any mixture"[242] to the newly baptized ones.

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[237] The difference of length in the Ethiopian anaphoras is striking. The shortest is the anaphora of the Apostle, followed by the anaphora of Dioscorus, the second shortest. Among the long anaphoras we find the anaphora of St. Mary, of the 318 Nicene Fathers, of St. Athanasius, and that of St. Epiphanius.

[238] See page 50, footnote no. 204 above.

[239] Based on the Jewish purification law that orders a woman to go to the temple on the 40th day after giving birth to a baby boy, and on the 80th day if she gave birth to a baby girl (Lev. 12:1-6), in the EOTC there is a tradition of baptizing baby boys on the 40th day of their births and the girls on the 80th. Also there is a tradition of assigning godparents to the newly baptized babies. The godparents are supposed to offer spiritual guidance to their children.

[240] See *Mäṣəḥafä Kərəstəna* [Book of Baptism] trans. G/Ammanuel and Gudie, 107, 109, 114.

[241] Ibid, 110.

[242] Ibid, 147.

The baptismal liturgy according to the EOTC tradition begins with the reading of various prayers from the Book of Baptism over the water of the baptismal basin and on the candidate as well. Also there are prayers recited on the Holy Chrism with which the baptisee is anointed.[243] The main part of the baptismal liturgy is the liturgy of the Word, comprising the prayer of thanksgiving;[244] lections (Titus 3:1-15, I Jn. 5:5-12, Acts 8:26-40, Jn. 3:1-16); *Trisagion*; litanies of the church, the fathers, and of the congregation; and the creed.[245] As soon as the candidate has been baptized, the priest anoints the various parts of the baptisee's body (eyes, nose, mouth, chest, palms, knees, etc) saying: "I anoint you with the oil of Myron which is the oil of the Holy Spirit…I anoint you with the Myron which is the guarantee of the Kingdom of Heaven…I anoint you with holy anointing of God the Messiah, and stamp you with the seal that cannot be broken."[246] The baptismal liturgy is followed by the celebration of the eucharistic liturgy (*Qəddase*).

The Ethiopian Book of Matrimony (*Mäṣəḥafä Täkəlil* – መጽሐፈ ተክሊል) has a special prayer and lections for an engagement service.[247] After the priest has read an advisory lection, the couple exchange vows of commitment. Following this, the lections (I Cor. 1:1-10, I Jn. 4: 18-20, Acts. 21:12-15, Jn. 1:1-17) will be read. Then, having recited the prayer of the ring (*Ṣälotä Ḫəlqät* – ጸሎተ ኀልቀት),[248] the priest blesses the rings.[249] When the priest officiates the sacrament of matrimony for the bride and the groom on their wedding day, he blesses their wedding garments, the oil of the Chrism,

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[243] Ibid, 109.
[244] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 22.
[245] *Mäṣəḥafä Kərəstəna* [Book of Baptism], trans. G/Ammanuel and Gudie, 124-128.
[246] Ibid, 142.
[247] *Mäṣəḥafä Täkəlil* [Book of Matrimony] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 2001) 78.
[248] Ibid, 90.
[249] Currently, as engagement services do not often take place at Ethiopian Churches, rings are blessed during the matrimonial service.

and the crowns, reciting prayers for their unity and joyful life.[250] The prayers of blessing are followed by the liturgy of the Word: prayer of thanksgiving, lections (Eph. 5:22-33, I Pet. 3:1-8, Acts. 15:22-30, Mt. 19:1-10); and litanies of the church, the fathers of the church, and of the congregation. Finally the couple will attend *Qəddase,* and partake of the Holy Communion.

The sacraments of Repentance and Unction or Anointing of the sick are administered privately. The priest listens to the confessions of the repentant and then encourages them to return to the Lord wholeheartedly. If the repentant have committed any mortal sin, the priest instructs them to pass some time in penance, asking for God's mercy. At the end of the penance, the repentant will be allowed to take Holy Communion. The sacrament of Unction is administered by lighting candles and by anointing the body of the sick (Js. 5: 14). More than one cleric can participate in the administration of this sacrament.

Though in rare cases bishops confer the order of the diaconate and priesthood privately at their houses, in most cases these clerical ordinations take place at church. Having recited prayers over the candidate/s, the ordaining bishop announces that he has ordained them as deacons or priests. Episcopal ordinations are preceded by vespers on the eve of the day of ordination. Then the candidates are consecrated within the service of *Qəddase* at the place where the Liturgy of the Word comes to an end. The patriarch and the other co-ordaining archbishops lay their hands on the episcopal candidates, saying: "We lay our hands on this chosen servant of God in the name of the Father, the Son, and

[250] *Mäṣəḥafä Täkəlil* [Book of Matrimony] 102, nos. 116-128.

the Holy Spirit."[251] Following this, the patriarch announces the chosen episcopal names of the candidates. Like all the other sacraments, the sacrament of Holy Orders is sealed and completed by the candidates' partaking of Holy Communion.

IV. The Liturgy of Hours

The Ethiopian Liturgy of Hours can be divided into two main parts: *Sä'atat* (*Horologium*) and Divine Offices (Cathedral Services).[252] The former is a monastic office usually prayed by monks and clerics, whereas the latter consists of complex offices, such as vigils (*Wazema* – ዋዜማ), cantillation (*Maḥälet* – ማሕሌት), Sunday nocturns (*Mäwäddəs* – መወድስ), and office of the Lent (*Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* – ጾመ ድጓ) chanted by the *Däbətära* – ደብተራ (professional cantors). Like *Qəddase,* the *Horologium* and the Divine Offices are sung using the three modes of chanting: *Gə'əz* (ግእዝ), which has accentuated expressions; *Ʒzəl* (ዕዝል), a very delicate and pleasant tune; and *Araray* (አራራይ), a very agreeable mode.[253]

A. *Sä'atat* (Horologium)

Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat – መጽሐፈ ሰዓታት (The Book of Hours) was prepared by *Abba* Giyorgis of *Gasəčča* (1365-1426) in two parts: *Sä'atat Zä-mä'alt* – ሰዓታት ዘመዓልት[254] (*Horologium* of Daylight Hours) and *Sä'atat Zä-lelit* – ሰዓታት ዘሌሊት (Nocturnal *Horologium*). The *Horologium* of *Abba* Giyorgis has replaced the Coptic *Horologium* that had been in use in Ethiopia. As a monastic office, *Sä'atat* was supposed to be prayed

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[251] Kinfe-Gabriel Altaye, *Sərə'atä Betäkərəstyan* [Church Orders] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press 1981) 102.
[252] Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1993) 262.
[253] Tito Lepisa, "The Three Modes and the Signs of the Songs in the Ethiopian Liturgy," *Proceedings of the Third International Conference of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies* (1966) 162.
[254] Worqneh, *Ṭənətawi Yä-Ityoṗəya Təməhrət*, [Ancient Education of Ethiopia] 129.

throughout the day by monks in monasteries.[255] Even though the whole part of *Sä'atat* is still chanted daily in most of the Ethiopian monasteries, in parish churches only the second part is chanted as nocturns and matins during major feasts, Lent, and the fast of the Assumption of St. Mary. Habte-Maryam Worqneh states that the current *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* in use is different from the original *Horologium* of *Abba* Giyorgis, which is found in the manuscript available at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa. Worqneh also asserts that there are many later additions to the *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat,* traditionally ascribed to *Abba* Giyorgis.[256]

The *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani*, a collection of Ethiopic texts, consists of excerpts from the first part of *Abba* Giyorgis' *Horologium* (*Sä'atat Zämä'alt*). The first excerpt has lections for the customary seven hours of the office: *Nägəh* – ነግህ (sunrise hour; prime or matins); *Śäläsətu Sä'at* – ሠለስቱ ሰዓት (terce or third hour);[257] *Sədəstu Sä'at* – ስድስቱ ሰዓት (sext or sixth hour); *Täsə'atu Sä'at* – ተስዐቱ ሰዓት (none or ninth hour); *Aśärtu Wå-kələ'etu Sä'at* – ዐሠርቱ ወክልኤቱ ሰዓት (vespers or Sunset prayers); *Śäläsətu Sä'atä Lelit* – ሠለስቱ ሰዓተ ሌሊት (compline or before retiring); and *Mänəfäqä Lelit* – መንፈቀ ሌሊት (midnight).[258]

The second and third excerpts in the *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani* enumerate the prayers and the lections of the 12 daytime hours. According to the second excerpt, which is *Sä'atat of the Psalter*,[259] the 150 Psalms of David are prayed in 5 equal parts (each

[255] The monks take turns to chant the *Sä'atat* [*Horologium*] prepared for the 24 hours of the day. Portions of the first parts of the *Sä'atat*, enumerated in *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani* have a quote from the Ethiopic Didascalia which states that bishops should encourage the laity to come to church during day and night. Hence the participation of the laity in this day-long service was expected. See *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani et Borgiani,* eds. Sylvain Grébaut and Evgenivs Tisserant (Vatican: Bibliotheca Vaticana, 1935) 4.
[256] Worqneh, *Ṭənətawi Yä-Ityoṗəya Təməhrət* [Ancient Education of Ethiopia] 130.
[257] The Ethiopian hour begins at sunrise; so the "third hour" in this sentence means 9:00 A.M.
[258] *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani*, eds. Grébaut and Tisserant, 2-5.
[259] Taft, *The Liturgy of Hours*, 270

consisting of 30 psalms). The Psalms are accompanied by the reading of various lections from both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.[260] In the final excerpt of the *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani*, we find lections and various prayers for each of the 12 daylight hours.[261] For example, the vespers (*Ṣälot Bä'aśärtu Wå-kələ'etu Sä'at* – ጸሎት በዐሠርቱ ወክልኤቱ ሰዓት) comprises: Prayer of St. Ephream; *Lucernarium* from the Apostolic Tradition;[262] three vesperal prayers; Lessons: Zech. 14: 5-9, Eph. 2: 19-22, Jas. 4: 7-12; Acts 10: 34-38, Lk. 23: 50-56; Prayer of Imposition of Hands; Creed with anathemas, and Final Prayer.[263]

The *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* of *Abba* Giyorgis, which is in use in most of the churches in Ethiopia, comprises nocturnes and matins. The service of *Sä'atat* usually begins at midnight and ends with matins at sunrise. The nocturns consists of interesting contemplations on God's omnipotence, benevolence, and divine providence.[264] There are also various litanies, orations, canticles, and intercessions followed by hymns chanted in honour of the saints. The daily lections from the Pauline and Catholic epistles, Acts of the Apostles, and the Gospels are preceded and followed by opening prayers and concluding intercessions.[265] As Robert Taft interestingly comments, thus, "the Ethiopians can lay claim to having transformed the hours into a Liturgy of the Word centered on Scripture lections a century before Luther."[266] The matins of the *Sä'atat* comprises the intercessory prayer *Mäḥärää Ab* – መሐረነ አብ (O God the Father have mercy on us) and other litanies

[260] See *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani,* eds. Grébaut and Tisserant, 45-48.
[261] Ibid, 85-105.
[262] Taft, *The Liturgy of Hours,* 271.
[263] See *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani*, eds. Grébaut and Tisserant, 101-105.
[264] For example see the sections: *Yətbaräk Ǝgəzi'abḥer* – ይትባረክ እግዚአብሔር [May God be Praised/Blessed]; *Gənäyu Lä-Ǝgəzi'abḥer* – ግነዩ ለእግዚአብሔር [Praise God]*; Nəsebḥo Lä-Ǝgəzi'abḥer* – ንሴብሖ ለእግዚአብሔር [Let us thank God] in *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 3, 5, 20.
[265] See *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 30-87.
[266] Taft, *The Liturgy of Hours*, 269.

for the saints.[267] Besides, on ordinary days, matins consists of prayers from the *Mäṣəḥafä Kidan* – መጽሐፈ ኪዳን (Testament of the Lord)[268] and daily litanies (*Liṭon Zä-nägəh Zä-säbəʿatu Ǝlätat* – ሊጦን ዘነግህ ዘሰብዐቱ ዕለታት),[269] whereas vespers include: the *Adəḫnänä Ḥzəbäkä* – አድኅነነ ሕዝበከ ([O God] save your people) from St. Yared's hymnary,[270] vesperal litany (*Liṭon Zä-śärək* – ሊጦን ዘሠርክ),[271] *Wəddase Maryam* – ውዳሴ ማርያም (*Theotokia*), and short prayers from the *Mäṣəḥafä Kidan* (Testament of the Lord).[272]

B. The Divine Offices (Cathedral Offices)[273]

The main hours of the Ethiopian Divine Offices are vespers, celebrated as vigils on feast days (*Wazema* – ዋዜማ); festive nocturns (cantillation or *Maḥəlet* – ማሕሌት); and daily, festive, and Sunday matins (*Səbəḥatä Nägəh Zä-zäwätər, Zä-bäʿalat, Zä-sänbät* – ስብሐተ ነግህ ዘዘወትር፤ ዘበዓላት፤ ዘሰንበት).[274] During Lent, there is a special office of the prime, third, sixth, and ninth hours known as *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* – ጾመ ድጓ (Fasting antiphonary).[275]

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[267] *Mäṣəḥafä Seʾatat Wa-Baḥra Hassab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 175-178.
[268] See the "Morning Prayer of the Covenant," *Ethiopian Liturgy,* trans. Daoud, 249-251.
[269] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [Book of Liturgy] 200.
[270] See "Wazema Məʿəraf," *Məʿəraf* [Hymnary] 35.
[271] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [Book of Liturgy] 204.
[272] See the "Evening Prayer of the Covenant," *Ethiopian Liturgy,* trans. Daoud, 251-252.
[273] For details on the Ethiopian Divine Offices, see Habtemichael Kidane, "L'ufficio Divino Della Chiesa Etiopica: Studio storico-critico con particolare riferimento alle ore cattedrali," *Orientalia Christiana Analecta,* Vol. 257. Rome: Pontifico Istituto Orientale, 1998.
[274] Habtemichael Kidane considers these matins as part of the daily offices that comprise the following: daily and festive offices, known as *Mäḫatəw* – መዕትው (*lucernarium*); the little hours of the Lent; *Kəśätät Aryam* (ክሥተት አርያም), a special office for the feasts of the saints; and *məḥlla* (ምሕላ), stational office celebrated ten times during the year. See Habtemichael Kidane, "Ethiopian (or Gəʿəz) Worship," *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, ed. Paul Bradshaw (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002) 171.
[275] For details on *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* (ጾመ ድጓ), see Bernard Velat, "Ṣoma Deggua," *Patrologia Orientalis*, 32 (1907). Also see Velat's study "Études sur le Me'erāf" on *Məʿəraf* (ምዕራፍ), St. Yared's hymanry which consists of festive vespers and daily and festive matins, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, 33 (1909). See also Worqneh, *Ṭənətawi Yä-Ityoṗəya Təməhrət* [Ancient Education of Ethiopia] 84-88.

Wazema is a festive celebration that begins in the afternoon of the vigil with the chanting of vespers, and normally lasts for about four to five hours.[276] It begins with a fixed prayer and a chant known as *Mäḫatəw* – መኃትው[277] (*lucernarium*). Then, Psalms 24 (The earth is the Lord's), 93 (The Lord is King; he is robed in majesty), 141 (I call upon you O Lord), 102 (Hear my prayer, O Lord), and 85 (Lord, you have been favourable to your land) are chanted interspersed with *halleluiahs* and various antiphons. Also in *Wazema*, intercessions for rains and the king (sovereign) are sung prior to the vesperal litany *(Liṭon Zä-śärək*) that begins with "O our God who reigns over the Cherubim."[278] Besides, the variable chants and *Qəne* – ቅኔ (poetic hymns) that are sung according to the importance of the day on which the *Wazema* is celebrated, the canticles of Daniel the prophet, the proper antiphons and the *Kidan Zä-śärək* – ኪዳን ዘሠርክ (Evening Prayer of the Testament) are invariably chanted.[279]

The longest and the most colourful of the Divine Offices is called *Maḥəlet* − ማሕሌት (cantillation or chanting), mostly celebrated throughout the night at the third ambulatory of the church (*Qəne Maḥəlet* – ቅኔ ማሕሌት). It is chanted by the cantors (*Däbətära*) who hold the *Mäq^{W}amya* – መቋሚያ (choir cane), and the chanting is accompanied by the shaking of sistrums and the beating of drums. Commenting on the execution of this office, Taft writes: "The rhythmic sway of the chanting dabtara has been compared to the trees of a forest slowly waving in unison in the breeze. These

[276] Taft, *Liturgy of Hours*, 263.
[277] See *Mə'əraf* [Hymnary] 8.
[278] Ibid, 12.
[279] Ibid, 10-17.

movements are the famous 'liturgical dance' of the Ethiopians that has so fascinated Westerners in our century."[280]

The office of *Maḥəlet* begins with the first two interchangeably sung verses of Ps.102: "Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to you. Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress. Incline your ear to me; answer me speedily in the day when I call." This is followed by the thanksgiving chant, sung in variable modes, to the Creator: "[The God] who created the whole world in one word[281] is thanked and glorified."[282] The second part is called *Nägəś* (ነግሥ), which contains sections of five rhymed stanzas that are sung for the glory of God and the veneration of the saints. Following this, the *Mälkə'– መልክዕ* (effigy or image), a composition made of stanzas that symbolically praise the physical parts and the moral qualities of the saint,[283] is chanted in accordance with the feast. After the chanting of the *Məsbak* (antiphon from the Psalms) and the Gospel reading, the office of *Maḥəlet* is concluded by a melodious chant known as *Miltan* (ምልጣን).[284] The long service of *Maḥəlet* is followed by the eucharistic celebration (*Qəddase*).

Mäwäddəs is a Sunday nocturn[285] that consists of the chanting of various Psalms, such as 39-41, 62, 63, 65, 91, 92, and 117 interspersed with variable antiphons. The Sunday matins (*Səbəḥatä Nägəh Zä-sänbät* – ስብሐተ ነግህ ዘሰንበት) as well are parts of *Mäwäddəs*, and they are a bit longer than the daily matins (*Səbəḥatä Nägəh Zäzäwätər* – ስብሐተ ነግህ ዘዘወትር). Constituents of the Sunday matins are: Sunday litany; the canticle of

[280] Taft, *Liturgy of Hours*, 262.
[281] That means by uttering the divine command: "let there be…" Gen. 1:3, 6, 14.
[282] *Mädəbäl Zä-maḥəlet* [Corpus of Liturgical Chants] (Asmara: Kokäbä Ṣəbaḥ Printing Press, 1988) 2.
[283] Ricci, "Ethiopian Christian Literature," 978.
[284] Worqneh, *Ṭənətawi Yä-Ityoṗəya Təməhrət* [Ancient Education of Ethiopia] 115.
[285] Taft, *Liturgy of Hours*, 264.

Ex. 15:2-14; selections from the canticles of Moses (Deut. 32); canticles of Hannah (I Sam. 2:1-10); canticles of Daniel and that of Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael;[286] the *Magnificat* (Prayer of St. Mary, Lk.1:47-55); and the canticle of Zechariah (Lk. 1:68-79).[287]

The fasting office, *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a,* has variable chants and lessons for each day of the Lent. Also the weeks in the Lent are called after the names of the 8 Sundays of the Lent: *Zäwärädä* – ዘወረደ (The one who came down [from heaven, i.e. the Son of God, Jn. 3:13]); *Qəddəst* – ቅድስት (Holy, Mt. 6:5-15); *Məq^{W}ərab* – ምኵራብ (Synagogue, Mt. 21:12-13); *Mäṣag^{W}ə'* – መፃጉዕ (The paralytic man, Jn. 5:1-16); *Däbrä-Zäyət* – ደብረ ዘይት (Mount Olive); *Gäbər Ḫer* – ገበር ኄር (The good servant, Mt. 25:21); *Niqodimos* – ኒቆዲሞስ (Nicodemus, Jn. 3:1-21); and *Hosa'ənа* – ሆሣዕና (Hosanna: Mt. 21:1-13). The chants in each week are correlated with the biblical story or character after which the week is named, and in this fasting office there are interesting lections on the virtue of fasting.[288] Also included are: canticles of the Old Testament prophets, hymns on God's transcendence, and intercessory prayers.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided glimpses into the Ethiopian Liturgy. The origin of the Ethiopian liturgical rite and its subsequent developments have been briefly studied. An attempt was also made to highlight the characteristic features of the various sacramental rituals and offices of the Ethiopian Liturgy. Even though the Ethiopian Liturgy was

[286] These canticles are parts of the Old Testament deuterocanonical books.
[287] *Mə'əraf* [Hymnary] 115-120; Worqneh, *Ṭənətawi Yä-Ityoṗəya Təməhrət* [Ancient Education of Ethiopia] 69.
[288] For example see the homiliary chant in *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* [Fasting Hymnary] 9.

originally influenced by both the Alexandrian and Syrian liturgical rites, it has grown to be an independent rite as a result of the creative works of the Ethiopian Church fathers. Foreign liturgical elements were made to conform with the Ethiopian tradition so that this process of inculturation has brought a peculiar liturgical tradition. Moreover, while the theological controversies of the 15th century resulted in the composition of indigenous anaphoras by the rival groups, additional hymnaries were also composed at later times. The next chapter will discuss various themes of creation theology in light of these liturgical texts.

CHAPTER 2

TOWARD THE THEOLOGY OF CREATION IN THE ETHIOPIAN LITURGY

The theology of creation is one of the major doctrines that can be drawn upon the biblico-liturgical tradition of the EOTC. Besides Scripture, the Pseudo-Clementine literature,[289] the book of *Aksimaros* (አክሲማሮስ),[290] and *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* – መጽሐፈ ሥነ ፍጥረት [Book of the Beauty of Creation][291] are the main sources on which the

[289]In the early church there were 8 writings circulated under the name of Clement, known to modern scholars as the Octateuch of Clement: I Clement, II Epistle of Clement, Apostolic Constitutions, 2 Epistles to Virgins, Clementine Homilies, Clementine Recognitions, Epitomes, and the Apocalypse of Clement or the Apocalypse of Peter. See R. W. Cowley, "The Identification of the Ethiopian Octateuch of Clement, and its Relationship to the Other Christian Literature," *Ostkirchliche Studien,* 27 (1978) 37. Though all these writings are not known in the EOTC, there are various Pseudo-Clementine writings accepted by the church, such as *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos* – መጽሐፈ ቀሌምንጦስ [The Book of Clement], *Ṭomarä Ṗeṭros Ḫabä Qälemənṭos* – ጦማረ ጴጥሮስ ኀበ ቀሌምንጦስ [the Epistle of Peter to Clement], and *Bä'əntä K^{W}ənäne Ḫaṭə'an* – በእንተ ኵነኔ ኃጥአን [The Mystery of the Judgment of Sinners]. *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos* [The Book of Clement] is part of the EOTC's New Testament Canon, and the book deals with creation, the fall, and various ecclesiastical regulations. See Sylvain Grébaut, "Littérature Éthiopiénne Pseudo-Clémentine," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, 12 (1907) 139-151, 380-392; 13 (1908) 166-180, 314-320; 15 (1910) 198-214, 307-323, 425-433. See also *Il Qalēmentos Etiopico*, ed. Alessandro Bausi (Napoli: Studi Africanistici, 1992).

[290] *Aksimaros* is a corrupt form of *Hexaemeron*, which is derived from two Greek words: *exi* (six) and *imera* (day). Like the other hexaemeral literature, the book of *Aksimaros* deals with the priestly biblical account (Gen. 1:1-2:4a) of the six days of creation in great detail. It is not, however, as theologically rich as St. Basil's *Hexaemeron* (a set of sermons on the six days of creation). Though the authenticity is not confirmed, the authorship of *Aksimaros* is traditionally attributed to St. Epiphanius of Cyprus. The Ethiopic text of *Aksimaros* is a translation of the Arabic *Hexaemeron* of Pseudo-Epiphanius. See E. Trumpp's study: "Das Hexaëmeron des Pseudo-Epiphanius: Aethiopischer Text verflichen mit dem arabischen Originaltext und deutscher Übersetzung." *Abhandlungen der Königlichen bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften philosophisch–philologischen Classe*, 16/2 (1882) 169-25. See also Roger W. Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation: A Study in Exegetical Tradition and Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 123-124; August Haffner, "Das Hexaëmeros des Pseudo-Epiphanius," *Oriens Christianus: Halbjahrshefte für die Kunde des Christlichen Oreints*, ed. A. Baumstark (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1923) 91-145.

[291] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] is both hexaemeral and exegetical in nature. While this book refers to *Aksimaros* and other apocryphal sources, the various Gəʿəz and Amharic versions that are simply entitled *Śənä Fəṭərät* – ሥነ ፍጥረት [Beauty of Creation] mainly depend on another hexaemeral work known as *Ṭəntä Haymanot* – ጥንተ ሃይማኖት [The Root of Faith]. Cowley presumes that the *Ṭəntä Haymanot* probably was a translation of an unidentified Arabic source. See Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 124.

Ethiopian fathers' teaching about creation is based. Most of the Ethiopian anaphoras and other liturgical books, such as *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* – መጽሐፈ ሰዓታት (Horologium), *Dəgg^{W}a* – ድጓ (Antiphonary for the Liturgical Year), and *Mə'əraf* – ምዕራፍ (Hymnary) consist of cosmological narratives and contemplations on God's beautiful work of creation. Using poetic imagery, these liturgical texts reflect on the Lordship of God over creation. While highlighting the transcendence of God in essence, the texts also signify that the transcendent God is immanent in creation. In doing so, apophatic language is used to acknowledge the unknowability of the divine essence.[292] Moreover, the EOTC anaphoras and the various hymnaries of the Ethiopian Divine Offices demonstrate the transformation of the whole of creation through the Christ event.

In this chapter, while studying the theology of creation in the *lex orandi* of the EOTC, I will begin with the apophatic method of speaking about God as expounded in the church's liturgical texts. This will be presented in terms of the distinction between the relationship of the Persons of the Trinity *ad intra* (immanent Trinity) and their relation to humanity and the rest of creation in the economy of salvation (economic Trinity). In the latter case, the cosmic renewal achieved by the saving act of the triune God will be highlighted. Based on the sacredness of creation and the place given to created matter in

[292] For example see the prefaces of the anaphoras of John, Son of Thunder; the 318 Nicene Fathers; Epiphanius; and John Chrysostom in *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 89, 123-124, 185-189, and 198-200. The prefaces of these anaphoras begin with the negative attributes of God, highlighting the incomprehensibility of the divine essence, and proceed to God's activities that are revealed in creation. Similar apophatic expressions are also found in *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* [Horologium] that addresses God as "incomprehensible, intangible, and ineffable." See *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 20-21.

the Ethiopian liturgy, I will also touch upon the responsibility of the human person for leading creation to its *telos* which is life in communion with God.[293]

Highlighting the liturgical aspects of the Holy Bible (psalms, songs, canticles; the liturgical setting of biblical stories: metaphorical, symbolic, and poetic language), E. H. Van Olst contends that "[i]n terms of both origin and use the Bible can be called a liturgical book."[294] The biblical foundation of the Ethiopian Liturgy is self-evident in the various liturgical texts of the EOTC. The fundamental doctrines that can be explored from these texts (tridology, christology, creation theology, eschatology, mariology, etc.) are wholly based on the teachings of the Scripture, and ample place is given for biblical chants and readings in the celebrations of the various sacraments and Divine Offices of the Ethiopian liturgical tradition.[295] E. Isaac rightly asserts: "[t]he liturgy of the Ethiopian service is largely Biblical in content. This of course is true of all the liturgies of other

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[293] Elizabeth Theokritoff, "Creator and Creation," *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*, eds. Mary Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 66.

[294] E. H. Van Olst, *The Bible and Liturgy*, trans. John Vriend (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991) x-xi.

[295] For instance the daily and Sunday matins (*Səbəḥatä Nägəh Zä-zäwätər Wå-Səbəḥatä Nägəh Zä-sänbät* – ሰብሐተ ነግህ ዘዘወትር ወሰብሐተ ነግህ ዘሰንበት) comprise a large number of Psalms and canticles such as the Red Sea Song (Exodus 15), the Song of Moses (Deut. 32), the Prayer of Hannah (I Sam. 2), the Prayer of Jonah (Jonah 2), the Song of the three Jews [Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael], and the *Magnificat* (Lk. 1:46-55). See Yared, *Mə'əraf* [Hymnary], 39-48, 115-119. Moreover, a close look at the two Ethiopian lectionaries proves the biblical basis of the Ethiopian Liturgy. The lectionary for the daily Eucharistic Liturgy (*Qəddase*) and for the celebration of great feasts with a special liturgical service known as *Maḥəlet* – ማሕሌት [Cantillation] consists of selected biblical readings from the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Catholic and Pauline epistles, and the Apocalypse of John. The lections are read at the daily Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*) and during the celebration of the great feasts of the Ethiopian liturgical year. See *Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe: Kä-amät Ǝsəkä Amät Bä-Qeddase Ǝna Bä-Maḫəlet Bä-Zäwätər Bä-amät Bä'alat Ǝna Bä-Ǝlätä Sänəbät Śərə'atä Ṣälot Lay Läminäbäbu Mənəbabatä Ṣälot Mawəča* [A Lectionary for the Selected Biblical Readings that are Read at the Daily Eucharistic Liturgy and during Cantillation] (Addis Ababa: Täsfa Gäbrä-Səllasse Printing Press, 1991). The other lectionary for the Passion Week, known as *Gəbrä Ḫəmamat* (ግብረ ኀማማት), comprises a large number of biblical readings from both the Old and New Testaments for the first, third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours of the day and night for each day in the Passion Week. See *Gəbrä Ḫəmamat* [Lectionary of the Passion Week] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1998).

Christian churches."[296] Thus, while dealing with the creation theology according to the Ethiopian liturgical tradition, I will also use the commentaries of the Ethiopian doctors on the biblical creation accounts and on the various cosmological themes of the Scripture. Moreover, since the EOTC shares basic doctrinal teachings on creation with the Eastern Orthodox Churches, in this chapter, relevant patristic writings and some works of the modern Orthodox theologians will be consulted.

I. God as a Mystery.

The Christian doctrine of creation is based on the confession of faith in God. Hence, before dealing with the theology of creation according to the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition, there is a need to discuss what the EOTC teaches regarding the attributes of the triune God. The EOTC's teaching about God shares the Eastern Orthodox theological stance that while God always remains transcendent in essence, God is immanent in the divine energies, which are also called "grace," "power," or "uncreated potentiality." [297] This distinction is better understood in light of apophatisicm, the theological method that begins with the denial of the positive attributes to God with the view that it is safer to say what God is not than what God is.[298] In other words, apophaticism is a recognition of the limits of human knowledge in its attempts to describe an infinite mystery whom we call God. This understanding is reflected in *Fəkare Mäläkot* – ፍካሬ መለኮት [Exposition of Divinity], the Ethiopic theological treatise, which states that since the prophets of the Old Testament were not able to comprehend the divine mystery,

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[296] E. Isaac, "An Obscure Component in Ethiopian Church History: An Examination of Various Theories Pertaining to the Problem of the Origin and Nature of Ethiopian Christianity," *Le Muséon: Revue d'études Orientales,* 85 (1972) 230.
[297] John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974) 131. See also James Payton, *Light from the Christian East: An Introduction to the Orthodox Tradition* (Illinois: IVP Academic, 2007) 91.
[298] Payton, *Light from the Christian East,* 77.

God was "revealed to them in a way they could understand as a mother uses simplistic language while communicating with her child."[299]

The "immanent Trinity," also called "eternal Trinity" or "theological Trinity," refers to "how God is in Himself."[300] The Christian God is understood to be "one essence in three hypostases."[301] *Haymanotä Abäw* – ሃይማኖተ አበው [The Faith of the Fathers][302] avers that while the three Persons are one in divinity, each Person is distinct from the other.[303] Elaborating the unity and distinction in the triune God, the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Mary says: "We believe that the Father, who sends, is Father in his nature. We believe that the Son, who is sent, is Son in his nature. We believe that the life-giving Holy Spirit is Holy Spirit in his nature. Three names, but one God."[304] While each of the Persons has a distinct mode of existence, all the three Persons are united in one essence. But, again as the anaphora of St. Mary contends, the trinity and unity of the divine Persons are different from what we can express in human language: "We do not say

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[299] "Fəkare Mäläkot [Exposition of Divinity]," *Scritti Teologici Etiopici,* ed. Cerulli, Vol. I, 37.
[300] John D. Zizioulas, *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics,* ed. Douglas Knight (London: T & T Clark, 2008) 69.
[301] Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 181. John Zizioulas states that the "idea of one essence in three persons is possible for the Trinity, because God is not limited by time and space." See, Zizioulas, *Lectures*, 51.
[302] *Haymanotä Abäw* is a collection of pieces of homilies and theological treatises of the church fathers on Trinity and the Incarnation of the *Logos*. It was compiled by Non-Chalcedonian theologians, and translated from Arabic to Gəʿəz by Mäbaʾa Ṣəyon, son of Ras' Andu, during the reign of Bäʿədä-Maryam (1468-1478). See Ayala Takla-Haymanot, "The Theological Terminology of the Haymanotä Abäw," *Misellanea Aethiopica*, 2 (1986) 226. Modern texts of *Haymanotä Abäw* are bilingual with the Amharic and Gəʿəz translations in divided columns. Aloys Grillmerier states that *Haymanotä Abäw,* also known in Arabic as *Itiraf al-aba* [Confession of the Fathers] or *Fides Patrum* in Latin, was assembled in 1078 and translated from Arabic into Ethiopic in the 16th century. Grillmerier also asserts that most of the patristic texts in the *Haymanotä Abäw* were revised by later theologians. See Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590-604): The Church of Alexandria with Nubia and Ethiopia after 451*, Vol. II, Part IV, trans. O. C. Dean (London: Mowbray, 1996) 337, footnote 1; and page 347, footnote 30.
[303] *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] (Addis Ababa: Tənsaʾe Zä-Gubaʾe Printing Press, 1994) 210, no. 2.
[304] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 109, no. 54.

[t]hree as we say Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but one in three [P]ersons. We do not say [o]ne like Adam, the first creature, but three with one nature."[305]

In the Holy Trinity, the *monarchia* belongs to the Father, because "it is the person of the Father that 'causes' God to exist as Trinity."[306] However the *monarchia* of the Father is only meaningful in the relationship which the Father has with the Son and the Holy Spirit.[307] The Father "begets the Son and spirates the Holy Spirit."[308] But according to the Ethiopian anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers, we cannot fully understand what this relationship really means. For instance, though the Son is begotten from the Father, "it is impossible to say that he begot him at such a time or that he begot him on such and such a day. His birth from the Father is unsearchable because it passes understanding, and his nature is unknown because it is hidden."[309] Also it is beyond human comprehension to perceive how the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. As John Zizioulas puts it, "for the immanent Trinity we cannot say anything definitive about the attributes of the persons."[310]

A. The Apophatic Way

As a theological method, apophaticism attests that God is beyond our comprehension, and thus no human language can express what God is fully. Avoiding the limited notion of describing God in positive predicates such as love, good, life, being, apophatic theology takes us to the level where God remains *unknown*. But this does not mean that the truth of the revelation given by God is denied; rather apophaticism

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[305] Ibid, 111, nos. 68-69.
[306] Zizioulas, *Lectures*, 53.
[307] Ibid.
[308] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Moges Equba-Giyorgis (Addis Ababa: Nigid Printing Press, 1995) 107.
[309] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 124, no. 25.
[310] Zizioulas, *Lectures*, 72.

underlines that this revelation about God is based on human concepts and experience, so that these concepts are inadequate to talk about God.[311] In the divine essence, God remains incomprehensible to our mind, and thus based on such perspective, in the apophatic theological nuance we do not claim to expound God.

As the anonymous writer of the *Areopagitica*, usually referred to as Pseudo-Dionysius,[312] figuratively states, the nature of apophatic theology is like the art of sculpture in which a rock is hewn to be an impressive statue. In the *Areopagite*'s words:

> I pray we could come to this darkness so far above light! If only we lacked sight and knowledge so as to see, so as to know, unseeing and unknowing that which lies beyond all vision and knowledge. For this would be really to see and to know: to praise the Transcendent one in a transcending way, namely through the denial of all beings. We would be like sculptors who set out to carve a statue. They remove every obstacle to the pure view of the hidden image, and simply by this act of clearing aside they show up the beauty which is hidden.[313]

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[311] Payton, *Light from the Christian East,* 74.

[312] Marios Begzos states that Dionysius the *Areopagite* was an Orthodox Christian who accepted Neo-Platonic terminology for apologetic reasons in order to convert some people of his time who were educated in Neo-Platonic philosophy. See Marios Begzos, "Apophaticism in the Theology of the Eastern Church: The Modern Critical Function of a Traditional Theory," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review,* 44/1 (1996) 338. Once this mystical writer was thought to be the convert of St. Paul based on Act. 17: 34: "But some of them joined him (Paul) and became believers including Dionysius the Areopagite." See also Daniel B. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2003) 62. An Ethiopic text, however, supports the old claim that Dionysius was one of the converts of St. Paul. The Ethiopian Lectionary of the Passion Week [*Gəbrä Ḫəmamat*] asserts that prior to his conversion, Dionysius the Areopagite was a knowledgeable person who served as a counsellor to then emperor of Athens. While Jesus was being crucified in C.E. 34, Dionysius wondered why the sun was darkened, and he got a papyrus beside a sea-shore on which it was written: "They crucified the God, *Ḫləmäkənun* (እልመከኑን), who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth." Then Dionysius ordered his disciple Onesimus to write in the Areopagus: "*Ḫləmäkənun,* the unknown, descended from heaven." Fourteen years later (in C.E. 48) when St. Paul was in Athens he found the inscription: "To an unknown god," and preached the "God who made the world and everything in it" to the Athenians (Acts 17:22-28). As stated in Acts. 17:34, Dionysius was one of those who believed in the preaching of St. Paul. The Lectionary further recounts that after his conversion, Dionysius was ordained as the first bishop of Athens by St. Paul. During his episcopate Dionysius translated a number of church ordinances, and he was finally martyred by the non-believers in Athens. See *Gəbrä Ḫəmamat* [Lectionary of the Passion Week] 328-329. In the English version of Ethiopic *Gädlä Ḫawaryat* – ገድለ ሐዋርያት [The Contendings of the Apostles] there is a section entitled "The Epistle of Dionysius the Areopagite to Timothy" in which the writer admires the dedication of St. Paul to his mission and encourages Timothy to follow the footsteps of his teacher Paul. However, E. Budge, the translator of the book, rejects the authenticity of this epistle. See *Gädlä Ḫawaryat: The Contendings of the Apostles Being the Histories of the Lives and Martyrdoms and Deaths of the Twelve Apostles and Evangelists,* trans. E. A. Wallis Budge (London: Oxford University Press, 1901) 51-77.

[313] Pseudo-Dionysius, "Mystical Theology II" *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1987) 138. As Hopko, emphatically put it, "In Orthodox Christian tradition no one is 'more apophatic' than the anonymous author known as Dionysius the Areopagite." See

But this figurative expression does not imply that apophaticism is about mere negation of the attributes of God. It goes beyond ascribing or denying attributes to God. "To speak apophatically of God means to transcend all attributes of God, whether positive or negative."[314] The apophatic thought about God "is beyond assertion and denial;"[315] it is not simply identified with negative theology. Negation is one of the factors of apophatic theology, which is better to be designated as "*theologia superlativa* (transcending theology)."[316] Kallistos Ware contends that, the apophatic way does not simply end in negation or emptiness. According to Ware, "negations are in reality super-affirmations. Destructive in outward form, the apophatic approach is affirmative in its final effects: it helps us to reach out beyond all statements positive or negative, beyond all language and all thought towards an immediate experience of the living God."[317] Indeed, apophaticism is a spiritual journey.

The principal interest in apophaticism is mainly to achieve a mystical union with God, passing through progressive steps. Vladimir Lossky succinctly explains the steps:

> If in seeing God one can know what one sees, then one has not seen God in Himself but something intelligible, something which is inferior to Him. It is by *unknowing (*άγνωσια) that one may know Him who is above every possible object of knowledge. Proceeding by negations one ascends from the inferior degrees of being to the highest, by progressively setting aside all that can be known, in order to draw near to the Unknown in the darkness of absolute ignorance.[318]

To enjoy the mystical union with the Unknown, one needs to begin with the denial of the positive attributes of God or with the purification of one's mind from such limited

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Thomas Hopko, "Apophatic Theology and the Naming of God in Eastern Orthodox Tradition," *Speaking the Christian God: The Holy Trinity and the Challenge of Feminism*, ed. Alvin F. Kimel (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992) 154.

[314]Begzos, "Apophaticism in the Theology of the Eastern Church," 328.

[315]Pseudo-Dionysius, "Mystical Theology V," 141.

[316] Begzos, "Apophaticism in the Theology of the Eastern Church," 329.

[317] Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995) 15.

[318] Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: James Clarke and Co. Ltd., 1957) 25.

concepts of God. The purification of the affirmative concepts is followed by the ideal way of apophasis − knowing by way of negation. In the advanced mystical experience, God is best known as the unknown other. At this level the mystic would be enlightened with the idea that God is to be known, for instance, as incomprehensible, ineffable, unintelligible, and as the one who transcends the created realm. Finally, the mystic ascends to the "darkness of unknowing," which is symbolized by the ascent of Moses to the darkness of Mount Sinai "where God was" (Ex. 20:21).[319] The darkness signifies the abyss of the unknowable nature of the divine being. At this point there is no speech at all but silence that results from the apprehension of the transcendent nature of God.

As apophaticism is one of the theological methods of the Eastern Orthodox tradition, we usually find various apophatic hymns and expressions in Eastern liturgical worship. For instance, the prayer of the first antiphon in the Byzantine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom begins with: "O Lord our God, whose might is ineffable; Whose glory passes all understanding; Whose mercy is infinite; whose love toward mankind is beyond utterance."[320] Apophaticism is manifested in the church's liturgical experience. The correlation of silence with speech, which characterizes apophaticism, is one of the significant features of Christian worship. Though we try to express God in our liturgical language, finally God remains inexpressible so that we end up in silence. The liturgical mystery is closely related to "silence," which is the key word in apophaticism.[321] While cataphatic theology describes God using affirmative terms, by going beyond the limited

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[319] Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 16.
[320] *The Orthodox Liturgy being the Divine Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom, and St. Basil the Great, and the Divine Office of the Presanctified Gifts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982) 37.
[321] Frans Jozef van Beeck, "Apophaticism, Liturgy, and Theology," *Ecumenical Theology in Worship, Doctrine and Life: Essays Presented to Geoffrey Wainwright on His Sixtieth Birthday,* eds. David S. Cunningham, Ralph del Colle, and Lucas Lamadrid (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 33.

scope of cataphaticism and using seemingly paradoxical language, apophatic theology signifies God's otherness.

When the church glorifies God in its liturgy, it acknowledges the limit to comprehend God's attributes. In the Ethiopian liturgy there are various analogies such as fire, sun, the human person, and vine that are used to describe God.[322] The anaphora of St. Mary, analogously explaining the trinity and oneness of the divine Persons says: "The Father is the sun, the Son is the sun, and the Holy Spirit is the sun: but it is one sun of righteousness over all. The Father is fire, the Son is fire, and the Holy Sprit is fire: but it is one fire of life in the highest heaven."[323] Nonetheless, realizing the limit of these analogies, the composer of the anaphora contends:

> It is not right to compare him [God] with earthly fire. Fire has measurement and volume but [regarding] the Deity it cannot be said that it is like this or even seems to be like this. The Godhead has no circle like the sun and moon, nor stature like man, but he is mighty and sits in the highest heaven which neither the thought of man nor the knowledge of angels can reach.[324]

We also find another analogy in the anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers where God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are symbolized by a gate, a door, and a dwelling-place respectively.[325] Each of these analogies, however, is known to be an imperfect

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[322] Additional analogies are found in the Ethiopic book of Clement (*Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos*). In the section, which is claimed to be a revelation of mystery by St. Peter to his disciple Clement, on the day of his ascension to heaven Jesus told various mysteries to Peter. Among other things, Jesus spoke about the omnipresence of the Persons of the Trinity, and analogously explained the attributes of these divine Persons: "The Father is truth and justice, I [Jesus, the Son of God] love and mercy, and the Holy Spirit power and wisdom;….the Father is speech, I the word, and the Holy Sprit life; ...my Father is sun, I the light [of the sun], and the Holy Sprit its heat; my Father is fire, I the flame, and the Holy Sprit its warmth; my Father is water, I its taste, and the Holy Sprit its life; my Father is honour, I wealth, and the Holy Spirit grace;…my Father is awe, I grace, and the Holy Spirit fulfillment." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Yohannes Gabra-Maryam (Addis Ababa: Publisher's name not given, 2008) 85-86.

[323] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 111, nos. 73-74.

[324] Ibid, 109, nos. 47-48.

[325] Ibid, 127, no. 45.

example (*Məsale Zäyäḥäṣəṣ* – ምሳሌ ዘየሐጽጽ),[326] which is to say that all analogies have limits and we use them apophatically.

Apophaticism is exhibited in the Ethiopian liturgy in many ways. Commenting on the apophatic features of the Ethiopian anaphoras, Ernest Horton asserts that the frequent allusions to mystery and unknowability in the anaphoras signify that divine realities often lie beyond the realm of human comprehension. In the anaphoras, "there are lyrical passages of great beauty in which the majesty and splendor of God are painted in words. Tucked in those passages, however, are profound doubts as to the extent to which God can be known fully."[327] We find some of these aspects in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. John Son of Thunder, which provides a balance between acknowledging the unknowablility of God's essence and using some affirmative terms to express God's activities that are revealed through creation. According to the anaphora, God cannot be perceived or understood.[328] No human being can behold God, nor locate the place of that divine mystery. As far as mortals are concerned, God cannot be known, and how God lives is beyond human comprehension. When it comes to the cognitive processes, the divine essence eludes the widest possible search.[329]

The following quote from the anaphora of John demonstrates the unknowability and mystery that surround God's being:

> Lord…none knows thy beginning or end: infinite are thou, nor can any find thee, and none can know thee or see thee. Thou know thyself, thy kingdom is without end, thy power is immutable, thy greatness is infinite... To all thou are unseen, yet all is seen of thee. Thou have no beginning but thou bring all things to their end. Infinite are thee, but for all things thou do set bounds.[330]

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[326] "Mäzəgäbä Haymanot [Treasure of Faith]," *Scritti Teologici Etiopici,* ed. Cerulli, Vol. I, 4.
[327] Ernest Horton, "Major Concepts of the Ethiopian Liturgy," *http://www.glendale.edu/philosophy/ethiopic.htm.* Accessed May 2010.
[328] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 89, no. 5.
[329] Horton, "Major Concepts of the Ethiopian Liturgy."
[330] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 89, nos. 3-6.

The sentence: "to all thou are unseen, yet all is seen of thee" in the above quote is interpreted in the commentary of the anaphora based on the phrase: "all things visible and invisible" in the Nicene Creed. As the literal meaning of the phrase indicates, God is the Creator of all which are visible and invisible; and the Gəʿəz phrase in the translated creed: *Zäyastärəʾi Wå-zäʾiyastärəʾi* (ዘያስተርኢ ወዘኢያስተርኢ) is equivalent to the English: visible and invisible. The Ethiopian doctors apply the phrase to God with the interpretation that God is willingly visible in a way we can understand the divine activities, while in essence God remains invisible.[331] Another commentary defines God as *Rəkub Zäʾiyəträkäb* (ርኩበ ዘኢይትረከበ), which is to say that while God is known through creation, the divine essence remains ineffable.[332] The balance maintained in the apophatic theology regarding the invisible and visible (unknowable and knowable) attributes of God is also reflected in the Tuesday litany [*liṭon* – ሊጦን] that is part of the matins: "O God our Lord while you reveal yourself to us according to your will, you are unknown in your essence."[333]

The reason for God's unknowability and mystery lies on the self-hiddenness of this divine being. God cannot be known, since this divine mystery is concealed from everyone's view, and God exists as a self-contained being.[334] As the anaphora of John Son of Thunder articulates, God's might and eminence are masked in the divine nature: "In thy invisibility thou are farther than those who are far….Thou are inside all, and thou

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[331] See "Qəddase Yoḥannəs Wåldä NägWädəgWad [Liturgy of John, Son of Thunder]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 273.

[332] *Mäṣaḥəfətä Bəluyat Kələʾetu (Zäfəṭərät Wå-Zäṣäʾat)*: *Anədəmta Tərəg*W*ame* [Commentary on the Two Books (Genesis and Exodus) of the Old Testament] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 2007) 4.

[333] See "Liṭon Zä-śälus: Tuesday Litany," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1996) 60.

[334] Horton, "Major Concepts of the Ethiopian Liturgy."

are outside all… Thy greatness is hidden in thee; thy power is hidden in thee. Thou veil thyself with thyself, and hide thyself in thyself."[335] We find similar expression on the hiddenness of God in the Ethiopian anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers: "No one can see him, and no one knows how he lives…no one, thinking deeply, can understand his nature, though he ascends to heaven."[336] Again, the wider contextual reference to the self-hiddenness of God proves enlightening as stated in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Gregory of Nyssa: "He [God] is hidden from the minds of all the angels, none can know his nature and none can count that which he formed with his hand."[337] Even God is a mystery to the angels, who are invisible to humans.

In various Ethiopic anaphoras, the ineffable and transcendent God is referred to as a triune God, one in essence (*baḥrəy* − ባሕርይ) and three in persons (*akalat* − አካላት) and names. The anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers presents a brief theological discourse on the Persons of the Trinity. The discourse on the unknowable and invisible nature of God has the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, saying:

> We have neither first nor last, we have neither right nor left, we have neither firmament nor foundation, we are the firmament and we are the foundation. None can see us and none can know how we live.[338]

These divine attributes are shared by each of the Persons of the Trinity. The triune God is the transcendent God whose existence and nature can neither be searched for nor fully perceived. God, as the same anaphora expounds, is "mighty in the clouds, higher than [the] heaven[s], glorious in all his ways,"[339] and "his divinity is unfathomable."[340]

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[335] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 90, nos. 7- 8.
[336] Ibid, 123 and 124, nos. 14 and 21.
[337] Ibid, 174, no. 11.
[338] Ibid, 126, nos. 43-44.
[339] Ibid, 123, no. 13.
[340] Ibid, 174, no. 10.

B. The Essence-Energies Distinction

Central to the apophatic theological method is the concept that "we cannot know God outside of the economy in which He reveals Himself."[341] While the essence and the intra-trinitarian relationship of the Persons of the triune God (immanent Trinity) are beyond our comprehension, that same God is revealed to us in the divine energies through which communication with God is possible. Thus as the Apostolic Creed[342] in the Ethiopian Missal states, the triune God "is not entirely unknowable, for He is known through creation."[343] The triune God's communication with the created beings is often described in terms of economic Trinity. The energies or the "life, power, and glory of God"[344] are understood to be "no less God than his essence."[345] This means that, the grace, mercy, and power of God given to humans and the rest of creatures are not mere effects, but "God himself, in his energies."[346] God is known and communicable through the uncreated energies, and the harmony of the created universe presupposes "the direct and energetic presence of God in the world."[347] In other words, this world is the result of

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[341]Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God* (London: Mowbrays, 1974) 15.

[342] There are two creeds in the Ethiopic Book of Liturgy: The Niceo-Constantinopolitan Creed and the Apostolic Creed. The latter is recited when one of the following four anaphoras: the anaphora of the Apostles, the Lord's, St. Mary's, and that of John Son of Thunder is chosen for the Divine Liturgy among the 14 official anaphoras. During the celebration of the rest anaphoras, the ecumenical creed is recited. The Apostolic Creed of the Ethiopian Missal, which is known as *Amäkənyo Zä-ḥawaryat* (አመክንዮ ዘሐዋርያት), is derived from the sixth book of the Apostolic Constitutions, and it is not the same as the Apostolic Creed known in the Western Churches. *Amäkənyo Zä-ḥawaryat* confesses God as the Creator of all, who is both eternal and unsearchable. The creed also has confessions on various theological issues, such as the divinity of Christ, who is referred to as "the Creator of all the hosts, the principalities and the dominions;" the goodness of the creation of God; the purity (sanctity) of marriage; and the resurrection of the dead. See "Amäkənyo Zä-ḥawaryat" *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 103-106. See also *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 51-52, nos. 33-45 and "Book IV: 11," *The Work Claiming to be the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles,* trans. Chase, 139-140.

[343] See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 104, no. 6.

[344] Kallistos Ware, *How are We Saved? The Understanding of Salvation in the Orthodox Tradition,* (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publishing, 1996) 58.

[345] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 91.

[346] Ibid.

[347] Christos Yannaras, "The Distinction Between Essence and Energies and its Importance for Theology," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly,* 19 (1975) 240.

the personal energies of God, a "creation" revealing the Person of the *Logos* and witnessing to the Father through the grace of the Holy Spirit.[348] Hence, in terms of the divine revelation and activities in this world, which bring about our communion with God, we are able to express God in positive terms (cataphatic approach).

Though the essence-energies distinction appears to be paradoxical, the distinction is important to understand God's existence in the divine essence and the presence of God's energies in creation. While "the divine *essence* is God *in his being,* the divine *energies* are God *in his actions*."[349] As John Chryssavgis notes, the paradoxical aspect of God's presence in creation signifies "on the one hand, a sense of affinity or immanence whereby God is recognizable in the beauty of the world; and on the other hand a sense of otherness or transcendence, whereby God is above and beyond anything worldly."[350] By the essence-energies distinction God's transcendence is honoured, whereas the divine intimate immanence in creation is celebrated.[351] The distinction is a fair way of saying that "God exists both in His essence and outside of His essence" and even if no human participation is possible in the divine essence, we are able to share the life of God through the energies. [352] Moreover, the essence-energies distinction, by showing how God differently exists in the divine essence and pervades creation through the energies, combats the idea that the world is identical to God (pantheism).[353]

As the Ethiopian anaphoras demonstrate the basic tenets of apophaticism, they also maintain the essence-energies distinction. In fact, an equivalent Gəʿəz word for "energies" cannot be found. *Ṣäga* (ጸጋ), the Gəʿəz equivalent for grace, does not convey

[348] Ibid, 241.
[349] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 79.
[350] John Chryssavgis, *Beyond the Shattered Image* (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publication, 1999) 71.
[351] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 79.
[352] Lossky, *Mystical Theology,* 73.
[353] Chryssavgis, *Beyond the Shattered Image,* 51.

the same meaning as the Greek word *energia*. However, as the energies of God are the ones that "support and conserve the created order, and have in relation to the world the aim of guiding it towards its perfection,"[354] most of the Ethiopian anaphoras consist of various contemplations on the divine sustenance and conservation that are expressions of the act of God's energies.[355] Moreover, as James Payton purports, though we are not able to contemplate the divine essence, "contemplation of the economy of salvation, the mystery of God and the wonder of divine love" is possible.[356] As an example, Payton mentions that God is addressed twelve times as "Lover of humanity" in the Byzantine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.[357] Similarly, highlighting God's good work in creation and the redemptive act in the economy of salvation, elsewhere in the Ethiopian Liturgy God is addressed as *Gäbare Śänayat* – ገባሬ ሠናያት (Beneficent) and *Mäfəqäre Säbəʿ* – መፍቀሬ ሰብእ (Lover of humanity).[358]

In the prefaces of the Ethiopian anaphoras, the apophatic expressions on the essence of God are immediately followed by creation narratives and contemplations. This uniform structure implicitly denotes the distinction between the unknown essence of God and the divine activities in creation through which God is revealed. The Ethiopian

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[354] Panayiotis Nellas, *Deification in Christ: Orthodox Perspectives on the Nature of the Human Person,* trans. Norman Russell (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1987) 31.

[355] For example, see the poetic expressions on the almighty God's act of creation and on the divine sustenance of the created order in the anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers - *Ethiopian Liturgy,* trans. Daoud, 125-126, nos. 29-30; 33-37 and in the anaphora of Epiphanius - *Ethiopian Liturgy,* trans. Daoud, 187-189, nos. 16-26; 31-35.

[356] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 96.

[357] Ibid. See also footnote no. 9 on page 97.

[358] For example, see the following portions in the *Ṣälotä Akʷätet* – ጸሎተ አኩቴት [Prayer of Thanksgiving]: "We give thanks unto the doer of good things [beneficent] unto us, the merciful God, the Father of our Lord and our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ…we pray and entreat of thy goodness, O lover of man [*sic*], grant us to complete this holy day and all the days of our life in all peace along with thy fear." See *Ethiopian Liturgy,* trans. Daoud, 22-23, nos. 31 and 37. The Liturgy of the Faithful begins with the following prayer: "O Lord our God, who, for thy love to man [*sic*] which is inexpressible, did send thy only-begotten Son to the world to bring back unto thee the lost sheep." See *Ethiopian Liturgy,* trans. Daoud, 48, no. 2.

anaphora of John Chrysostom begins by referring to God the Father as the one who lived before the world was created and whose being is known by none of the created beings.[359] Then the preface enumerates the marvelous creative deeds of the eternal and unknowable God, who among other things was revealed by stretching the heavens, establishing the earth, and ordering light to appear.[360] Implicit in this expression is that the transcendent God is known through creation.

The same structure is followed in the anaphoras of the 318 Nicene Fathers and that of Gregory of Nyssa. In the former anaphora the mighty and eternal God is both expressed as the one whose nature cannot be understood[361] and as the one who was revealed to humans by setting an order on the vast universe.[362] Likewise, the anaphora of Gregory of Nyssa states that the beneficent God is unfathomable in the divine nature. However, God is known to us through the activities, such as binding up "the waters in clouds and [letting] rain go down from their [the clouds'] womb."[363] These expressions demonstrate that every action outside of the divine essence belongs to the energies of God through which "the immanent Trinity manifests itself as the economic Trinity."[364]

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[359] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 198, no. 4.
[360] Ibid, 198-199, nos. 5-9.
[361] Ibid, 124, no. 21.
[362] Ibid, 125, no. 29.
[363] Ibid, 175, no. 23. Similar expressions on God's mighty work of maintaining order in creation are found elsewhere in *Abba* Giyorgis' work, *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣtir* – መጽሐፈ ምሥጢር [Book of Mystery]. For example the reading for the second Sunday of Advent begins with: "In the name of the triune God who is united in essence and worshipped as one God; who lets the sun rise through the windows of heaven and fills the moon with light in accordance with its cycle; who pours the rains from the belly of the clouds when lightning appears and storms roar. Thanks be to Him, who is the Lord of creation." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣtir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 28. The preface of the reading for the feast of Transfiguration as well expresses the triune God as the one who "puts curdled water in the belly of the clouds; sends snow [down to earth]; hastens the fog to run, and scatters it like dust; pours the rains with the sound of thunder and lightning." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣtir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 286.
[364] Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 184.

Even though the transcendent God is revealed through creation, the full revelation of God occurred when the Word (*Logos*) was made flesh. The Ethiopic anaphora of St. John Son of Thunder asserts the revelation of God through the Son who walked on the earth without being moved from the divine glory. The Son of God was with his Father in heaven while doing the salvific deeds on earth.[365] Through his incarnation we knew the divine honour of the Son of God:

> He who sits upon the cherubim abode in a daughter of flesh; the consuming fire put on flesh; the invisible Spirit has been clothed with flesh; he was born from that which was hidden unto that which was open; he who forms infants in the womb became an infant; they wrapped with cloths him who was clothed in light.[366]

Furthermore, the Son, who is consubstantial with God the Father, taught us about his Father: "Thy Son whom you begot told us about thee (God the Father). He who was born of thee preached unto us tidings of thee. He is honorable like thee who begot him." [367]

The anaphora of St. Mary as well illustrates the revelation of God through the incarnation of the *Logos*. Though Christ, the Word of God incarnate, appeared taking the form of a servant, he is of the same divine honour as his Father and the Holy Spirit:

> He is the mighty One whom none can discern by subtle device – but he became humble among us; he is the most high whom none can attain – but among us he took upon him the form of a servant; he is the impalpable fire, but we saw him and felt him and ate and drank with him.[368]

The incarnation revealed to us the divinity, a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29) whom no human being can approach. As the Word of God took our flesh, we were deified and given the privilege to be heirs of the divine honour.

This section has dealt with the essence-energies distinction, based on the distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity. The latter distinction further

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[365] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 92, no. 31.
[366] Ibid, 92, no. 33.
[367] Ibid, 90, no. 9.
[368] Ibid, 113, no. 88.

elucidates how creation is regarded as the work of the common will of the three divine Persons as discussed below.

II. Creation as the Work of the Triune God

Prior to the creation of the whole universe, the Persons of the Trinity eternally existed in their intra-trinitarian communion of love. These Persons, in various Ethiopian doctrinal and liturgical sources, are understood to be consubstantially divine and eternal.[369] According to the sources, the praise or glory of the triune God did not start with the creation of the world; but rather it had been eternally there within the Persons of the Trinity.[370] The introductory part of the brief creation narrative in the Ethiopic text of *Les Miracles de Jésus* [*Täʿammärä Iyyäsus* – ተአምረ ኢየሱስ], a book used in the EOTC for liturgical purposes, says that "before the creation of the world, God was praised by His own praise."[371] This stand echoes the prayer of Jesus to his Father: "So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed" (Jn. 17:5). Though there was no existing creature to thank God prior to the creation of the world, the three divine Persons possessed eternal praise, inseparable from their nature.[372] The Ethiopian anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers states that "Before he [the triune God] created the angels for his worship, his glory was infinite;[373] the glory of

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[369] For example the *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] says: "We know God in the three Persons who are consubstantial in divinity and eternal without change." See *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] 211, no. 10; See also *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 110.

[370] See *Mäṣəḥafä Aksimaros Zä-sədəstu Ǝlätat* [The Book of Aksimaros on the Six Days (of Creation)] ed. Senay Misikir (Bahir Dar: St. George Monastery, 2007) 1.

[371] See "Les Miracles de Jésus: Texte Éthiopien Publié et Traduit," *Patrologia Orientalis,* Vol. 12, ed. Sylvain Grébaut (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Imprimeurs-Éditeurs, 1919) 561.

[372] *Aksimaros*, ed. Misikir, 1.

[373] The Gəʿəz text says: "*Səbḥatihu Itäẓärəʿa* – ስብሐቲሁ ኢተፀርዐ," which literally means "his glory (praise) was not interrupted." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 98, no. 31.

the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit was perfect."[374] Similar expression is found in *Sä'atat* (The Ethiopian Horologium): "Holy, Holy, Holy, God the Lord of hosts, his glory is within himself and his praise from himself."[375] All these liturgical prayers refer to the immanent Trinity prior to its activity in the economy, that is, before the act of the creation of the cosmos.

In the Ethiopic biblico-liturgical literature we read that neither angels nor humans can comprehend the eternal praise of the triune God. The Ethiopic version of the apocalyptic writing, known as the *Ascension of Isaiah*[376] (*Ǝrəgätä Isayəyas* – ዕርገተ ኢሳይያስ) repeatedly avers that there is "a Great Glory" offered to the "Unnamed and Transcendent One by the heavenly angels."[377] The angels who witnessed "the ascension of the Beloved (Christ)," were able to perceive "the glory that was on him" but these angels could not comprehend the heavenly glory while worshipping the triune God.[378] The prophet Isaiah, whom the writer chose to be the patron of the apocalypse, as well was overwhelmed by the heavenly praise which he saw on the various levels of the heavens.[379] The morning prayer (matins) of the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord* as well states that the angels never feel content with their unceasing praise to the Almighty: "though they have been praising God since the creation of the world, they feel as if they

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[374] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 125, no. 31.
[375] *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 118. But this does not mean that the three Divine Persons were praising each other. As they are consubstantial with each other, no one praised or worshipped the other, but each of them equally possessed the divine glory before the creation of the world. See *Aksimaros*, ed. Misikir, 14.
[376] The *Ascension of Isaiah* is a Judeo-Christian apocalypse. According to modern scholars the apocalypse was written by an unknown Christian writer in the second century C.E. and simply attributed to the prophet Isaiah who had a vision of God (Isa. 6). Jonathan Knight states that currently this pseudonymous apocalypse exists only "in a number of later translations, in languages as diverse as Ethiopic and Slavonic." See Jonathan Knight, *The Ascension of Isaiah* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd., 1995) 13.
[377] See for instance 7: 37, 9: 37, and 11: 24 in *Ascensio Isaiae: Aethipice et Latine,* ed. Augusto Dillmann, (Lipsiae: F. A. Brochaus, 1877) 34, 46, 56.
[378] Ibid, 11:32, 58.
[379] Ibid, 46 and 56.

praised God only for a quarter of an hour."[380] Underlining the human interest to join in the angelic praise, the Ethiopian Book of Hours [*Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat*] beseeches God to grant us "unity of faith with the angels and the knowledge of the unbounded glory of God who is eternally blessed."[381] As in the words of St. Paul, in this earthly life "we see in a mirror, dimly" and our knowledge is partial (I Cor. 13:12). After we achieved the communion of saints in heaven, we will have a better understanding of the divine glory.

While nothing can be known about the eternal existence of the Persons of the Trinity or their relationship *ad intra* (immanent Trinity), we can only understand the triune God's action in the world that is *ad extra* (outside of) the divine essence. All action in the immanent Trinity is one and eternal, and this united action has been expressed in different ways in the economic Trinity.[382] Moreover, any action *ad extra* is "the work of the common will in the three *hypostases* (Persons),"[383] and thus as an act *ad extra*, creation is "the common and indivisible act of the three Persons of the Trinity."[384] The Ethiopic text of the *Haymanotä Abäw* agrees with this: "The Father created the whole of creation through his Word and [in] the Holy Spirit whose will is the same as that of the Father and the Son."[385] Creation is a trinitarian act, brought forth by the one and the same will of the three divine Persons.[386]

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[380] "Kidan Zä-Nägəh: Morning Prayer of the Testament," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 31.
[381] See *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* [Book of Hours] 55.
[382] Zizioulas, *Lectures,* 72.
[383] Nikos Matsoukas, "The Economy of the Holy Spirit: The Standpoint of Orthodox Theology," *Ecumenical Review*, 41/3 (1989) 400.
[384] Georges Florovsky, "Creation and Creaturehood," *Creation and Redemption: The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky,* Vol. III (Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Company, 1976) 60.
[385] *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] 84, no. 9.
[386] Among the Ethiopic texts that present creation as the work of the triune God, we find the following in *Mäṣəḥafä Məṣtir* [Book of Mystery]: "In the name of God whose trinity is eternal…,and who created the firmament without pillars; placed the earth on the waters; ….made chariots of winds and orbits for the sun and the moon. Praise is due to Him, the Lord of the lights." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa

The Ethiopian Liturgy as well demonstrates the Orthodox doctrinal stand that creation is the work of the one will of the Trinity. Having enumerated the negative attributes of the Godhead of the Trinity, such as unsearchable, unknowable, the anaphora of St. Mary applies various works of creation to all the three Divine Persons: "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit think. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit speak. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit like."[387] As stated in the commentary of the anaphora, the quote signifies that the three Persons originally thought to create the whole world; and then they said: "Let there be light...let there be a dome….let the waters, the earth bring forth living creatures…" (Gen. 1: 3, 6, 20, and 24). Finally the triune God saw "everything that he made, and indeed, it was good" (Gen. 1:31).[388] In the last verse of the above quote: "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit like," the Gəʿəz verb that Marcus Daoud translated as "like" is "*yəśämäru* – ይሠምሩ" which also means "to allow or to be willing." Thus the verse can also be interpreted as "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have one and the same will in creating the good creation."[389] With one and undivided will the divine Persons of the Trinity thought about the creation of this world, and created the whole cosmos accordingly. In all of this, one must note that the context for speaking about God as "willing" or "thinking" is that of apophatic theology.

Moreover, the expression: "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit counsel; The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit utter the word [*sic*];[390] and The Father, the Son, and

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Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 45. Also in the same book, the triune God is praised as the one: "who hung the firmament with out pillars and established the earth without foundation." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 286.

[387] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 110, no. 58.

[388] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 247.

[389] Ibid.

[390] The Gəʿəz verb used in the original text is *yənäbəbu* (ይነ·በ·)*,* i.e. they "speak."

the Holy Spirit complete" in the same anaphora,[391] refers to the common will of the triune Persons in creating the first human. Their common will was revealed when they said: "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness" (Gen. 1:26) and then made that creature from the earth (*adamah*).[392] All these expressions attest that "in their operations *ad extra*, the three persons of the Godhead always act together."[393] The three divine Persons in their activities *ad extra* act in one and undivided will as stated in the Ethiopian anaphora of Gregory of Nyssa: "There are….three persons [the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] who hold all the world with one counsel, with one authority, and with one unity."[394]

Since the three divine Persons, in their externally directed activities, act jointly in one will, it is possible to address each Person of the Trinity as a Creator. In the preparatory service of the Ethiopian *Qəddase,* while God the Father is addressed as: "O Lord our God and our Creator, who made all through your Word,"[395] there is also a reference to the Son of God as a Creator: "O God, our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ, …who spread out the heavens by thy wisdom, and gave diverse laws to the firmament, to the clouds, and to the heavens."[396] Likewise, the divinity of the Holy Spirit is explicitly stated in the epiclesis of the Ethiopian anaphora of St. James the Brother of the Lord [*Akk^{W}åtetä Q^{W}ərban Zä-Qəddus Ya'əqob ƎḪ^{W}əhu Lä-Ǝgəzi'ənä* – አኰቴተ ቍርባን ዘቅዱስ ያዕቆብ እኁሁ ለእግዚእነ]: "Have mercy on us God the Father, *Pantocrator*, and send to this

[391] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 110, no. 59.
[392] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 247.
[393] Kallistos Ware, "God Hidden and Revealed: The Apophatic Way and the Essence-Energies Distinction," *Eastern Churches Review*, 7/2 (1975) 130.
[394] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 175, no. 25.
[395] Ibid, 9, no. 23.
[396] Ibid, 12, no. 41.

offertory the Holy Spirit who is God, the Creator of life (*Gäbare Ḥəywåt* – ገባሬ ሕይወት), consubstantial with You and with your Son."[397]

According to the Ethiopic cosmological book, entitled *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, the communal aspect of the three divine Persons' work of creation can be illustrated based on Scripture. The book states that the names of the Trinity are apparent in the very first two verses of the priestly creation account (Gen. 1: 1-2). As Scripture calls the Son: the "First One,"[398] the phrase "in the beginning" in Gen. 1:1 alludes to him. The word "God" in Gen. 1:1 refers to the Father, and the "Spirit of God"[399] was explicitly mentioned as hovering above the water.[400] Hence, as the names of the three Persons were mentioned at the beginning of the narrative, the various creatures stated in the rest part of the narrative were presented as the work of the triune God. While God the Father was creating the world through the Word of God, the Holy Spirit was at the same time at

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[397] See "Akk^{W}åtetä Q^{W}ərban Zä-Qəddus Yaʿəqob ƎḪ^{W}əhu Lä-Ǝgəziʾənä [Anaphora of St. James the Brother of the Lord]," *Missale Ethiopicum* (Rome: Vaticano Printing Press, 1945) 110. The *Haymanotä Abäw* as well presents each Person of the Trinity as the Creator of the world. While it refers to God the Father as "the eternal God who created the whole of creation," (112, no. 23) it also affirms the consubstantiality of the Son "with the Father in creating the world" (113, no. 33). The same consubstantiality is also applied to the Holy Spirit: "we find the Holy Spirit wherever the Father and the Son are. And the divine honour of the Father and the Son also belongs to the Holy Spirit, who rules over the whole of creation."[397] See *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] 114, nos. 39-40.

[398] The Gəʿəz word used in the book (*Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*) is *Bäk^{W}ər* (በኩር), which also means "first born," and the word "beginning" in Gen. 1:1 is correlated with Col. 1:15: "He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." See *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth and Other Works of Bahayla Mikael (Zosmimas)*: *The Ethiopic Texts Edited From the Unique Manuscript (Eth. 37. Peiresc) in the Bibliotheque Nationale with English Translation*, trans. E. A. Wallis Budge (London: Oxford University Press, 1935) 16.

[399] In the NKJV, Gen. 1:2 reads: "The Spirit of God was hovering above the waters." But in NRSV, "The Spirit of God" is replaced by "wind from God." Robert Jenson contended that the phrase "wind from God" was an erroneous translation of the original Hebrew phrase: "*ruah Elohim*" which should have been translated as "the Spirit of God." Also Jenson stated that since the role of God's Spirit as the agent of prophecy and all revelation was precise and dominant to the priestly tradition, the priestly writer most likely had "the Spirit of God" in his mind when he used "*ruah Elohim.*" See Robert W. Jenson, "Creation as a Triune Act," *Word and World,* 2/1 (1982) 38. Opting to the translation of the phrase as the "Spirit of God," John Meyendorff wrote that the expression in Gen. 1:2 signified "a primeval maintenance of all things by the Spirit, which made possible the subsequent appearance of a created logical order through the Word of God." See Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 169.

[400] *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 8.

work, perfecting creation.[401] In all this we see a trinitarian connection for the "existence, configuration, and meaning of creation."[402] The triune act of creation was rooted in the Father, and presented as the "economy of the Son and the Spirit."[403] While the Son brought God's desire into existence, the Holy Spirit, "through whom the heavens and the earth were beautified,"[404] perfected it in goodness and beauty. Thus, creation is a result of the communion (*koinonia*) of the Holy Trinity.

A. The Doctrine of *Creatio Ex Nihilo*

As the work of the triune God, the whole of creation had a beginning. God is the only one without a beginning, and thus no created being existed eternally with God. The Ethiopian anaphora of St. John Chrysostom avers that no time can be applied to the eternal and triune God: "Before time and hours, before nights and days, before months and years, before days of the week and the seasons, he [God] was in his place."[405] Time itself began with creation, and "thus the movement, the flux of creation and the position of each of its parts with relation to the others is measured by time and space."[406]

As Dumitru Stăniloae articulates the phrase "in the beginning" (Gen. 1:1) in the biblical creation account has the following powerful meaning:

> When the creative act is produced and creation appears, the expression "in the beginning" indicates the first union of the eternity of God with time. "In the beginning" means both the beginning of God's coming down to meet time and also the beginning of time, which takes its being through the creative power of the God who has thus come down; "in the

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[401] Hans Urs Von Balthasar, "Creation and Trinity," *Communio: International Catholic Review,* 15 (1988) 285.
[402] Ibid, 288.
[403] Michael Prokurat, "Orthodox Perspectives on Creation," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly,* 33/4 (1989) 332.
[404] See the brief creation narrative in *Gəbrä Ḫəmamat* [Lectionary of the Passion Week] 64.
[405] "Anaphora of St. John Chrysostom," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 199, no. 12.
[406] Paul Evdokimov, "Nature," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 18 (1965) 4.

> beginning" is the first moment of the dialogue between the God who has come down to creation and the creation which is beginning along its path through time.[407]

This is a 'beginning' that refers to the infinite existence before time.[408] There was no creature which existed before the creation of time, nor was there a created matter that caused other creatures. Hence, the world was created out of nothing (*ex nihilo*); as usually expressed in the Ethiopian tradition, the world was brought from non-existence into existence (*əm-ḫäbä aləbo ḫäbä bo* – እምኀበ አልቦ ኀበ ቦ).[409]

There are a few biblical references that allude to the Christian doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. In the second book of Maccabees we read about a mother speaking to her son, reflecting her belief in creation out of nothing: "I beg you, my child, to look at the heaven and the earth and see everything that is in them, and recognize that God did not make them out of things that existed" (II Mac. 7: 28). The doctrine is also hinted in Rom 4: 17 which refers to God as the one who calls "into existence the things that do not exist." In addition, Heb. 11: 3 reads: "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible." Underscoring the creation of all the universe out of nothing, Scripture seeks to demonstrate the omnipotence of the Creator whose creating act did not depend on anything. Even the "formless void" in Gen. 1: 2 does not suggest the pre-existence of matter before creation, because that formless matter by itself was the creation of God that appeared in the beginning (at the commencement of time) with the other creatures.

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[407] Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God, Orthodox Dogmatic Theology: The World: Creation and Deification,* Vol. II (Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2005) 10.
[408] Hilarion Alfeyev, *The Mystery of Faith: An Introduction to the Teaching and Spirituality of the Orthodox Church* (London: Longman, 2007) 49.
[409] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 13. See also the introduction to the homiliary of *Retu'a Haymanot* which begins with "In the name of the triune God who … brought the world *əm-ḫäbä aləbo* – እም ኀበ አልቦ [*ex nihilo*]." See *Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library* (Collegeville: MN) Project no. 2375, f. 3a.

Moreover, God could create freely, and thus "God was not constrained in creating by the limitations of pre-existing matter."[410] To speak of creation out of nothing is simply to say that creation is not from something. And when we say creation was from nothing, the "nothing" does not imply the existence of "nothingness" in the form of "a void or vacuum." But it mainly shows that there is no reality at all outside of God.[411]

The Gəʿəz equivalent term for *ex nihilo, əm-ḫäbä aləbo* (from non-existence), indicates that creation was brought "from non-being" so that it did have any prior existence. Reflecting this doctrinal stand, the *Haymanotä Abäw* says: "Let us thank the Holy Trinity [the three divine Persons] as they are the ones who brought the whole creation from non-being."[412] Creation was brought from non-existence into existence (*əm-ḫäbä aləbo ḫäbä bo*),[413] and this belief mainly emphasizes the divine omnipotence in creating the universe out of nothing. A theological treatise, entitled *Ḥämärä Näfəs* − ሐመረ ነፍስ [The Ark of the Soul], asserts that the triune God instantly brought the whole of creation "from void (non-existence) into existence, and from invisibility into being visible."[414] This is to say that by "bringing into existence, God the almighty revealed the world, which was hidden in being unavailable (void)."[415] The reference to hiddenness in the last quote, however, does not imply the pre-existence of creation before it was revealed but rather it highlights God's supreme power in bringing creation, which was non-existent, into existence.

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[410] David Wilkinson, "Creation Accounts in the Old Testament," *Creation and the Abrahamic Faiths,* ed. Neil Spurway (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008) 5.
[411] Jaroslav Z. Skira, "The Ecological Bishop: John Zizioulas' Theology of Creation," *Toronto Journal of Theology,* 19/2 (2003) 202.
[412] See *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] 34, 3. Nikos Matsoukas states that the usual term used in Orthodox patristic theology for the creation of the world is *ek tou me ontos* (from non-being). See Nikos Matsoukas, "The Economy of the Holy Spirit: The Standpoint of Orthodox Theology," *Ecumenical Review*, 41/3 (1989) 399.
[413] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 13.
[414] See "Ḥämärä Näfəs [The Ark of the Soul]" *Scritti Teologici Etiopici,* ed. Cerulli, Vol. I, 155.
[415] See the preface to *Gəbrä Ḫəmamat* [Lectionary of the Passion Week] i.

The doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* entails an ontological distance separating created living things from God.[416] God the Creator is ontologically different from the created order and immanent in creation through the divine energies.[417] The created matter does not have any affinity with the essence of the transcendent God; there is "infinite distance of natures" between God and the creatures.[418] By assigning a beginning to creation, the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* signifies its creatureliness (creaturehood), and rules out the pantheistic concept that considers creation as "an emanation, a pouring out of the Godhead."[419] If one denies the origin of creation with time, this makes creation eternal with God, overlooking the difference between the Creator and creation.

Acknowledging the created status of the world, the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* also combats the erroneous notion that the material world exists independently of God (dualism). For most of the ancient Greek philosophers the world had no beginning, and thus was eternal.[420] Rejecting the thought of the Greek philosophers, the early Fathers of the church argued for the absolute beginning of the world based on the *creatio ex nihilo* formula. The fathers, according to Zizioulas, were mainly interested in indicating that

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[416] Elizabeth Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation: Some Modern Orthodox Insights Concerning the Material World," *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West: Festschrift for Bishop Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia*, eds. John Behr, Andrew Louth, Dimitri Conomos (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003) 222.

[417] In order to express the point of contact of every created being with the Godhead, St. Maximus the Confessor developed the concept of the *logoi* (words or underlying principles) of the created beings. This framework mainly expresses the divine immanence in creation, i.e. God "conceals himself mysteriously in the *logoi* of created beings." For details on this framework, see Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor: The Early Church Fathers* (Routledge: New York, 1999) 55-78; Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 222; Chryssavgis, *Beyond the Shattered Image*, 57.

[418] Georges Florovsky, "Creation and Creaturehood," *Creation and Redemption,* 46.

[419] Alfeyev*, The Mystery of Faith,* 43.

[420] John D. Zizioulas, "Preserving God's Creation: Three Lectures on Theology and Ecology," *King's Theological Review*, 12 (1989) 42.

"nothing at all existed previously to creation, no factor whatsoever apart from God's free will was at work or contributed in any way towards the creation of the world."[421]

The ancient Greek assumption also had a serious theological problem, for it made creation co-eternal with God. However, since "creation has in no sense the quality of necessity" [422] it was the work of God's will, not of the divine nature, and thus creation could not exist without a beginning. God is the only "eternal, the first and the last, who has neither beginning nor end."[423] Underlining the eternal existence of God prior to the act of creation, the preface of the Ethiopian anaphora of St. John Chrysostom states that God "was before the world was created…None was before him, none will be after him…He was before all, before the heavens were stretched out, before the face of the earth appeared, before the mountains arose."[424] The emphasis in this illustration is that there was no created being whatsoever that existed eternally with God.

More specifically, the eternity of each of the divine Persons is articulated in the introduction to the advent homily of *Il Libro del Mistero* [*Mäṣəḥafä Məsṭir* – መጽሐፈ ምሥጢር]. *Abba* Giyorgis, the prolific Ethiopian writer, begins his homily "in the name of God the Father whose eternity is unsearchable, and in the name of the Son who was with the Father prior to the appearance of the beauty of the sun and prior to the gathering together of the waters [Seas, Gen. 1:9-10], and in the name of the Holy Spirit who existed

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[421] Ibid, 43.
[422] Evdokimov, "Nature," 8.
[423] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 32, no. 108.
[424] Ibid, 188, nos. 4-5. Similar illustration is found in the anaphora of St. Dioscorus: "From before the world and ever after, God is in his Trinity; God is in his divinity, and God is in his kingdom. Before the dawn and the morning, before day and night, and before the creation of the angels, God was in his kingdom. Before the heavens were stretched out, before the face of the earth appeared, and before the green plants were produced, God was in his kingdom. Before the sun, the moon, the stars, and before the motion of lights, God was in his kingdom." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 232-233, nos. 3-6.

eternally before the heavens were spread (made) and before the earth was established."[425] Prior to the existence of any created being, the triune God lived eternally; this eternity is ineffable for our human language. John Zizioulas agrees with this thought of eternity. "If the world 'was not', had no existence, what was there?" Zizioulas contends, "God was there. There was nothing other than God." The world is not eternal, because no eternal being could be created.[426]

Creation came into existence as the result of God's choice and free will. God did not create out of necessity;[427] but did so in order that creation may enjoy divine blessings and goodness. The Ethiopic book of *Aksimaros* refers to God as saying: "I wished to create the creatures of the world, not because I had a need."[428] God was not in need of creation, nor was compelled to create. Creation, thus, was the result of divine choice, an act of God's "free will, goodness, wisdom, love and omnipotence."[429] As an act of God's free choice, creation owes its existence to the will of God that is entirely free. Hence the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* combines two major aspects of creation: creation has no necessary existence, and it exists by the will of God, who desired to have communion with creation. The doctrine, as Elizabeth Theokritoff articulates "is less a theory of origins than a doctrine of relationship between the universe and God."[430]

As stated above, the cosmology of the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition is based on the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. Even the daily matins begin with offering

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[425] Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 72.
[426] Zizioulas, *Lectures,* 89.
[427] See the introductory part of the brief creation narrative in the Ethiopic text of *Les Miracles de Jésus* [*Täʿammärä Iyyäsus* – ተአምረ ኢየሱስ] which states that "God did not make the world as the one who had a necessity or as the one who was in need of praise." See "Les Miracles de Jésus," *Patrologia Orientalis,* 12 (1919) 561.
[428] See *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 4.
[429] Prokurat, "Orthodox Perspectives on Creation," 333.
[430] Theokritoff, "Creator and Creation," 63.

thanksgiving to God, who brought creation from non-existence into existence.[431] Moreover, most of the theological treatises of the Ethiopian fathers of the golden period (15th century) are full of profound sense of awe and admiration for God's mighty work of the entire cosmos that was created from nothing.[432] The Ethiopian tradition signifies that creation is a divine act and so no human ingenuity can comprehend it.[433] Nevertheless, while highlighting human limit in fully understanding God's work of creation, the Ethiopic biblico-liturgical texts often contemplate the beauty of creation [*Śənä Fəṭərät* – ሥነ ፍጥረት]. Based on Scripture, which is the root of Ethiopian liturgy, and the wide range of the Ethiopic literary genre (biblical and liturgical commentaries, haexameral writings,

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[431] Interpreting the first sentence of the daily matins: "O Lord, maker of all, invisible God, we stretch out our soul to thee and we offer morning prayer unto thee, the powerful wisdom of all," the commentary on the Ethiopian Book of Liturgy (Missal) states that by saying this we are worshipping the maker of all things and offering thanks to the one "who brought this world from non-existence into existence," and would pass it "from existence into non-existence [from being into non-being.]" See "Kidan Zä-Nägəh (ኪዳን ዘነግህ): Morning Prayer," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 28. For the English translation of *Ṣälotä Kidan* –ጸሎተ ኪዳን [Prayer of the Covenant] see *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 247.

[432] For instance *Abba* Giyorgis begins his homily for the feast of the Pentecost in the name of the triune God "who has brought the world from non-existence (non-being)" [*Aməṣa'e aläm əm-ḫäbä aläbo* – አምጻኤ ዓለም እምኀበ አልቦ]. See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 243. And in most of his other homilies, *Abba* Giyorgis thanks God for the wonderful creation. For example see his homily for Epiphany: "Thanks are due to God, who makes the fog to be discharged over the mountains like smoke and spreads it on the air. He covers the face of the firmament by clouds." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 144. For similar contemplative exposition, see also the introduction to the Good Friday homily in the same book: "Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 319. These homilies are assigned to be read on the great feasts of the liturgical year, and this implies the liturgical setting given to the homilies. Likewise the homilies of *Rətu'a Haymanot* begin with rubrics which state that they are supposed to be read on the great feasts of the Lord such as Nativity, Epiphany, Palm Sunday, Easter, and Transfiguration. See *EMML*, Collegeville: MN, Project No. 2375 and 7028. Though these doctrinal homilies are not currently read while the Divine Liturgy is celebrated in the EOTC, their place is replaced by another doctrinal corpus, *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers], which is read shortly before the faithful partake of the Holy Eucharist.

[433] Signifying the incomprehensible aspect of the divine act of creation, *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] says: "God the Father created the whole of creation through the Word and by the will of the Holy Spirit, and no creature can comprehend this act of creation." See "Aśärtu Wå-kələʿetu Təʿzazat Zä-Qəddus Atnatewos Zätäfänäwa ḫäbä Qʷäsṭänṭinos Wåldä Qʷäsṭänṭinos Nəgus – ዐሠርቱ ወክልኤቱ ትዕዛዛት ዘቅዱስ አትናቴዎስ ዘተፈነዋ ኀበ ቈስጠንጢኖስ ወልዶ ቈስጠንጢኖስ ንጉሥ [The 12 Commands (Doctrinal Statements) of St. Athanasius Sent to Constantius, Son of Emperor Constantine," *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] 84, no. 9.

and homilies), the following section deals with the theological presupposition of these writings on creation.

B. The Ethiopian Creation Narrative and its Theological Presupposition

The creation narrative of the EOTC's Book of Creation [*Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät*] is mainly based on the biblical creation accounts. As reflected in the Book of Creation and other liturgical texts, belief in God as the Creator of the visible and invisible worlds is the object of faith: "you [our Lord and God] created all things, and by your will they existed and were created" (Rev. 4:11). In the biblical creation account, God is presented as the only transcendent source of creation. The divine omnipotence is seen in the Word of God that brought forth creatures, implying that for God to speak is to create: "what he [God] has spoken is immediately accomplished; in a moment what he has thought is fulfilled."[434] That is why Scripture tells us that "All things came into being through him [the Word of God], and without him not one thing came into being" (Jn. 1:3).[435]

The modern doctors of the EOTC, who consider themselves as the inheritors of the tradition of their forefathers, never see any mythical character in the priestly and *yahwist* biblical creation accounts (Gen. 1:1-2:3 and 2:4-25). For them the creation stories in the Bible are genuine narratives that depict the world as originating from a loving and caring God. They do not, however, solely depend on the biblical creation accounts, taking

[434] See "The Anaphora of the Three Hundred," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 125, no. 28.
[435] Interpreting this verse the Ethiopic *Anədəmta Wånəgel* – አንድምታ ወንጌል [Gospel Commentary] says: "the whole of creation was created through the Word; none was created without the existence [*hləwəna* – ህልውና] of the Word." See "Wånəgel Zä-Yoḥannəs (ወንጌል ዘዮሐንስ): Gospel of John," *Wånəgel Qəddus Zä-Ǝgzi'əna Wå-mädəḫaninä Iyyäsus Krəstos Käqädəmo Abbatočča*č*čən Ğäməro Qal Läqal Sinnägär Yämmäṭaw Nəbabu Ǝna Tərəg*^{w}*amew* [The Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: The Commentary that Has Been Told Word by Word Since the Time of our Forefathers] (Addis Ababa: Tasfa Gabra-Sillassie Printing Press, 1993) 4.

them too literally.[436] While their teaching on the origin of the universe and on the days of creation basically agrees with the priestly creation account, their commentary on the account is elaborated based on some apocryphal and pseudopigraphical writings.[437] Commenting on the norm of the Ethiopian fathers' works on creation, Cowley writes: "Ethiopic literature includes both indigenous homilies and translations….The interest of the homilies, including those on creation, are generally those of adding detail to and systematizing the Biblical narratives, and of making moral and doctrinal applications."[438] Most of the translated writings are hexaemeral or homiliary in nature, and borrowing various ideas from these writings, the Ethiopian fathers developed an exegesis of the priestly creation account which demonstrates their theology of creation. Their exegesis

[436] See for example the hermeneutical discussion in the commentary on the Genesis creation account: "Orit Zälədät (Fəṭərät) – ኦሪት ዘልደት (ፍጥረት): Genesis 1" *Bəluyat Anədəmta Tərəg*^{W}*ame* [Old Testament Commentary] 4-39. See also *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 20, 33, 40, 69; Roger Cowley purports that the Ethiopic Commentary on the Pentateuch [*Tərəg*^{W}*ame Orit* – ትርጓሜ ኦሪት] was composed in the 17th century by Məhrka Dəngəl, the disciple of Ǝnbaqom, the renowned Ethiopian scholar. According to Cowley, this commentary is mainly based on *Ibn At-Taiyib's* Arabic commentary on Genesis. See Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation*, 114.

[437] For instance, the *Mäṣəḥafä Kufale* (መጽሐፈ ኩፋሌ), which is the Ethiopic version of the Hebrew book of Jubilees, is considered by Ethiopian scholars as a canonical work that elaborates the precise creation accounts of Genesis. R. H. Charles enumerates the various names of *Mäṣəḥafä Kufale* as "*The Little Genesis, The Apocalypse of Moses, The Testament of Moses, The Book of Adam's Daughters, and The Life of Adam.*" See *The Book of Jubilees or the Little Genesis: Translated from the Editor's Ethiopic Text and Edited with Introduction, Notes, and Indices,* trans. R. H. Charles (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1902) xvii. The other sources on which the Ethiopian creation narratives depend are: *Aksimaros*, the Pseudo-Epiphanius haexameral work; *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos* [Book of Clement]; *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, originally taught by *Abba* Bäḫayla Mikael the Ethiopian and compiled by his disciple Yəsḥaq (Isaac); the Ethiopic *Gädlä Addam Wå-Ḥewan* – ገድለ አዳም ወሔዋን [The Book of Adam and Eve], which according to Cowley contains "the material of the Syriac *Testament of Adam*, the Arabic *Book of the Rolls,* and the Syriac *Cave of Treasures.*" See Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 137. In the introduction to his translation of the Ethiopic *Gädla Addam Wå-Ḥewan* [The Book of Adam and Eve], S. Malan presumes that the book "is probably the work of some pious and orthodox Egyptian of the fifth or sixth century." See *The Book of Adam and Eve, also called the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan, A Book of the Early Eastern Church Translated from the Ethiopic with Notes from the Kufale, Talmud, Midrashim, and other Eastern Works,* trans. S. C. Malan (Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1882) v.

[438] Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation*, 130.

and elaborated creation narratives may sound simple, but they are "ineffable doctrines of truth" as St. Basil said about his *Hexaemeron*.[439]

According to the Ethiopian traditional scholars, the phrase "in the beginning" in the priestly creation account signifies "time" which came into existence with creation. The triune God existed eternally, so that there is neither beginning nor end of God's existence. As stated in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Dioscorus, before our expression of time as "dawn and morning" or "day and night," "God was in his kingdom."[440] Time began with creation, resulting from the separation of day and night that is called by Scripture: "the first day" (Gen. 1:5). The Ethiopian fathers teach that Sunday was the first day of creation. Accordingly, they apply the scriptural designation: "the first day" to Sunday whose equivalent word in the Ethiopic language is *Ǝḥud* (አሐዱ), which literally means the first.[441] Even the Ethiopic commentary on Genesis sounds very audacious in

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[439] Basil of Caesarea, "Hexaemeron," *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Vol. 8, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company 1989) 69.

[440] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 232.

[441] In Gəʿəz *Ǝḥud* – አሐዱ (Aḥadu– አሐዱ) means "one" or "the first," and the naming of the day is based on the biblical creation account as the day when God created the heavens and the earth and separated the light from darkness was "the first day" of creation (Gen. 1:5). The same applies for the rest Ethiopic names of the days of the week. *Sänuy* – ሰኑይ [Monday] means "second," and this refers to "the second day" when God separated the waters above and below the dome (Gen. 1:8). *Śälus* – ሠሉስ [Tuesday], i.e. "the third," indicates the third day when trees and plants were created (Gen. 1:13). *Räbuəʿ* – ረቡዕ [Wednesday], which means "the fourth," refers to the fourth day on which the luminaries were created (Gen. 1:19), whereas *Ḫämus* – ሐሙስ [Thursday] (the fifth) signifies the creation of the aquatic creatures on the fifth day of creation (Gen. 1:23). While *Arəb* – ዓርብ [Friday] does not mean "the sixth" following the series, it implies the completion of the act of creation on the sixth day (Gen. 1:31). The Ethiopic designation for Saturday (*Qädamit Sänbät* – ቀዳሚት ሰንበት), which means "the first Sabbath," denotes that Saturday was the Sabbath that God blessed and rested from the act of creation (Gen. 2:3). It is called "the first Sabbath" because according to the Ethiopian tradition Sunday is also considered as a Sabbath. Focusing on the sixth day's (*Arəb*) etymology that comes from the verb "*Arəbä* = it [the sun] sets" and on its relation with the Jewish *Sabbath,* Getatchew Haile defines it as "'evening, 'sunset,' or as the Bible has it, 'the day of preparation' cf. Mt. 27:62; Mk. 15:42; Lk. 23:54; and Jn. 19:14, 31 and 42." See Getatchew Haile, "The Forty-Nine Hour Sabbath of the Ethiopian Church," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 33/2 (1988) 243. E. Isaac asserts that the Ethiopian day *Arəb* corresponds to the Hebrew word "*erev*" indicating "*Erev Shabbath*," and thus it must have originated "from a Jewish circle." See E. Isaac, "An Obscure Component in Ethiopian Church History," *Le Muséon* 85 (1972) 244. For etymological details on the Ethiopic names of the days of the week see Wolf Leslau, "The Names of the Weekdays in Ethiopic," *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 6 (1961) 62-70.

asserting the date on which the world was created, that is the 29th of the seventh Ethiopian month, *Mägabit* (መጋቢት).[442] This assertion sounds unrealistic since it is impossible to date the creation of the world on which time itself began when God called "the light Day, and the darkness night" (Gen. 1:4).

The Days of Creation[443]

On *Ǝḥud* (the first day), God created *ex nihilo* the four elements (fire, water, wind, and earth) from which all the rest creatures were created. On this same day, God also created the heavens and the angels, and then darkness, which was followed by the creation of light.[444] However, the Ethiopian traditional scholars are divided on the creation of the angels. Some scholars, referring to Ps. 104: 4 "Who makes his angels

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[442] See *Bəluyat Anədəmta Tərəg^{w}ame* [Old Testament Commentary] 4. This date is equivalent to April the 7th in the Gregorian calendar. Again the Ethiopian tradition claims that on this same date the Lord Christ rose from the dead in C.E 34. For example, see Getatchew Haile, *Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Computus] (Avon, MN: Image Makers, 2000) 233. There is a similar attempt of dating creation in some Jewish sources as well though the sources are divided about the date. According to Cowley, while two Jewish commentaries on Genesis: *Midrash haggadol* and *Midrash hahefes* suggest that the world was created on the 25th day of the Jewish month *Elul,* making *Tashri* 1st the date of the creation of Adam, another commentary, i.e. *Yalqut me'am lo'ez* speculates that the first night of creation was the eve of the 23rd day of the Jewish month *Adar* which is equivalent to the Ethiopian month *Mägabit*. See Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 237.

[443]There are varied opinions about the length of the days of creation. *Aksimaros* states that we have to understand the length of each day of creation as clarified by both the Psalmist (Ps. 90: 4-5) and St. Peter (II Pet. 3:8-9): "with the Lord one day is like a thousand years." See *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 53. Conversely, in *The Mysteries of Heaven and Earth* we read that a day in the creation account is "equal to a period of seven years." See *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 14.

[444] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 13-19. The priestly writer of the creation account in Genesis mentioned only the creation of the heavens and the earth on the first day and the divine order for the appearance of light that banished darkness. However, as enumerated in the Ethiopic book of Jubilees, there were some other creatures which the priestly writer did not mention. The book says: "[O]n the first day He (God) created the heavens which are above and the earth and the waters, and all the spirits which serve before Him – the angels of the presence [Gəʿəz: *Mäla'əktä Gäṣə* – መላእክተ ገጽ], and the angels of sanctification [*Mäla'əktä Qəddase* – መላእክተ ቅዳሴ], and the angels [of the spirit of fire and the angels of the spirit of breath] (Gəʿəz: [*Mäla'əktä Mänfäsä Ǝsat Wå-mäla'əktä Mänfäsä Ǝstənfas* – መላእክተ መንፈሰ እሳት ወመላእክተ መንፈሰ እስትንፋስ], of the spirit of the winds and the angels of the spirit of clouds, and of darkness, … and of all the spirits of His creatures which are in the heavens and on the earth, (He created) the abysses and darkness, eventide (and night), and the light, dawn and day, which He has prepared in the knowledge of His heart." See *The Book of Jubilees* (Ch. II: 5-7), trans. Charles, 11-13. For the Gəʿəz *Mäṣəḥafä Kufale* see *Liber Jubilaeorum qui idem a graecis η λεπτή Γένεσις inscribitur versione Graeca dependita nunc nonnisi in Geez lingua conservatus nuper ex Abyssinia in Europam allatus,* ed. Augustus Dillmann (London: Williams and Norgate, 1859).

spirits; his ministers a flaming fire,'' (KJV) say that the angels were created from fire. Conversely others argue that the psalmist's verse does not indicate the creation of the angels from fire. It refers to the attributes of the angels, which means that they have warmth (are powerful) like fire and also they are as invisible as wind. "Since there was no creature that was made from another creature before the second day of creation, all the creatures of the first day were created *ex nihilo*."[445] Moreover, if the angels were created from fire, they would be mortal like the first human who was made from the earth.[446] The latter argument sounds more plausible.

The first seven creatures: the heavens, earth, water, fire, wind, angels, and darkness were created in silence, whereas the eighth one, light, was created in God's verbal order: "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3).[447] While two liturgical sources: the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Epiphanius and a hymn known as *Ṭäbibä Ṭäbiban* (ጠቢበ ጠቢባን)[448] marvel that the Almighty God made light out of darkness, the book of *Aksimaros* wonders why darkness was created before light. The anaphora mentions the act of "making light out of darkness" among the various marvelous deeds of the Creator such as "dividing the clouds and waters, building the earth with boundaries, fencing the seas with doors and wrapping them with mist."[449] One of the various versions of the hymn *Ṭäbibä Ṭäbiban* has a stanza that reads: "I bow down to your [G]odhead, you who

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[445] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 20.
[446] For further detail on this debate see *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 25 and *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 19-20.
[447] *Beauty of the Creation*, trans. Getatchew Haile and Misrak Amare (Manchester: University of Manchester, 1991) 77. We find a parallel to this Ethiopian perspective in St. Basil's Hexaemeron. Commenting on the order of God: "Let there be light," St. Basil writes that the pronouncement was the first word of God that created the nature of light and vanished darkness. See Basil, "Hexaemeron," 63.
[448] *Ṭäbibä Ṭäbiban* literally means 'The wisest of the wise." It is a liturgical hymn so designated to imply the unsearchable wisdom of God. The hymn is rhymed, and in its opening stanzas describes God's activities in creation.
[449] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 187, no. 17-19.

created darkness before you made light."[450] According to *Aksimaros*, the reason for the creation of darkness on the first day was to implicitly indicate the unknowable nature of God.[451] The darkness instigated the angels to search for the origin of their being, which resulted in difference of opinion among themselves, followed by the rebellion of the former angel *Saṭna'el* – ሳጥናኤል (Satanael or Sataniel), also known as Lucifer (Is. 14:12, KJV).[452] In fact, with the appearance of light, the darkness was also meant to divide the day from the night.

Though the priestly writer tells us that the "heavens" were among the creatures of the first day (Gen. 1:1), nothing is mentioned regarding the names or number of these heavens. We find the details of these heavens in the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition. The heavens, as mentioned in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Jacob of Serough, are seven in number: "God has authority, power and name, and there is no name like his under the four foundations [the four elements: earth, water, fire, and wind] and over the seven heavens."[453] The Ethiopic Book of Jubilees alludes to these heavens as the "seven great works" whose creation was witnessed by the angels.[454] In line with this, the Ethiopic *Mäṣəḥafä Kidan* – መጽሐፈ ኪዳን [Testament of the Lord], which is used for matins, alleges that the angelic Sanctus began at the creation of the heavens. When the angels saw God's

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[450] According to Cowley this quote is taken from the version of the *Ṭäbibä Ṭäbiban* edited by E. Cerulli. See E. Cerulli, "I manoscritti etiopici della Chester Beatty Library in Dublino," *Memorie della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei,* serie VIII, Vol XI (1962) fasc. 6 quoted in Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation*, 141. A different version of *Ṭäbibä Ṭäbiban* is found in *Chrestomathia Aethiopica: Edita et Glossario Explanata,* ed. Augusto Dillmann (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1950) 108-131.

[451] *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 14.

[452] Ibid, 22.

[453] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 231, no. 102.

[454] "And thereupon we saw His works, and praised Him, and lauded before him on account of all His works; for seven great works did He create on the first day." See *The Book of Jubilees* (II: 3), trans. Charles, 13. The Ethiopic Book of Clement also mentions these heavens but strangely states that in addition to the seven heavens, whose detail is discussed below, another seven heavens were created on the first day of creation. "The whole of creation is in our [the three divine Persons] palm. When we finished creating the seven heavens, we immediately created verbally another seven [heavens]." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 87.

creation of the bright heavens, they thanked the Creator, singing: "Holy, Holy, Holy, God Lord of Hosts [*Ṣäba'ot* – ጸባኦት] heaven and earth are full of the holiness of Your glory."[455]

According to the Ethiopian hexaemeral tradition, the seven heavens were created between the 2nd and 8th hours of the night of the first day (*Ꞩḥud*).[456] The First heaven, created on the second hour of the night, is called *Mänbära Səbḥat* – መንበረ ስብሐት [The Throne of Praise].[457] This is the highest heaven, the throne of the Almighty God as stated in Is. 66:1: "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool." The second heaven, which was created on the third hour of the night, is known as *Ṣərḥa Aryam* – ጽርሐ አርያም [Heavenly Hall].[458] This heaven is speculated to be the roof of the abode of God, where the Almighty's throne of grace is located, as stated in the Ethiopian anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers: "His throne is compassed by fire and his abode is enveloped by water, and round the roof of his house hang drops of water which do not fall."[459]

The third heaven: *Sämay Wəddud* (ሰማይ ውዱድ), created on the 4th hour of the night,[460] is the throne carried by the many-eyed living creatures, known as Cherubim.[461] In the description of his vision, the prophet Ezekiel mentions the throne carried by the four living creatures: "Over the heads of the living creatures there was something like a dome,…and above the dome over their heads there was something like a throne" (Ez.

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[455] "Kidan Zä-Nägəh: Morning Prayer," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 29.
[456] *Aksimaros*, ed. Misikir, 16.
[457] Ibid. *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth* states that the name of this heaven is *Gergel* (ጌርጌል). See *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 8.
[458] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 17.
[459] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 127, no. 54.
[460] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 18.
[461] *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 16. See the description on Cherubim in the Book of Ezekiel 1:15-28. According to the Ethiopian tradition, the Cherubim are figuratively thought to be the throne of God: "I praise thee, Lord my God, who sits upon the cherubim and does rest in the high ones." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 86.

1:22 and 26). There is a brief illustration of the throne and abode of the triune God in the Ethiopian anaphora of Gregory of Nyssa:

> Glorious is he (the triune God) who sits in the highest heaven; profound [*sic*][462] is he who sits beneath the depths, his chariot is snow and the bounds of its circle are fenced with fire. Its center is full of smoke. None enters and none goes out except those creatures of terrible appearance and with six wings whose bodies are full of eyes.[463]

While this illustration signifies the awesome and frightening feature of the abode of God, as discussed above, one should note that in the Ethiopian Liturgy the usual way of expressing the divine mystery is quite apophatic.

The heavenly Jerusalem is the 4th heaven created on the 5th hour of the night.[464] In this heaven the "altar of fire, the ark (*Tabot* – ታቦት) of fire, the seven tabernacle of fire, and the seven seas of light are found."[465] In line with this description, the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Mary refers to the heavenly Jerusalem as a place "where the tabernacles of the flaming fire are stretched" and Jesus Christ, the High Priest, dwells with "the pictured appearance of his face."[466] The rest of the three heavens: *Iyor* (ኢዮር), *Rama* (ራማ), and *Erär* (ኤረር), created on the 6th, 7th, and 8th hours of the night of the first creation day are known as *Alämä Mäla'əkt* – ዓለመ መላእክት [The World of the Angels].[467] As stated in the *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos* [Book of Clement] while humans are able to see the firmament, which is called in the book "*Falek* – ፋሌክ" or "the lowest heaven," the

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[462] The Gə'əz word used in the Ethiopic text is *əmuq* (ዕሙቅ) which could be translated literally as "deep," or rather "fathomless" since the adjective is attributed to God in the text. See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 138, no. 28.

[463] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 175, nos. 28-29. Similarly the anaphora of Cyril contemplates on the divine attributes of the Almighty and on the terrifying dwelling: "He (God the Lord) is the consuming fire, the life-giving fire, the God of gods and the Lord of lords whose throne is above the heavens and whose footstool is the earth. He is high and far away, and dwells in light. High and invisible is he who dwells in heaven. He is clothed in garments of fire and adorned with flames of fire. [H]is throne is on the heads of fire; his going to and fro is through impalpable air. [H]is high garment is in heaven, clouds are his chariot. [H]is way is in the stormy sea and on the heads of fire [the angels] who minister him." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 209, nos. 3-5.

[464] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 18.

[465] *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 10.

[466] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 119, nos. 156-158.

[467] *Aksimaros*, ed. Misikir, 20.

seven great heavens are "fiery and extremely shining so that no human eye can look at them."[468]

Even though angels were not mentioned at all in the Genesis creation account, according to the EOTC liturgical tradition the creation of the heavens presupposes the creation of the angels (heavenly beings). Hilarion Alfeyev agrees with this perspective: "when we read he [God] 'created the heavens', this means the spiritual world and its inhabitants, the angels."[469] The Ethiopian traditional fathers assert that before the creation of the angels, God created in silence because there was no living being who could listen, but after the creation of the angels God created verbally, saying: "let there be light; let there be a firmament; let the waters under the heavens be gathered" (Gen. 1:2).[470]

Based on the biblical reference on the sin of the angels, who were cast out to Hades (*Tartarosas – Ταρταρώσας* II Pet. 2:4), the Ethiopic book of *Aksimaros* deals with the celestial rebellion in detail.[471] According to *Aksimaros*, God created the angels after the creation of the heavens and the earth so as to avoid any sense of conceit that could lead the angels to think that they helped God in the work of creation.[472] However *Saṭnael*, the former archangel also known as Lucifer, showed interest in being worshipped like God, and his excessive pride resulted in his downfall: "O You [God], who expelled the

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[468] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 6.
[469] Alfeyev, *The Mystery of Faith*, 44.
[470] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Moges Equba-Giyorgis, 25.
[471] In the Eastern Orthodox tradition the rebellion of Satan has similar story to the one narrated in the *Aksimaros.* Alfeyev purports that the rebellion led by Lucifer, the former archangel, resulted in the entrance of evil to the good creation of God. Shortly after the angels had been created, some of them started a rebellion by opposing themselves to God and falling away from divine grace. Lucifer, whose name literally means, "light-bearing," was the leader of the rebellion. Lucifer set himself against God; and consequently, he fell away from goodness into evil. According to Alfeyev, "[t]his teaching about the fall away from God deliberately provoked by the devil is a response to the eternal question in all philosophy about the origin of evil." See Alfeyev, *The Mystery of Faith*, 46-47.
[472] *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 24.

devil because of his pride (arrogance), teach me the law of humility that pleases you."[473] When God withdrew the divine light from the celestial realm, the angels started thinking about their origin: "Where did we come from? Who created us?"[474] As *Saṭnael* (Satanael) was the closest to the throne of God and the most high-ranking archangel of all the archangels,[475] he told the troubled throng of angels that he was the one who created them. Some of them believed what he said, whereas others doubted his claim. The rest listened to the advice of the Archangel Gabriel: "let us stand firm until we find our Creator." At this time, God said: "Let there be light" (Gen. 1: 2), and thus being illumined by the light, they knew who their real Creator was.[476]

Prior to his total banishment from the heavens, *Saṭnael* was demoted and sent to the lowest heaven. Without showing any sense of remorse for his deceitful claim, when he saw the creation of the luminaries on the fourth day of creation he stubbornly thought: "I will establish my throne above the stars, and I will make myself to be like unto the Most High and Mighty God" (Is. 14:13).[477] Consequently, *Saṭnael* and those who believed in him were trodden by the armies of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel down to Hades (Rev. 12: 7-9).

Aksimaros' description of the nine angelic ranks agrees with the biblical and patristic enumerations of these celestial orders. In Colossians 1:16, St. Paul mentions

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[473] See "Ṭäbibä Ṭäbiban," *Chrestomathia Aethiopica,* ed. Dillmann, 108, no. 3.
[474] *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 32.
[475] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 5.
[476] *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 36.
[477] *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 16. See also *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 136. The reference to the stars and to the fall of Lucifer in the Book of Isaiah (Is. 14: 12-16, KJV) indicates that the banishment of *Saṭnael* (Lucifer) and his followers from the heavens was on the fourth day of creation. An Ethiopic text attributed to an unidentified Gregory affirms this view: "Their [Satan and his followers'] fall occurred on the evening of the fourth day of creation." See "Vision de Gregoire: Ra'eya Gorgorios," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien,* 21 (1918) 138. The Book of Clement as well states that Satan was thrown down to earth before the creation of Adam (before the sixth day of creation). *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 8.

some of the celestial ranks as "thrones or dominions or rulers or powers." Enumerating each angelic group with its archangel, *Aksimaros* attests that the first rank (order) led by St. Michael the archangel is called *Ḫaylat* – ኀይላት (Powers).[478] Among the angelic ranks, we find the four-faced creatures, full of eyes, who were revealed to the prophet Ezekiel (Ez. 1: 5-14) and John the Apostle (Rev. 4: 6-11). These are known as *Kirubel* – ኪሩቤል (Cherubim), whose chief is *Kirub* – ኪሩብ (*Cherub*).[479] The Seraph, who touched the lips of Isaiah with a live coal (Is. 6:6-7), belongs to the group known as *Surafel* – ሱራፌል (Seraphim) that are led by *Suraphi* (ሱራፌ). The rest orders consist of: *Arəbab* – አርባብ (Masters), led by Archangel Gabriel; the *Mänabərt* – መናብርት (Thrones) of Archangel Raphael; *Śəlṭanat* – ሥልጣናት (Authorities) of Archangel Suriel; *Mäk^{W}anənt* – መኳንንት (Dominions) of Archangel Sedakael; *Liqanat* – ሊቃናት (Principalities) of Archangel Salatael; and *Mäla'əkt* – መላእክት (Angels) of Archangel Ananiel.[480]

The second day of creation, *Sänuy* (ሰኑይ), saw the division of the waters before the creation of the firmament. On this day, the space above the earth was covered by the waters that were divided into three parts.[481] When God said: "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters" (Gen. 1:6, NKJV),

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[478] *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 28.
[479] Ibid, 27.
[480] Ibid, 28. See also *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 8, 12-13 and *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 5-6. *The Celestial Hierarchy* of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite enumerates the nine angelic ranks that are found under three hierarchies. The first and highest contains the seraphim, cherubim, thrones; the second, dominions, powers, authorities; and the third, principalities, archangels, and angels. See Pseudo-Dionysius, "The Celestial Hierarchy, VI" *Pseudo-Dionysius*: *The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1987) 160-161. In his *Ascetical Homilies*, St. Isaac the Syrian offers a concise description of the angelic ranks: "In Hebrew, Seraphim means those who are fervent and burning; the Cherubim, those who are great in knowledge and wisdom; the Thrones, receptacles of God and rest…These orders are given these names because of their operations. The Thrones are so called as once truly honoured; the Dominions, as those who govern the atmosphere; Powers, as those who give power over the nations and every man; Virtues, as one mighty in power and dreadful in appearance; the Seraphim, as those who make holy; the Cherubim, as those who carry; the Archangels, as vigilant guardians; the Angels, as those who are sent." See St. Isaac the Syrian, *Ascetical Homilies,* 131-132 quoted in Alfeyev, *The Mystery of Faith,* 45.
[481] *Aksimaros*, ed. Misikir, 55.

the first part of the waters was solidified and remained between the waters above[482] and below. In the Ethiopic commentary of Genesis, the waters above the firmament are called *Ḥänos* (ሐኖስ). In Gen. 1:7 the commentary reads: "by creating the firmament, God separated *Ḥänos* [the waters above the firmament] from the oceans."[483] As the firmament was made from water, it is different from the heavens that were created on the first day of creation; the latter are fiery and blazing in nature.[484] Explaining the significance of the firmament, the Ethiopian fathers say that in addition to its being the abode of the fourth day creatures (the Sun, the moon, and the stars), the firmament reminds us of our heavenly inheritance.[485] In their commentary, the Ethiopian fathers state that if the firmament were very bright or gloomy it could be either blinding or depressing to our eyes. But our benevolent God made it in a way which is comfortable for our eyes to look at.[486]

On the third day (*Śälus* – ሠሉስ) the one third of the waters, which had been left on earth under the firmament, were divided into two. With the divine order: "let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place" (Gen. 1:9, NKJV), God put the first part of the waters in a reservoir and called them "Seas" (Gen. 1:10). These seas are the great oceans that encircle the earth (Job. 38: 8-10). The rest mass of the waters remained under the earth: "Give thanks to the Lord...who spread out the earth upon the

[482] Regarding the waters above the firmament (sky), the Psalmist sings: "Praise him (the Lord), you highest of heavens and you waters above the skies" (Ps. 148: 4).
[483] *Bəluyat Anədəmta Tərəg^{W}ame* [Old Testament Commentary] 9. The Amharic translation of the *Book of Jubilees* as well calls the waters above the firmament *Ḥänos*. Kufale – ኩፋሌ [Jubilees] 2: 9: reads: "On the second day [of creation] He [God] created the firmament between *Ḥänos* and the oceans." See "Mäṣəḥafä Kufale," *Mäṣəḥaf Qəddus* [The Holy Bible] 928.
[484] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 6.
[485] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 31.
[486] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 282.

waters" (Ps. 136:6).[487] Under these waters, God also made the abyss filled with darkness known as *Si'ol* – ሲኦል (*Sheol*) or Hades.[488] The description of the under world in *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth* is worth mentioning:

> Beneath it (the earth), He (God) created [made] a great female sea, a subdivision of the male water which is in the heavens. This earth is above the water, and below the Ocean[s] is the awful abyss of water, and below the abyss is a rock, and below the rock is *Si'ol* (*Sheol*), and below *Si'ol* is the wind, and under the wind is the boundary of darkness. And beyond this [boundary] what is there? God alone knows His hidden things.[489]

Here we see the Creator's power in bringing order from chaos. God has transformed the "formless void" (Gen. 1:2) "by giving structure through separation and then filling up those structures."[490]

On the third day, besides putting the waters into a reservoir, God ordered the earth to bring forth creatures that were grouped into three: trees, grains, and fruits.[491] *The Book of Jubilees* mentions the Garden of Eden (Paradise) among the creatures of the third day: "And on that (third) day He (God) created…the seed which is sown, and all sprouting things, and fruit-bearing trees, and trees of the wood, and the Garden of Eden."[492] While the creation account in Jubilees considers Paradise as part of the earth, conversely, the *Book of Clement* presents it as a planetary heaven. The book states that Paradise is "a heavenly garden, situated in the air 15 miles above the highest mountains [of the

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[487] *Aksimaros*, ed. Misikir, 56. The division of the waters around and under the earth is elaborately stated in the *Book of Jubilees*: "And on the third day He (God) commanded the waters to pass from off the face of the whole earth into one place, and the dry land to appear. And the waters did so as He commanded them, and they retired from off the face of the earth into one place outside of this firmament, and the dry land appeared. And on that day He created for them all the rivers, and the gatherings of the waters in the mountains and on all the earth, and all the lakes, and all the dew of the earth." See *The Book of Jubilees* (II: 6-7) trans. Charles, 14.

[488] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 38; *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 13.

[489] *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 13.

[490] Wilkinson, "Creation Accounts in the Old Testament," 7.

[491] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 50. In the next chapter I will discuss the usage and theological implication of the fruits of the earth in the Ethiopian Liturgy.

[492] *The Book of Jubilees* (II: 6), ed. Charles, 14.

earth].”[493] Given that the authentic biblical account says that the Garden of Eden was planted in the East (Gen. 2:8), the description in the *Book of Clement* does not sound tenable.[494]

The luminaries (the sun, the moon, and the stars) were created on the fourth day (*Räbuəʹ* − ረቡዕ) of creation. As stated in the Ethiopic version of the Book of Enoch (LXXII: 4), the sun is “filled with illuminating and heating fire.”[495] Contemplating on the location of the sun and the moon, the writer of the Ethiopic Book of Creation says:

> If one asks, “why did He [God] suspend the sun under the firmament?” (I say) it is for our benefit. The creation of the firmament is from water, and the nature of water is to flow downward. The creation of the sun is [from] fire and wind. When fire and wind meet they go upward. For this reason He put it (the sun) under the firmament to carry it (the firmament). As for the moon, it is for our benefit that He put it here, bringing it near (us), underneath all (others). (For) one thing, He put it near intending (that) it gives light. Secondly since there is the nature of water in it, he created it lowering it so that it may cool for us the heat of the sun spent on us during the day.[496]

This illustration is quite speculative. However, as it is the case in the Ethiopic texts that deal with creation, this description accentuates the benevolence of the Creator to the created beings. Similarly, contemplating on the divine providence, *Abba* Giyorgis’ *Mäṣəḥafä Säʹatat* [Book of Hours] glorifies God for “hanging the firmament and situating the sun under it.”[497]

According to the Ethiopian traditional narrative, the creatures of the fifth day (*Ḥämus* − ሐሙስ) consist of the fish and reptiles including all the great sea monsters, and

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[493] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 15.
[494] The description of the Garden of Eden in the *Book of Adam and Eve* agrees with the biblical account. “On the third day, God planted the garden in the east of the earth, on the border of the world eastward, beyond which, towards the sun-rising, one finds nothing but water that encompasses the whole world, and reaches unto the borders of heaven.” See *The Book of Adam and Eve,* trans. Malan, 1.
[495] *The Book of Enoch Translated from the Ethiopic Text,* trans. R. H. Charles (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1912) 152.
[496] *Beauty of Creation*, trans. Haile and Amare, 44.
[497] See Giyorgis “Mäṣəḥafä Säʹatat Zä-mäʹalt Wå-Zä-lelit: Book of the Day and Night Hours,” *Codices Aethiopici Vaticani*, 72.

the various kinds of birds.[498] The list of the monsters includes Behemoth and Leviathan[499] which were mentioned in God's famous speech to Job (Job. 40: 15-24; 41:1-34). The creatures of the sixth day, brought forth from the earth consist of animals (cattle) that are edible; beasts (the inedible ones);[500] the amphibians; and finally the first human, who was made in the image and likeness of God. In the following section I will discuss the anthropological thoughts of the Ethiopian biblical and liturgical tradition.

C. The Original Condition of the Human Person

After creating the celestial world, God created the material world and then finally placed the human person at the center of the universe.[501] Highlighting the special place given to the human person,[502] the Ethiopian Book of Creation (*Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät)* addresses Adam, the first human creature, as "the lord of creation."[503] The Ethiopian anaphora of St. Athanasius also marvels the divine providence for the person:

> O Lord how much have thou done for man! [*sic*] Thou did stretch heaven as a tent for his astonishment, and widen [spread] the earth for the tread of his feet. Thou keep water in the womb of clouds to feed him; thou did light the sun that he might be illumined by day;

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[498] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 62.
[499] *Aksimaros*, ed. Misikir, 139. *The Book of Enoch* states that Leviathan, the female monster, dwells in the abysses of oceans whereas Behemoth, the male monster, occupies a waste wilderness. See *The Book of Enoch,* trans. Charles, 115.
[500] *Beauty of Creation*, tans. Haile and Amare, 85.
[501] Alfeyev, *The Mystery of Faith,* 52.
[502] The *Book of Clement* articulates the special honour given to the human person among all the creatures of God. After Lucifer (Satanael) had been expelled from heaven prior to the creation of Adam, the triune God declared: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26, KJV). "Having heard this divine declaration, the angels wondered what kind of creature God would create. Then God created Adam, instilling wisdom and knowledge in him. When the angels saw Adam, they were afraid of the divine light that was shining on his face, and they heard God saying that He made Adam the king, prophet and priest of the whole of creation…Ever since, Satan became envious of the divine grace bestowed on Adam, and started looking for a means to seduce him." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 8-9.
[503] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis,72. In his treatise, *On the Mystical Life,* St. Symeon the new theologian states that the human person was created as the "lord and king of all the visible creation." See St. Symeon the New Theologian, *On the Mystical Life: The Ethical Discourses,* Vol. 1 (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995) 21.

> thou did prepare the moon lest the darkness of night should cover him; thou did cause the light of the stars to shine upon him that he might know the work of thy fingers.[504]

God prepared creation for the human person, and the person was granted dominion over the earthly living beings. But this dominion by no means implies some form of creation's abuse by the human person. Again as stated in the Ethiopian liturgy, while God made Adam "prince over all creatures," Adam was supposed "to rule them in righteousness and truth."[505]

The creation of the human person from "the four elements [earth, water, fire, and wind]" [506] and the person's soul that has three attributes (reasoning/understanding, speaking, and immortality) imply perfection. As the "number seven is a perfect number for the Hebrews, the presence of the aforementioned seven elements (attributes) in the person indicates that Adam was created as a perfect creature." [507] That was why, according to the Ethiopic Genesis commentary, while God saw that the rest of creation was good, after the creation of Adam, God viewed the whole of creation to be "very Good" (Gen. 1: 4,12,18, and 31). [508] Moreover, Ethiopian biblical exegetes mention Proverbs 8:31: "my delights were with the sons of men" (KJV) referring to the divine joy in creating the human person.[509] The perfect creation of Adam and God's delight in making this wonderful creature is also figuratively expressed in the Ethiopian anaphora of the Nicene Fathers: "He [God] made him [Adam] fair [handsome][510] with his holy hands, kissed him and loved him; and breathed in his nostrils the breath of life."[511] The

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[504] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 140, nos. 23-24.
[505] See "Preparatory Service," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 10, no. 23.
[506] "Anaphora of the Three Hundred," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 125, no. 34.
[507] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 70.
[508] See *Bəluyat Anədəmta Tərəg^{W}ame* [Old Testament Commentary] 20.
[509] Ibid.
[510] The Gəʿəz verb used here is "*Aśänäyo* – አሠነዮ" which means to beautify or make pleasant.
[511] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 125, no. 35.

commentary on the anaphora elucidates that the phrase "kissed him" should not be taken literally. The expression is meant to implicitly indicate God's foreknowledge that the *Logos* would assume Adam's flesh for the salvation of the world.[512]

The particular aspect of the creation of the human person is also reflected in the declaration of the triune God: "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). The Ethiopian Church fathers teach that the soul represents the image of God in the human person. The soul is by nature immortal,[513] and it has both rationality and intelligence.[514] It was the ineffable intelligence given to Adam that enabled him to name the animals (Gen 2:19-20). In these attributes of the soul, humans resemble their Creator.[515] This interpretation of the image of God is implicitly stated in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Mary. Downplaying anthropomorphism, the composer of the anaphora purports that the Godhead "has neither chest nor back by which he can be seen, and through which he can be limited, but he is covered with the flame of fire."[516] This implies that one should not literally take the human person's creation in the image of

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[512] See the commentary on the Ethiopian anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers "Qəddase Śälästu Məʿət," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 283.

[513] Death is simply understood as the separation of soul and body. After death, the human soul does not cease to exist but returns to God. According to the Ethiopian tradition, while the human soul is ontologically immortal, its separation from God is considered as its death (spiritual death). By exercising their own freedom, when the first-formed humans (Adam and Eve) broke their communion with God, they became liable to both physical and spiritual death. See *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation], ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 121. In his *Mäṣəḥafä Məsṭir* [Book of Mystery] Abba Giyorgis, supporting the immortality of the human soul and refuting the teaching that God breathes the spirit of life into the fetus on the 40th day of its conception, writes: "the soul, which is immortal, is imparted to the fetus from the nature of its parents, not because God breathes the breath of life into it." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 40.

[514] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis,70.

[515] Christos Yannaras agrees with this view. He writes that it is the soul that could represent the "image of God" in the human person, because the material part, the human body, is unable to represent God. And the soul is endowed with three properties that characterize God himself: "*rationality, free will,* and *dominion*." See Christos Yannaras, *Elements of Faith*: *An Introduction to Orthodox Theology,* trans. Keith Schram (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991) 56.

[516] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 109, no. 53.

God and conclude that God has the same physical form as humans.[517] The *imago Dei* in humans, thus, should be understood in terms of various human attributes, such as mind (rational faculty), knowledge, understanding, and free will.[518] Regarding the free will given to the human soul the Ethiopic Gospel commentary says: "God gave power to the soul [of Adam] to do whatever it wills without having anyone who oppresses or governs it. The [human] soul was granted free will [*Näṣä Fäqad* – ነፃ ፈቃድ] to do good or bad like the angels."[519] The human person was created endowed with freewill like the celestial angels who also enjoy freewill, and thus made their own decision during the heavenly rebellion as discussed above.

The human person, moreover, resembles God in the dominion that the person has over the other creatures. In the biblical creation narrative, since the creation of Adam and Eve in God's image and likeness is linked to their rule over the creatures whom God made (fish, birds, livestock, and wild animals - Gen 1: 26-28), humans resemble God in the dominion that they are granted. Hence, the Ethiopic Genesis commentary makes a direct correlation between God's sovereignty and humans' God-given dominion. The commentary affirms: "we govern by grace the creatures whom the Trinity govern by nature."[520] While God the *Pantocrator* [*Aḫaze K^{W}əlu / Aḫaze Aläm* – አኃዜ ኵሉ / አኃዜ ዓለም][521] is the "King of all, the Almighty, the Governor of all, the Life-giver of all, and

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[517] See pages 40-44 in chapter one of this thesis regarding the controversy on anthropomorphism, i.e. whether the triune God has the same *mälkəʾ* – መልክዕ (form or image) as humans, which broke out in Ethiopia during the regime of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob (1434-1468).

[518] Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 259. See also *Bəluyat Anədəmta Tərəg^{W}ame* [Old Testament Commentary] 18.

[519] See *Anədəmta Wånəgel* [Gospel Commentary] 16. For further explanation on this quote see Abba Gabriel (Archbishop) *Təməhrtä Haymanot Orətodokəsawi* [Orthodox Doctrines] (Addis Ababa: Addis Printers, 2001) 39.

[520] *Bəluyat Anədəmta Tərəg^{W}ame* [Old Testament Commentary] 19.

[521] Elsewhere in the Ethiopian Liturgy God is addressed as *Aḫaze K^{W}əlu* (አኃዜ ኵሉ), the one who holds all (the whole of creation) – an equivalent term for the Greek *Pantocrator.* See for example "The Prayer of Thanksgiving" and "The Prayer of Fraction," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 22 and 61. The morning

the Nourisher of all,"[522] the human person has been accorded the status of ruling over the earthly creatures. The dominion granted to humans, however, does not condone their selfish exploitation of creation. As stewards of the earth, human beings are supposed to take care of the material world; to use it without abusing it.

The creation of the human person, as expounded in the Ethiopian traditional commentary, is also distinct from that of the animals in two ways. While God created Adam enabling him to walk upright, by contrast, the other wild animals were created in a way they could walk stooping. This distinction, according to the Ethiopic commentary, indicates that only humans have the hope of resurrection; not the animals that walk stooped down.[523] Moreover, while the animals and the plants were created for the nourishment of humans, the purpose of the creation of the human person was "to glorify the name of God and inherit the Heavenly Kingdom."[524]

The human person was created incorrupt. Reflecting this theological stand, the Ethiopian Liturgy of the Word says: "God, great eternal, who did form man [*sic*] uncorrupt,[525] thou did abolish death that came first through the envy of Satan by the advent of thy living Son our Lord and our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."[526] This echoes what we read in the Book of Wisdom 2:23-24: "for God created us for incorruption, and made us in the image of his own eternity, but through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his company experience it." God did

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litanies [*liṭonat* − ሊጦናት] for Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday address God as *Aḫaze Aläm* [the one who holds the world]." See "Liṭon Zä-Śälus, Zä-Ḥamus, Zä-Qädamit − ሊጦን ዘሠሉስ፡ ዘሐሙስ፡ ዘቀዳሚት," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 59, 62, and 64.

[522] See "Anaphora of Dioscorus," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 237, no. 62.

[523] *Bəluyat Anədəmta Tərəg^{W}ame* [Old Testament Commentary] 19.

[524] Ibid, 4.

[525] The phrase used in the Gəʿəz version is *ənbäla musəna* (እንበለ ሙስና), which means "without corruption." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [Book of Liturgy] 42.

[526] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 54, no. 54.

not make death, and the divine original plan for humans was to live in the state of incorruption.

The incorruptibility granted by God to the human person was conditional, so that its continuation depended on the person's communion with God. Unfortunately, heeding the advice of the enemy, the first humans turned from "eternal things to things corruptible," and thus they became "the cause of their own corruption in death."[527] An Ethiopic liturgical text, known as *Ǝgəzi'abḥer Zäbərhanat* – እግዚአብሔር ዘበርሃናት [God of Lights],[528] avers that through the crucifixion of Christ, God "changed us from corruption into incorruptibility."[529] As we will discuss later, through Christ's redemptive work the corruptibility brought by Adam on himself and on the other creatures was abolished, and "incorruptibility established" for the whole of creation.[530] Hence, the *litany* (*liṭon* – ሊጦን) for Monday, which is part of the matins, praises God for bringing us "from darkness to light and from corruption into incorruption."[531]

The human person was also created with conditional immortality that was offered not only to the soul but also to the human body.[532] In their pre-lapsarian stage the first

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[527] Athanasius of Alexandria, *St. Athanasius on the Incarnation,* trans. C.S.M.V. (London: A. R. Mowbray and Co. Ltd., 1975) 30, no. 5.

[528] *Ǝgəzi'abḥer Zäbərhanat* [God of Lights] is part of the Ethiopic *Mäṣəḥafä Kidan* [*Testament of the Lord*]. This text is used for liturgical purposes in the EOTC, especially for exorcism when there are catechumens to be baptized. In the *Testament of the Lord* the prayer has a prologue which indicates that it was used by the early church for exorcism before the catechumens were admitted to baptism. See *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 117; *Syriac Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 121.

[529] See "Egzi'abher Zabrhanat [God of the Lights]," *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 118.

[530] Ibid, 120. The Ethiopic *Mystagogia* [*Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* – ትምህርተ ኅቡዓት], which is also part of the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord*, signifies the incorruptibility granted to the human flesh through the incarnation of the Logos: "[When] the incorruptible [The *Logos*] put on a corruptible body, he made the mortal body incorruptible." See *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 56.

[531] See "Liṭon Zä-Sänuy (ሊጦን ዘሰኑይ): Monday Litany," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 57.

[532] *The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Faith, Order of Worship and Ecumenical Relations*, eds. Archbishop Mekarios and et al (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1996) 26. *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* [Mystagogia] also asserts that through the redemption made by Christ, the immortality of the human person was reversed. Christ made the flesh of the person immortal that had become mortal due to

humans were immortal by grace, not by nature; God is the only one who is immortal by nature. Reflecting the conditional immortality granted to the human person, the Ethiopic text *Ṭəntä Haymanot* – ጥንተ ሃይማኖት [Root of Faith] asserted that while warning Adam not to eat from the fruit of knowledge lest he should die, God also said to him: "know that I allowed you to live forever…enjoying the joy of Paradise, since I created you in my image and likeness."[533] Though the first humans were naturally endowed with the image of God, they were supposed to grow into the likeness of God in holiness and spirituality with the destiny of completing the mystery of *theōsis* (deification). As Masarat Sebhat Lä-Ab, the late Ethiopian scholar, explained "having said let us create man in our image and likeness, the triune God willed the human person to be the exact likeness of himself."[534] But since the first humans, through their disobedience, failed to remain in communion with God they introduced mortality (physical corruption) to themselves and to the rest of creation.[535] Had they not sinned in their paradisiacal state, they could have lived forever in incorrupt bodies, partaking of the tree of life in Paradise and eventually attaining to heaven as well.[536]

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the fall. See "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at [Mystagogia]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 12.

[533] See *Ṭəntä Haymanot* [Root of Faith] entitled: "Eine äthiopische Handschrift der k. k. Hofbibliothek in Wien zu den pseudo-ephiphanischen Werken," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes,* Vol. XXVI, trans. August Haffner (Wien: Alfred Hölder, 1912) 367.

[534] Masarat Sebhat Lä-Ab, *Səmə'a Ṣədəq Bəḥerawi* [National Witness of Truth] (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing Press, 1959) 51.

[535] Zizioulas emphatically argues that death, as reality, was not caused by the Fall. Death was inherent in the created world, and the Fall of the human person made the cure from death impossible. See Zizioulas, *Lectures*, 102. Conversely, however, Hieromonk Damascene asserts: "the teaching that death and corruption entered the cosmos only at the fall, is a basic tenet of the Orthodox Christian worldview." See Hieromonk Damascene, "Created in Incorruption: The Orthodox Patristic Understanding of Man and the Cosmos in their Original, Fallen, and Redeemed States," *The Orthodox Word,* 44/1-2 (2008) 10.

[536] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 81-82.

In the Ethiopian tradition, the "tree of life" in the midst of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2: 9) is considered as the means of achieving immortality.[537] The first humans did not enjoy immortality by partaking of the tree of life, because they violated the commandment of God by eating from the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil. However, now believers are given immortality by partaking of the flesh and blood of the Lord Christ. This idea is reflected in the Ethiopic *Wəddase Maryam* – ውዳሴ ማርያም [Praise of Mary/ Theotokia] that likens the tree of life to the Holy Eucharist: "he [Christ] allowed us to eat from the tree of life, which is his flesh and blood."[538] It is interesting to note that the same idea is found in St. Maximus' *Ambigua*. Referring to the pre-lapsarian life of Adam and Eve, Maximus wrote: "The food of that blessed life is the bread which came down from heaven and gave life to the world."[539] According to Maximus, even before the Fall the *Logos* was the bread of life.[540]

The combination of material and spiritual realities in the human person entails the unique aspect of his/her creation. There are two dimensions in the human person: soul and body, which unite the human person ontologically with the material and spiritual dimensions of creation.[541] Among the creatures of God, humans are the only ones who consist of spiritual and material dimensions. By their souls they are related to the spiritual realm, whereas by their bodies they belong to the material world.[542] Hence the human person stands at the midway point of creation, and "unites the spiritual and material

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[537] Ibid, 81.
[538] See "Wəddase Maryam [Praise of Mary/Theotokia]," *Mäzəmurä Dawit Wå-ṣälotatä Näbiyat* [Psalm of David and the Prayers of the Prophets] (Addis Ababa: Täsfa Gäbrä-Səllasse Printing Press, 1970) 25.
[539] See Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua, PG 91, 1157A*, quoted in Panayiotis Nellas, *Deification in Christ*: *Orthodox Perspectives on the Nature of the Human Person*, trans. Norman Russell (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1987) 47.
[540] Nellas, *Deification in Christ,* 47.
[541] Ibid, 173.
[542] *Anədəmta Wånəgel* [Gospel Commentary] 14.

worlds."[543] Moreover, according to the Orthodox anthropology since the human person recapitulates within him/herself the whole of creation, the person is "a microcosm."[544] As a microcosm and as the "king of creation,"[545] the human person was given a task by God to unite the whole created matter and grow to the full participation in the glory of God. Nevertheless the first humans tried to reach deification by transgressing the divine command. As a result, not only their relationship with God but with each other and with the rest of creation was distorted.

III. The Cosmic Dimension of the Mystery of Salvation

In Orthodoxy, death, which resulted from the failure of the human person to bring the whole of creation in communion with God, is viewed as "a cosmic catastrophe."[546] By the misuse of their free will, the first humans alienated themselves from God, and consequently brought corruption to creation. Thus the purpose of the incarnation of the *Logos* was to bring creation to its originally intended *telos* – life in communion with God.[547] As creation was made through Christ, it was also through Christ that the fallen creation was renewed. Though God's good plan for creation had been affected by the Fall of humanity, the Christ event offered the possibility of cosmic transfiguration that will be realized at the second coming of Christ.

A. The Fall and Its Consequences

The EOTC's teaching on the Fall is mainly based on its interpretation of the third chapter of the book of Genesis. The Ethiopian Church's tradition does not view the

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[543] Melketsedek (Archbishop) *The Teaching of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church* (Danville, California: Alem Publishers, Publication date not given) 21.
[544] Nellas, *Deification in Christ,* 29.
[545] See "Anaphora of St. Athanasius," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 140.
[546] Florovsky, "Redemption," *Creation and Redemption*, Vol. III, 105.
[547] Theokritoff, "Creation and Creator," 66.

Genesis account of the Fall as a myth.[548] The tradition considers the whole Scripture to be a divinely revealed truth, and thus the narrative of the Fall is taken to be a genuine historical account. As the Ethiopian Book of Creation expounds, the serpent, which "was more crafty than any other wild animal," embodies the evil force that entered into it.[549] That evil force is Lucifer, who fell away due to his pride, "[t]he great dragon …who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world" (Rev. 12:9). The serpent's agitation to the woman: "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eye will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3: 5) is an invitation to idolatry, since it suggests humanity's self-sufficiency to become a god.[550] Through the serpent's idea, the human person was challenged to choose between good and evil. Being engineered by "the envy of Satan"[551] and supported by the misuse of human free will, "misery and suffering as well as sin and evil" entered the world.[552] The "thorns and thistles" (Gen. 3:18), which the earth is said to bring forth, represent propensity to evil, wickedness, and lustful passions that resulted from the Fall.[553]

The "garments of skin" with which Adam and Eve were clothed (Gen. 3: 21) figuratively symbolize mortality, corruption, and sensual passion.[554] As the results of sin, the garments also exemplify an obscuring of the image of God, and thus they "are not to

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[548] Various books written by the Ethiopian traditional fathers on creation and the origin of evil take the first three chapters of Genesis as real historical accounts. For example see *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 80-86; Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici , Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 47-51.
[549] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 85.
[550] Ibid, 86.
[551] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 54.
[552] V. C. Samuel, "The Faith of the Church," *The Church of Ethiopia: A Panorama of History and Spiritual Life,* ed. Sergew Hable-Sellassie (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1997) 48.
[553] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 92.
[554] Gregory of Nyssa enumerates the consequences of the Fall that the garments signify as: "sexual intercourse, conception, parturition, impurities, suckling, feeding, evacuation, gradual growth to full size, prime of life, old age, disease, and death." See Gregory of Nyssa, "On the Soul and the Resurrection," *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Vol. 5, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994) 465.

be identified with the human body."[555] Based on his concept of the pre-existence of souls, Origen suggested that the "garments of skin" should be equated with human body.[556] According to *Abba* Giyorgis, Origen's view is erroneous.[557] Giyorgis argues that since Adam, referring to Eve said "this is flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone" the first humans had finite bodies before the Fall, so that the garments of skin should not be identified either with their bodies or with ours.[558] For Giyorgis, the garments signify humanity's loss of grace as the human person was originally clothed with a garment of light (*ləbəsä bərhan* – ልብሰ ብርሃን).[559]

The Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition teaches that Genesis 3 is not only about the story of the Fall and its consequences. It also consists of an implicit prophecy about the incarnation of the *Logos*. God said to the serpent: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel" (Gen. 3: 15). There is hostility between the human nature and the devil. The descendent of the woman is Christ, who "when the fullness of time had come [was] born of a woman [Mary, the second Eve]" (Gal. 4: 4).[560] Christ's victory over the devil

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[555] Nellas, *Deification in Christ,* 45.

[556] Origen, *On Genesis* III, 2, quoted in Nellas, *Deification in Christ,* 45. In the Ethiopic Book of Clement [*Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos*] there is an expression that echoes Origen's erroneous view on the garments of skin. The book asserts that "after Adam and Eve covered themselves with the leaves of Paradise, God clothed them with the garment of skin which is the cloth of sorrow and pain on our body." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 14.

[557] Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 47.

[558] Ibid.

[559] Ibid, 49. In line with *Abba* Giyorgis, Nellas calls the radiant pre-lapsarian clothing a "divinely woven attire." See Nellas, *Deification in Christ*, 53.

[560] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 90. In the Ethiopic *Book of Clement* [*Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos*] and *The Book of Adam and Eve* [*Gädlä Addam Wå-Ḥewan*] God is said to have told Adam directly that the *Logos* will be incarnated from one of his (Adam's) daughters. In both books, the time of the incarnation is specified as "after 5 and half days" which is to mean after the completion of 5500 years, for "with the Lord one day is like a thousand years" (II Pet. 3:8). The divine promise in the *Book of Clement* reads: "God said to Adam: 'after five days and half of a day I will forgive you out of my abundance mercy, and abide in [the womb] for your sake." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 28. The famous 5 and half days are also stated

was predicted, when God said to the serpent: "he will strike your head," indicating that by his redemptive work on the cross Christ would crush the power of the devil. Referring to the accomplishment of this prophecy, the Ethiopic Lenten hymnary says: "He (Christ) killed the adversary by his cross."[561] Though Genesis 3 seems all about divine curse, the implicit prediction of Christ's "victory over the devil is the Scripture's proto-gospel" and "the first joyful message" of human salvation.[562] According to the Ethiopian fathers, God also said: "See the man has become like one of us" (Gen. 3: 22) literally indicating the attempt of Adam to be like God, but eventually referring to the deification of humanity through the incarnation of the *Logos*.[563]

The Fall of the human person had an adverse effect on humanity and on the rest of creation as well. God created the first humans with free will, but the misuse of the God-given freedom led to slavery.[564] The Fall signifies the person's refusal to exercise the given freedom. Referring to the wrong choice of the human person, the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Athanasius says: "Man [*sic*], being a king, knew not and so at his own will, debased himself and became a servant; and those who are not lords ruled over him."[565] The would-be "lords" who ruled over the human person were the devil and his

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in *The Book of Adam and Eve* as follows: "God said to Adam, 'I have ordained on this earth days and years, and thou and thy seed shall dwell and walk in it, until the days and years are fulfilled; when I shall send the Word that created thee, and against which you have transgressed, …yea, the Word that will again save thee when the five days and a half are fulfilled. But when Adam heard these words from God, and [of] the great five days and a half, he did not understand the meaning of them….Then God in His mercy for Adam [who was made in] His own image and similitude, explained to him, that these were 5000 and 500 years; and how One would then come and save him and his seed." See *The Book of Adam and Eve*, ed. Malan, 3-4.

[561] See *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* [Fasting Hymnary] 113.

[562] Yannaras, *Elements of Faith*, 86.

[563] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 88; Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 50.

[564] The Ethiopic anaphora of St. John Chrysostom states that among the consequences, which resulted from the human person's transgression of the commandment of God, were being "driven from the garden of delight unto destruction, from life unto death, [and] from freedom unto slavery." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 199, no. 15.

[565] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 140, no. 21.

evil forces.[566] Adam was not aware of the divine grace bestowed on him; hence, "impoverished himself" willingly.[567] As a result of the Fall, even though the image of God was not totally obliterated from the human person, it was distorted. Also due to the primordial sin, the human person lost the likeness of God.

According to the dominant Orthodox teaching, the descendants of Adam and Eve inherited from them propensity to sin, not their guilt. The progeny of Adam and Eve neither share in nor are guilty of Adam and Eve's sin though they suffer the effects of that sin. While the guilt of the original sin remains with Adam and Eve, the effect of that sin extends to all their descendants.[568] Holding Adam and Eve accountable for the original sin and signifying only the consequence of the sin on their descendants, the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Athanasius of Alexandria says:

> O Adam, what wrong did we do thee that thou did bring the sentence of death upon us? O Adam, what wrong did we do thee that thou did not let us rejoice in paradise, the abode of the Lord? O Eve, what wrong did we do thee that now our body is darkened through the multitude of sins instead of being worthy to live in the likeness of the heavenly ones?[569]

The transgression of Adam and Eve forbade humanity to enjoy the blissful life in Paradise. However, the primordial sin or guilt of Adam and Eve is not imputed to their progeny, even though their descendants are affected by the "consequences of sin," such as corruption, death, weakness of will, and inclination toward sin.[570] As John Meyendorff argues, since "sin is always a personal act, never an act of nature," the rebellion of Adam and Eve should be viewed only as their own personal sin, not as "sin of nature" that could

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[566] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 311.
[567] See "The Anaphora of St. Athanasius," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 140, no. 22.
[568] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 111.
[569] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 140-1, nos. 28-9
[570] Melketsedek, *Ethiopian Church Teaching,* 25.

be inherited by their descendants.[571] There is "inherited weakness" but not "inherited guilt."[572] The following section deals with the salvation of the entire creation from sin and corruption through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

B. The Orthodox Concept of Salvation

In Orthodoxy, the whole life of Christ is viewed as an act of salvation. The Word of God became incarnate to fulfill the original divine plan which is the transfiguration of the cosmos. Through the incarnation, the *Logos* became part of his creation and recapitulated the whole of creation in his body. The baptism of Christ, the *Logos* incarnate, renewed the entire cosmos, whereas his crucifixion on the Cross offered redemption from sin. Through his death, Christ destroyed death (the cosmic disease) and defeated the devil, triumphantly rising from the dead. Therefore, "the whole life of Christ is the medium of our salvation, not just the Cross. The Incarnation, the life of Christ, the Cross, the Resurrection, and the Pentecost in the mystery of salvation in Christ form a whole and cannot be separated from each other."[573] The whole Christ event "forms an

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[571] Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 143. Meyendorff contends that the "doctrine of guilt inherited from Adam and spread to his descendants," which is usually associated with St. Augustine, resulted from an erroneous translation of Romans 5:12 into Latin. In this verse, speaking of Adam, St. Paul writes: "As sin came into the world through one man, and through sin, death, so death spread to all men *because all men have sinned*." The italicized part originally reads in Greek: *eph ho pantes hemarton*, and these four words were translated to Latin as *in quo omnes peccaverunt,* bearing a different meaning from that of the Greek original, i.e. (in whom [in Adam] all men have sinned). While the verse "presupposes a cosmic significance of the sin of Adam, [it] does not say that his descendants are guilty." See Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 144. It seems that Augustine read the Latin version that led him to think that as humans sinned in Adam they inherited his sin for which they too are responsible. The Ethiopic translation of the verse agrees with the Greek original, and Ethiopian scholars do not speak of our responsibility for the Adamic sin though they agree with Eastern Orthodox theologians that we have been affected by the consequences of Adam's original sin.

[572] Kallistos Ware, *How are We Saved? The Understanding of Salvation in the Orthodox Tradition*, (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publishing, 1996) 18.

[573] Savas Agourides, "Salvation According to the Orthodox Tradition," *Ecumenical Review*, 21/3 (1969) 202.

undivided unity" that "we are saved through the total work of Christ, not just by one particular event in his life."[574]

Various liturgical texts of the EOTC demonstrate that we were saved through the whole life of Christ's incarnate dispensation. The *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* – ትምህርተ ኅቡኣት [*Mystagogia*],[575] a dogmatico-liturgical text, speaks of the incarnation of the *Logos* as a means of saving the fallen humanity: "[The *Logos*] who clothed Himself with the dead Adam, [made] him to live [alive]."[576] The devil deceived Adam and Eve by hiding himself in the body of the serpent; likewise, by hiding his divinity in human flesh, the *Logos* defeated the devil.[577] A hymn for the feast of Epiphany refers to the baptism of Christ as a redeeming act: "The Son of God was baptized in the river Jordan to redeem

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[574] Ware, *How are We Saved?* 48.

[575] What is known as *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* in the EOTC is the "*Mystagogia*" of the *Testament of the Lord*. In *Haymanotä Abäw* [the Faith of the Fathers], the doctrinal book, a recension of *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* is called *Ǝlmäsəṭoagya* (እልመስጦአግያ) – a corrupt form of *Mystagogia*. See *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] 21-27. As an "interpretation of mystery" the *Mystagogia* of the *Testament of the Lord* was used by the early church to "explain to the newly baptized the spiritual and theological significance of the various signs, symbols and gestures of the initiation rites which they had experienced on Holy Saturday night." See Jefferey Baerwald, "Mystagogy," *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*, ed. Peter E. Fink (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1990) 881. The prologue of the *Mystagogia* indicates that it was also used as the initiation of the faithful into the Holy Mysteries which they partake of: "After that let the bishop teach the mysteries to the people. But if he be not present, let a presbyter speak so that the faithful may know to whom they are approaching and who their God and Father is." See *The Testament of Our Lord Translated from the Syriac,* ed. Cooper and Maclean, 84 and *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 53. In the EOTC, *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at is* chanted during the vigil service of the feast of Epiphany [*Ṭəmqät*] which commemorates the baptism of the Lord at the river Jordan. During the Passion Week the doctors of the church interpret the *Mystagogia* [*Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at*] to the laity word by word, highlighting its passages that demonstrate the victory of Christ over death, corruption, and over the devil as well. In fact, this is in accordance with the rubric found at the end of the *Mystagogia* itself that it should be taught to the people during the great feasts, such as Epiphany and Pascha. See "The Ethiopic Version of the Mystagogia," *Le Muséon: Revue d'Études Orientales,* trans. Frank H. Hallok, 53 (1940) 73; "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at [Mystagogia]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 1-4. See also *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at*'s French translation in *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 181-185.

[576] See "The Ethiopic Version of the Mystagogia," trans. Hallok, 68. See also *Syriac Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 85.

[577] A hymn, chanted at the feast of the Transfiguration, speaks of the incarnation of the Logos as hiding in the human flesh: "The Father said to His Son: 'while you are consubstantial with me in your divine essence, you were hidden in the womb of Mary." See *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1995) 216.

us."[578] Another hymn of the Epiphany states the purpose of Christ's crucifixion: "The Son of God, who sits on the Cherubim and the one whom the heavenly hosts praise, was crucified on the Cross to redeem human beings."[579] We were redeemed from sin by the sacrifice of the Son of God, who "took our death and gave us his life."[580] As the commentary on the Ethiopian Liturgy attests, "by his burial, the Lord abolished corruptibility from our flesh once for all,"[581] and his salvific act was finalized when he rose from the dead, trampling death[582] and destroying all the evil works of the adversary.

Thus, in accordance with the soteriology of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Ethiopian liturgical texts present the whole life of Christ as a means of salvation. A close look to these texts, however, reveals that emphasis is given to the incarnation. As discussed below most of the liturgical texts contain contemplations on the mystery of the incarnation that are elaborately nuanced in the commentaries of the texts. While the texts also signify the sacrificial aspect of the death of Christ on the Cross, his death is presented as a means of destroying death and defeating the devil − *Christus Victor*, the typical Orthodox concept of redemption.[583] Besides, the various Ethiopic hymns on the joy of the whole of creation at the birth of Christ and on the cosmic dimension of his crucifixion demonstrate that the main purpose of the Christ event was the transformation of the entire cosmos. The following sections will deal with these soteriological themes.

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[578] See "Ziq Zä-Ṭəmqät [Hymn of Epiphany]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 116.
[579] Ibid, 115.
[580] *Wəddase Maryam* [Praise of Mary] 28.
[581] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 4.
[582] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 40, 173.
[583] Gustaf Aulén, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement,* trans. A. G. Hebert (Origen: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2003) 44.

The Centrality of the Incarnation

The soteriological nuance of the fathers of the EOTC highlights the significance of the incarnation of the *Logos* for the economy of salvation. As stated in the official publication of the EOTC, the church teaches that "The Incarnation of God the Son is primarily for the salvation of the world; [and] salvation means the restoration of the world to its direct and unimpeded relation with God."[584] George Florovsky notes that the incarnation of the *Logos* was the fundamental motive of the early church's theology. In the early church the whole christological thought was based on the teaching that envisions "the incarnation of the Word as Redemption."[585] Thus as the Ethiopian liturgical texts highlight the centrality of the incarnation for salvation, they maintain the early church's soteriology. In fact, Eastern Orthodoxy in general "places great emphasis on the incarnation,"[586] considering it as "the pivotal event in the salvation of the cosmos."[587]

Most of the Ethiopic liturgical texts expound the mystery of the incarnation in poetic imagery, often accompanied by contemplations. The Ethiopic anaphora, named after St. James of Serough, figuratively speaks of the incarnation of the *Logos*: "Thou [the Son of God] are the long cord which will not be severed from the Father…The womb of the Virgin contained thee."[588] This is to say that, the Son of God assumed human flesh without being separated from his Father in his divinity as explained in the anaphora of St. Mary: "The Word came to thee [St. Mary] without being separated from the bosom of his Father; thou did conceive him without his being limited, and he stayed

[584] V. C. Samuel, "The Faith of the Church," 47.
[585] Florovsky, "Redemption," *Creation and Redemption,* Vol. III, 96.
[586] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 122.
[587] Theokritoff, "Creation and Creator,"69.
[588] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 223, no. 21.

in thy womb without making subtraction from above or addition beneath."[589] Moreover, the *Haymanotä Abäw* (ሃይማኖተ አበው) marvels at the incomprehensible aspect of the incarnation: "As the angel said that the Holy Spirit would overshadow St. Mary, the Word was conceived by the work of the Holy Spirit in a way unknown to human mind. The one, who forms the fetus in the womb, was conceived as a babe in the womb of St. Mary."[590] All this is meant to emphasize the unfathomable mystery of the incarnation of the *Logos*.

This mystery was initially hidden from the celestial beings. The Ethiopic Mystagogia [*Təməhrətä Ḫabu'at* – ትምህርተ ኅቡኣት] asserts that "the Logos abode in the womb of the virgin, being hidden from all the celestial powers."[591] As illustrated in *Anəqäṣä Bərhan* (አንቀጸ ብርሃን), the Ethiopic *Theotokia* attributed to St. Yared the hymnologist, when the great multitude of angels learnt about the birth of the Son of God at Bethlehem they stood around the baby and his mother in fear and trembling, and praised him with his mother. When they saw "the one who holds the whole of creation [*Pantocrator*] in the bosom of Mary, suckling her breast like babies, they searched for him in the heavens and they found him with his Father and the Holy Spirit [in his divine honour]." Being amazed at the humility of the Son of God, they chanted: "Glory be to

[589] Ibid, 109, no. 46. A similar expression is found in *Abba* Giyorgis' work, *Fəkare Haymanot* – ፍካሬ ሃይማኖት [Exposition of Faith]: "I believe in the Son of God who came into the world by His own good pleasure and the good pleasure of His Father and the Holy Spirit. He journeyed without moving, He descended without diminution above and without commotion below. He was carried without being gathered in the womb. He was born without opening the gate of the body (virginity). He was nourished by the milk of virginity." See "*Fəkare Haymanot* or the Faith of *Abba* Giyorgis Säglawi," trans. Haile, 243.

[590] *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] 68.

[591] See "Təməhrətä Ḫabu'at [Mystagogia]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 12.

God on high." Referring to his great love for humans, they also sang: "He loved humans; let peace be upon earth."[592]

The Ethiopian tradition upholds that while both creation and redemption are the works of the same triune God, the wisdom that God showed in the incarnation of the Logos to save the world is more wonderful than the divine wisdom of creating the world.[593] With this sense of owe and wonder, at the feast of the Nativity of Christ the following hymn is chanted: "We greet the birth of Emmanuel, the Word of God incarnate. O Word of God eternal, how could the virgin carry you [in her womb]? …He [The Word of God incarnate] slept in a manger; was wrapped by swaddling clothes; and he was suckled like babes."[594] It is extraordinarily marvelous that the one, who had made the heavens and the earth, was born of St. Mary and slept in a manger, suckling from the breasts of his virgin mother.[595] Likewise, the author of the Ethiopic anaphora of St. Athanasius expresses a great sense of amazement at the incarnation of the Son of God: "This is a wonderful, admirable and marvelous thing. Which shall I think and about which shall I marvel? Your existence with your Father in silence and holiness or your [presence] in the bosom of your mother like babies?"[596] Indeed, "great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16).

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[592] See "Anəqäṣä Bərhan: Gate of Light," *Mäzəmurä Dawit* [Psalm of David], 51-52.
[593] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 122. This is consonant with what Gregory of Nyssa wrote in his *Great Catechism*: "[I]t is not the vastness of the heavens, and the bright shining of its constellations, and the order of the universe, and the unbroken administration over all existence that so manifestly displays the transcendent power of the Deity as this condescension to the weakness of our nature." See Gregory of Nyssa, "The Great Catechism, XXIV" *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Vol. 5, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994) 494.
[594] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 107.
[595] Ibid, 105.
[596] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 149, no. 120.

At the heart of the Ethiopian incarnational theology lies the deification of the human person (*theōsis* or *deificatio*).[597] In the *hypostatic* union of the divinity and humanity in Christ, humanity was exalted to the level of divinity. As a second Adam, Christ the incarnate Word, in his humanity made us partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 1: 4). The Ethiopian fathers teach that the deification of the human person in Christ fulfills the prophecy foretold by the triune God: "See the man has become like one of us" (Gen. 3: 22).[598] In the humanity of Christ, which is consubstantial with us, we were brought into fullness of communion with God in order that we may be transfigured from glory to glory.

The incarnation of the Logos is mainly significant because the concept of redemption and the renewal of creation are centered in it. The incarnation had two main purposes: the first one, which may be considered as a negative purpose, is redeeming creation from sin and its consequences (death, corruption), whereas the positive aspect is bringing all of creation to transfiguration, its original destiny. In his treatise, *On the Incarnation,* St. Athanasius reflects on these dual purposes of the incarnation. According to Athanasius, "the renewal of creation has been wrought by the Self-same Word Who made it in the beginning."[599] However, putting death and corruption to an end was the necessary step for the renewal and re-creation of the universe: "In order to effect this re-

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[597]The Orthodox view of *theōsis* is succinctly defined by Anastasius of Sinai as quoted by Christoforos Stavropoulos. "Theosis is elevation to what is better, but not the reduction of our nature to something less, nor is it an essential change of our human nature. A divine plan, it is the willing condescension of tremendous dimension by God, which he did for the salvation of others. That which is of God is that which has been lifted up to a greater glory, without its own nature being changed." See Christoforos Stavropoulos, "Partakers of Divine Nature," *Eastern Orthodox Theology*: *A Contemporary Reader*, ed. Daniel B. Clendenn (Michigan: Baker Books, 1995) 184.

[598] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 88.

[599] Athanasius, *On the Incarnation,* 26, no. 1.

creation, He (the Word of God incarnate) had first to do away with death and corruption."[600]

As the Word of God incarnate, Christ was able to redeem creation by his suffering and create it anew: "For He (the Word of God) alone, being Word of the Father and above all, was in consequence both able to recreate all, and worthy to suffer on behalf of all."[601] Having redeemed the whole of creation from sin and its adverse consequences, the Lord Christ offered the possibility of bringing creation to its consummation. "[I]n Christ the providence of God is revealed as a plan and a real activity for the salvation and deification of creation in him."[602] These two purposes of the incarnation of the Logos: redemption from sin and its consequences, and the deification (transfiguration) of creation are manifested in the liturgical texts of the EOTC as discussed below.

Redemption from Sin

The first humans did not only violate the commandment of God, but also introduced sin to the whole of creation. As a result of the primordial Fall, sin and the "cosmic disease of death"[603] disintegrated the created order. Thus salvation was given as "a divine answer to the evil which exist[ed] parasitically in the whole of creation."[604] Since the transgression of the first humans subjected creation to the slavery of sin, Christ suffered to "break the bonds of sin" once for all.[605] As descendants of Adam and Eve,

[600] Ibid, 41, no. 13.
[601] Ibid, 33, no. 7.
[602] Stăniloae, *The Experience of God,* Vol. II, 215.
[603] Payton, *Light from the Christian East,* 211.
[604] Prokurat, "Orthodox Perspectives on Creation," 341.
[605] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 26.

humans inherited inclination to sin, and thus the entire human nature was deteriorated.[606] While Christ is sinless, "he took our sins, and redeemed us" from all the effects of sin.[607]

The redemption of the world from sin and corruption was achieved through the death of Christ which is a sacrificial offering. Bearing the sin of humanity on his body, "Christ suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring [us] to God" (I Pet. 3:18). He gave his life as a ransom for us, and "bought us by the [shedding] of his precious blood."[608] Underlining the sacrificial aspect of the death of Christ and its sacramental efficacy, in the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy, shortly before partaking of the Holy Communion the celebrant prays:

> Lord my God, behold the sacrifice of thy Son's body which pleases thee. Through it blot out all my sins because thy only-begotten Son died for me. And behold the pure blood of thy Messiah, which was shed for me upon Calvary, cries aloud in my stead. Grant that this speaking blood[609] may be the forgiver of me, thy servant.[610]

Christ's offering of himself for our sins was a ransom made on the basis of love, for "the effective power of sacrifice is love."[611] Highlighting the unconditional love of Christ revealed in his death, the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Mary says: "Love drew the mighty Son [of God] down from His throne, and led him to death."[612] In the same anaphora the sacrificial aspect of the death of Christ is symbolically explained. The Lord Christ is

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[606] Maximos Aghiorgoussis, "Sin in Orthodox Dogmatics," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly,* 21/4 (1997) 183.
[607] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 11.
[608] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 193, no. 86. Though, in the Ethiopian liturgical texts there are references that present the death of Christ as a ransom, the idea whether the ransom was paid either to God or to the devil is not entertained at all. The references to "ransom" imply our deliverance from sin and its consequences, such as corruption, death, etc.
[609] According to the liturgical commentary, the phrase "speaking blood" refers to the power of Jesus' blood to cleanse our sins (I Jn. 1:7). See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 139. As we read in the gospels, Jesus was remitting sins by uttering an order: "your sins are forgiven" (for e.g., see Mk. 2:5). Hence, the expression "this speaking blood" that forgives sin seems to be an allusion to Christ's commanding power of forgiving sins by utterance.
[610] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 67, nos. 105-106.
[611] Florovsky, "Redemption," *Creation and Redemption,* Vol. III, 131.
[612] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 116, no. 127.

symbolized by a lamb who does not speak in front of those who drag him for slaughter.[613] While Christ is the sacrifice offered for our sins, at the same time he is also the High Priest who offered the redemptive sacrifice and received the sacrifice together with his Father and the Holy Spirit.[614]

In line with the Eastern Orthodox soteriology, the Ethiopian liturgical texts speak of the death of Christ as a victory over death and the devil. His death was not meant for the satisfaction of divine justice,[615] but to "destroy death and break the bonds of Satan; …to tread down hell; open the gates of life; and to remove [the power of] darkness."[616] Orthodoxy mainly looks at the death of Christ on the basis of the cosmic reality of death. As death had held humanity and the entire cosmos under "its usurped control and pushed it into the vicious circle of sin and corruption," Christ died to overcome mortality and corruption.[617]

While suffering on the Cross, therefore, "Christ was not a passive victim, but the Conqueror, even in His uttermost humiliation."[618] For Orthodoxy "the Cross is an emblem of victory,"[619] through which we were given authority to tread upon all the power of the enemy.[620] As chanted in matins of the EOTC, suffering on the Cross, Christ severed the chain of death and thus we were given "freedom from the bondage of sin,

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[613] Ibid, 117, no. 129.
[614] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 124.
[615] Anselm of Canterbury's theology of satisfaction teaches that humanity's transgression had aroused God's anger and offended the divine justice. Since there was no sufficient human sacrifice to appease God's anger, Christ died for the satisfaction of God's justice. See Aulén, *Christus Victor*, 84-92; Agourides, "Salvation According to the Orthodox Tradition," 198; Alfeyev, *The Mystery of Faith,* 89.
[616] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 59, no. 37.
[617] Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 161.
[618] Florovsky, "Redemption," *Creation and Redemption,* Vol. III, 101.
[619] Kalistos Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (New York: Penguin, 1993) 227.
[620] While the daily prayer recited before the Ethiopic Psalter refers to the Cross of Christ as "our power and fortress" the Prayer of Thanksgiving in the Ethiopian Missal signifies the victory we were granted over the devil and his demons as follows: "O Lord God Almighty…you are the one who has given us power to tread upon serpents and scorpions and upon all the power of the enemy." See "Ṣälot Zäzäwätər [Daily Prayer]," *Mäzəmurä Dawit,* 5 and "Prayer of Thanksgiving," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 23, no. 38.

death, and that of the devil."[621] The *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* [*Mystagogia*] dramatically presents the defeat of the devil by the death of Christ. Though the text does not dare to say that God deceived the devil, it reflects Gregory of Nyssa's thought of redemption as the "deception" of the devil. Gregory teaches that concealing his divinity, Christ offered his body to the devil. Greedily focused only on the humanity of Christ, the devil rushed on this "bait," Christ's humanity, but was caught on the "hook," Christ's divinity. Since the devil himself is a deceiver, he was rightly deceived.[622] According to the *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* [*Mystagogia*] as the devil "was accustomed to devouring the souls" of the Old Testament people, while Christ was suffering on the Cross he approached him to do the same.[623] But he was trapped by Christ's divine power, and was scared of the "divine beauty (*Śənä Mäläkot* – ሥነ መለኮት) that he saw in Christ."[624]

Having vanquished the "venomous power of the devil"[625] on the Cross, after his death Christ descended to Hell in his soul.[626] He descended into hell as "*Christus Victor,*

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[621] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 32.

[622] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Great Catechism, XXVI" *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Vol. 5, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994) 495. Gregory writes: "He (the devil) who first deceived man by the bait of sensual pleasure is himself deceived by the presentment of the human form." Similarly *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* [Mystagogia] states that as the devil deceived Adam and Eve being disguised in the body of the serpent and defeated them, so was he defeated when the *Logos* "hid Himself in the human flesh." See "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at [Mystagogia]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 13.

[623] See "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at [Mystagogia]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 16.

[624] Ibid.

[625] Ibid, 7.

[626] The Ethiopian traditional fathers teach that Christ descended to Hell in his soul after his death. Though his soul was separated from his body, his divinity was not separated either from his soul or from his body. See the commentary on "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at [Mystagogia]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 16. Christ's descent to Hell to release the souls that were under the bondage of the devil has a biblical mandate: "He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison" (I Pet. 3: 19). See also "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 328-367 for *Abba* Giyorgis' refutation against the heresy attributed to a certain "Arsis" and his associates who said that "Christ descended to *Sheol* [Hell] in both his body and soul." *Abba* Giyorgis argued that since Christ's death on the Cross was understood as the separation of his soul from his body, we could not say that he descended to *Sheol* after his crucifixion in both his soul and body. "Being separated from his body, the soul of Christ

as the Master of Life."[627] Defeated and losing his grip on the souls whom he had taken captive, as *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* [*Mystagogia*] interestingly illustrates, the devil cried:

> Who is this Who [that] has conquered me, having clothed Himself with a body which is under my power? Who is this (Who) snatches away from me the body given him for destruction? Who is this (Who) has clothed Himself of the earth, but is heavenly? Who is this (Who) was born in corruption and Who is incorruptible? Who is this (Who) is a stranger to my law? Who is this Who will take captive (those) who are mine? Who is this Who by the power of the flame of fire will contend with Death? Who is this Who has conquered darkness?[628] What is this new glory which in this similitude has hindered me from doing that which I will? Who is this without sin Who has died? Who is this Who by His great light has made blind the darkness, and Who has not left me those who are mine, over (whom) I rule,[629] but draws all (to) the heavens, the souls which have been given [to] me? What is this glory which will not refuse the body (which) is not corrupted?[630] Who is this Whom it is not possible to touch? Who is this Whom a glory which is unsearchable encircles?[631] I have been destroyed by this One and by those whose [*sic*][632] are His; I am not able to work harm against them.[633]

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descended to *Sheol* with the power of the divinity." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO,* Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 329.

[627] Florovsky, "Redemption," *Creation and Redemption,* Vol. III, 142.

[628] The English translation of the Syriac version reads: "Who is this that strives with the power of burning Death, and conquers darkness?" See *Syriac Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 88.

[629] The English translation of the Syriac version reads: "Who is this that by the abundance of light extinguishes darkness, and does not allow me to have rule over those that are mine?" See *Syriac Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 88.

[630] The English translation of the Syriac version says: "What is this glory which prevents the body from being corruptible?" and this appears to be the correct translation of the sentence. The translator of the Gəʿəz text was faithful to the text; but the sentence did not make sense since in the original Gəʿəz the verb that refers to "be corrupt" was mistakenly negated. The Gəʿəz reads: "*Mänu zəntu səbḥat zäyəkälə' śəga itəmasən* – መኑ ዝንቱ ስብሐት ዘይከልእ ሥጋ ኢትማስን," which means "what is this glory which prevents the body that is not corruptible?" But if the negating letter "*i* [ኢ]" were avoided from the last word: "*itəmasən* (ኢትማስን)" the sentence would have read: "*Mänu zəntu səbḥat zäyəkällə' śəga təmasən* – መኑ ዝንቱ ስብሐት ዘይከልእ ሥጋ ትማስን," conveying the same meaning as the Syriac: "What is this glory which prevents the body from being corruptible." Since the context is focused on the incorruptibility of the body of Christ as stated in the preceding sentence: "Who is this (Who) was born in corruption and Who is incorruptible?" this sentence too should have signified the same message. Also the Gəʿəz text which Hallok consulted has the negating letter "i" in the verb "*yəkällə'* (ይከልእ) = to prevent/ refuse" whereas the letter is omitted in Beylot's and other modern texts of the Ethiopic *Mystagogia* [*Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at*]. That was why he negated the verb which he translated as "will not refuse" within the sentence. See "The Ethiopic Version of the Mystagogia," trans. Hallok, 72 and 75; *Syriac Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 88; *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 59. See also "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 17.

[631] Here the English translation of the Syriac version adds: "Woe is me!" See *Syriac Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 88.

[632] The Gəʿəz text says: "*wäəmə'lli'ahu* (ወእምእሊአሁ);" the phrase should have been translated as, "by those who are His."

[633] See "The Ethiopic Version of the Mystagogia," trans. Hallok, 71-72. See also "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 16-17.

The devil, symbolized by death and darkness in the above text, was unable to understand the mystery of the incarnation of the *Logos*.[634] He was shocked to realize that the immortal and eternal divine nature assumed the fallen human nature so as to end his dominion over humanity. The radiant divine light of Christ, the Sun of righteousness, blinded the darkness of hell, and the devil could not approach that divine light. As a result, the devil had no option but to release all the souls whom he had taken captive by his deceit.[635] As sung in the Ethiopian matins, "using his Cross as an oar, Christ took all the souls out of the sea of Hades"[636] – he made "captivity itself a captive" (Eph. 4:8). Indeed, "The descent of Christ into hell is the manifestation of Life amid the hopelessness of death; it is victory over death."[637]

The redemption and victory achieved by the death of Christ was culminated when Christ rose from the dead. "For since death came through a human being," writes St. Paul, "the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ" (I Cor. 15:21-22). Death that had reigned over human beings due to the Adamic sin was mocked by the resurrection of Christ: "Where, O death is your victory? Where O death is your sting?" (I Cor. 15:55). By his resurrection, Christ "trampled death under [his] foot, and gave the life of eternal rest to those who were in the grave."[638] For Orthodoxy, therefore, the resurrection of Christ is the summit of the salvific work of the whole Christ event. As Payton notes: "What is assured in Christ's incarnation, pursued in his life and reached for in his death – namely, eternal life, communion with God and victory over our enemies – is only achieved fully

[634] See "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 16.
[635] Ibid, 7 and 16.
[636] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 32.
[637] Florovsky, "Redemption," *Creation and Redemption,* Vol. III, 142.
[638] See the paschal hymn of the preparatory service of *Qəddase* in *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 40, no. 173.

and completely when Christ rises from the grave."[639] Rising from the dead as the "first fruits of those who have died," (I Cor. 15:20) Christ has given us the hope that our corruptible bodies will be raised putting on incorruptibility. In the resurrection of Christ, the new creation that is the eschatological destiny of matter is already inaugurated.[640]

The Transfiguration of the Cosmos in Christ

Orthodox soteriology mainly understands salvation as the deification (transfiguration) of the entire cosmos in Christ. John Chrissavagis asserts that "…the Incarnation is considered as part of the original creative plan, and not simply as a response to the human fall."[641] Based on Maximus the Confessor's *theologoumenon* that the incarnation would have taken place even if the human person had not fallen, Zizioulas contended that the incarnation of the Logos was not primarily the result of the primordial Fall.[642] It was mainly meant to transform the whole of creation and unite the material creation with the uncreated God. The incarnation has revealed the goal of creation, which is "the consummation of the entire cosmic order, organic and inorganic, in Christ."[643] The *Logos* assumed human flesh mainly to serve the original will of God for the cosmos.

In the Ethiopic texts we find parallels to the Orthodox view that considers the incarnation of the *Logos* as the original divine plan. *Kəbrä Nägäśt* – ክብረ ነገሥት [Glory of Kings], which is a historical book, in its 68th chapter sketches a genealogy of Christ the Redeemer "in the image of the pearl that was hidden in Adam's body before the creation of Eve and wandered a pre-designated path through the generations to the fulfillment of

[639] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 129.
[640] Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 237.
[641] Chryssavgis, *Beyond the Shattered Image,* 54.
[642] Zizioulas, *Lectures,*103.
[643] Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 227.

the ages."[644] Signifying the divine plan of salvation before the Fall, the book states: "Your [Humans'] salvation was created in the belly of ADAM in the form of a Pearl before EVE."[645] The identification of the pearl with Christ is also elucidated as: "the Pearl shall be…the saviour of all the world. And when the appointed time has come this Pearl shall be born of thy [David's] seed…and the Redeemer shall come from the seat of His Godhead, and shall dwell upon her, and shall put on her flesh."[646] Though the name of the Redeemer is not explicitly mentioned in this illustration, his coming from "the seat of His Godhead," and his dwelling "upon her" refer to the incarnation of the Word of God from St. Mary when the fullness of time has come (Gal. 4:4; Jn. 1:14).

In accordance with *Kəbrä Nägäśt*'s pearl story, in the Ethiopic *Theotokia* [Praise of Mary] Christ is analogously called "a precious pearl," which Joseph the righteous discovered in a treasure [*Mäzəgäb* – መዝገብ], and the treasure refers to St. Mary.[647] This analogy of a pre-existing pearl reflects the Orthodox teaching that the incarnation of the Logos was God's original creative plan, and it would have taken place even though Adam and Eve did not fall. This stand is more clearly reflected in a saying ascribed to Jesus in the Ethiopic *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos* – መጽሐፈ ቀሌምንጦስ [Book of Clement]: "O Peter if I did not plan to be incarnated from the Virgin, I would not have created Adam or the heavens."[648] As clearly stated in *Tä'ammərä Maryam* – ተአምረ ማርያም [Miracle of Mary], a book used in the EOTC for liturgical purposes, since the incarnation of the

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[644] Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition,* Vol. II, Part IV, 339. Grillmeier states that the Redeemer is also symbolized by a pearl in the writings of St. Clement of Alexandria and St. Ephraem the Syrian. See footnote no. 11 on the same page. For the full account of the pearl story see *Kebra Nagast,* trans. Budge, 230-235.
[645] See *Kebra Nagast,* trans. Budge, 230.
[646] Ibid, 232-233.
[647] *Wəddase Maryam Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Praise of Mary] (Addis Ababa: Tinsae Zagubae Printing Press, 1991) 53.
[648] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 93.

Logos from the Blessed Virgin was God's original plan "St. Mary had been in the thought of God prior to the creation of the world."[649] In line with this perspective, a modern Ethiopian scholar underlines in his doctrinal book that salvation was "God's plan before the creation of the world," and this plan was "revealed after the Fall of the human person."[650]

As the whole of creation was created through the *Logos* (Word of God), when the *Logos* became flesh, he entered to his own creation, containing in him all creation invisibly. By becoming man the *Logos* recapitulated all creation into his body.[651] Scripture tells us that all things were created for Christ, and as he is before all things, in him all things hold together (Col.1: 16-17). Thus, the whole creation is inherent in Christ, the Word of God incarnate. As the *Logos* incarnate, Christ is both the "agent of creation" in God and a "microcosm."[652] The plan that God has set forth in Christ is "to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph. 1:10). Creation was created through the Logos, and also its fullest existence and meaning was realized in Christ.

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[649] *Tä'ammərä Maryam Bä-Gə'əz Ǝna Amarəññа* [The Miracle of Mary in Gə'əz and Amharic] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1997) 3, no. 6.

[650] Sebhat Lä-Ab, *Səmə'a Ṣədəq Bəḥerawi* [National Witness of Truth] 51.

[651] In *Adversus Haereses*, Irenaeus illustrates his theology of recapitulation. For example, he writes: "There is….one Christ Jesus, who came by means of the whole dispensational arrangements…, and gathered together all things in Himself. But in every respect, too, He is man, the formation of God; and thus He took up man into Himself, the invisible becoming visible, the incomprehensible being made comprehensible, the impassible becoming capable of suffering, and the Word being man, thus summing up all things in Himself." See "Against Heresies III, XVI, 6" *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*: *Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, Vol. I, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Michigan: W.M.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993) 443. In the Ethiopic Book of Clement [*Mäṣəḥafä Qäleməntos*] there is a brief dialogue attributed to Jesus and his disciple Peter. To Peter's query about the existence of the Son of God before his incarnation, Jesus replied: "I am the place who holds all; and prior to creation I was on my throne of grace, whereas the Father was being praised in me, and I was also being glorified in the Holy Spirit. There is neither precedence nor succession between us [the three Persons of the Trinity]; we do not have either origin or an end." The reference to Jesus as the "place who holds all [the whole of creation]" in the Ehiopic Book of Clement reflects the Irenean thought of recapitulation. See *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 84-85.

[652] Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 152.

By his coming to the world, Christ opened the heavens and renewed the relations between God, the human person, and the rest of creation. The cosmic significance of the Nativity of Christ was revealed by the rejoicing of all creation at the coming of the Savior: the angels announced the glad tidings to the shepherds who witnessed the birth of Christ; angels and humans offered glory to God in unison; the star, another celestial creature, led the magi to Bethlehem; two animals warmed up the newly born Saviour with their breath.[653] A portion of the Ethiopic *Theotokia* (*Wəddase Maryam*) signifies that "the whole of creation rejoiced by the coming of the Saviour," and again the *Theotokia* reads: "Rejoice O Bethlehem, the country of the prophets, for Christ has been born in you."[654] Mountains, hills, and trees as well are said to be joyous over the birth of the redeemer, as stated in the Ethiopian Christmas hymnary: "While the mountains rejoice and the hills are delighted, the trees of the wilderness clap their leaves as the Saviour has been born."[655] The birth of Christ, indeed, is envisioned as a cosmic joy.

Through his redemptive act, Christ gathered the entire creation that had been disintegrated by the human sin. Christ, the second Adam, came to the world "aimed precisely at [the] unity and communion of the whole of creation with God, at the reference of creation back to God again."[656] The whole life of Christ was a mission of transforming creation. This stand is clearly reflected in the Ethiopic hymn which is chanted at the feast of the Holy Cross. According to this hymn, Christ's crucifixion on

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[653] In reference to the care given to the newly born Jesus by two animals, the post-communion prayer of the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Mary says: "O Virgin, remind him of his birth, delivered from thee at Bethlehem, of his being wrapped in swaddling clothes and his being warmed by the breath of [a donkey] and a cow on the cold days." *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 120, no. 166.
[654] *Wəddase Maryam* [Praise of Mary/*Theotokia*] 10.
[655] See "Ziq Zä-Lədät – ዚቅ ዘልደት [Hymn of Nativity]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 106.
[656] John Zizioulas, "Man the Priest of Creation: A Response to the Ecological Problem," *Living Orthodoxy in the Modern World*, eds. Andrew Walker and Costa Carras (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000) 184.

the Cross was not only to redeem humans who were captives of Satan, but also "to renew the corrupted creation."[657] Expounding the cosmic aspect of the redemption made by Christ, Florovsky notes that the death of the Saviour on the Cross, "is the cleansing of the whole world. It is the baptism by blood of all creation, the cleansing of the cosmos through the cleansing of the Microcosm (the human person)."[658] In line with this understanding, an Ethiopian Paschal hymn says: "the earth has been cleansed by the blood of Christ."[659]

The cosmic dimension of the redemption is presented in the Ethiopian Liturgy in a poetic language, exemplifying that the whole cosmos celebrates *pascha*. "Being cleansed by the blood of Christ, the earth celebrates *pascha*," says the Easter hymnary;[660] and for this celebration, the earth is joined by its inhabitants, such as humans, mountains, hills, storms, beasts, birds, and all the trees of the wilderness.[661] As the *pascha* is a cosmic event, there is also a great joy in the heavens: "Today in the heavens the hosts of the angels rejoice, since Christ has defeated death, and is risen."[662] Humans, angels, and the rest material and invisible creatures of the cosmos that were hostile to each other, being reconciled by Christ's redemptive work offer a cosmic worship in unison. The God

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[657] See "Ziq Zä-Bä'alä Mäsqäl – ዚቅ ዘበዓለ መስቀል [Hymn of the Feast of the Cross]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 23.

[658] Florovsky, "Redemption," *Creation and Redemption,* Vol. III, 133-134.

[659] See "Mäzəmur Zä-Tənsaʿe – መዝሙር ዘትንሣኤ [Paschal Song]" *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 52. The cosmic dimension of Christ's passion and crucifixion is elsewhere articulated in the Ethiopian Liturgy. For example, the anaphora of Gregory of Nyssa says: "The sea trembled and the waters of the stream fled when they saw [the Son of] God beaten on his cheeks; the sun was darkened, the moon became blood and the stars became void of their great light. Death was afraid, the Devil fell, and Hades went together with its own to receive the [awesome] God." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 177, nos. 43-44.

[660] "Mäzəmur Zä-Tənsaʿe – መዝሙር ዘትንሣኤ [Paschal Song]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 52.

[661] "Ziq Zä-Tənsaʿe – ዚቅ ዘትንሣኤ [Paschal Hymn]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 159.

[662] "Mäzəmur Zä-Tənsaʿe – መዝሙር ዘትንሣኤ [Paschal Song]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 52.

who created the whole universe in the beginning is the God who redeemed it through the atonement made by Christ.

Though the whole universe has been redeemed, its ultimate transfiguration has yet to come. Creation is now in travail, awaiting the time when it "will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8: 21). While Christians experience the renewal of the cosmos in the sacramental reality of the body of Christ, who has recapitulated the whole creation in himself, the final glory of the cosmos is still to come. Even though the Christ event has brought "the potential transfiguration on the whole cosmos," we experience "the already and not yet tension" because the transfiguration of the cosmos is an eschatological reality.[663] Through his redemptive work, Christ has given us the possibility to experience deification; but our full participation in the glory of God will be achieved after the second coming of Christ. At the general resurrection, by reuniting humans' souls to their bodies, Christ will grant an everlasting deification to humanity, and along with humans the cosmos also will be given "unending deification." The bodies of humans and the entire creation will be renewed as "an incorruptible, spiritual and divine dwelling place."[664]

Our hope of the transfiguration of the cosmos, which is an eschatological reality, was manifested in the transfiguration of Christ at Mount Tabor. Theokritoff asserts that what really happened at the transfiguration of Christ was the transformation of the cosmos. "As is often pointed out," she contends, "not only Christ's face but also his clothes are transfigured; non-human creation, even human artifacts are caught up into

[663] Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 230.
[664] Damascene, "Created in Incorruption," 84.

glory."[665] As "a consummate affirmation of the worth of the sensible and of matter,"[666] Christ's transfiguration underlines the transfiguration of the whole cosmos. God's economy of salvation mainly consists of the deification of the created world,[667] and since we belong to the material environment by our bodies, our transfiguration entails the transformation of the entire creation. While we will be deified by participating in the energies of God, Christ will relieve the universe from its groaning by transforming it into "a new earth and a new heaven" (Rev. 21:1), finally summing up all creation in him so that God would be all in all.

C. Human Responsibility for Creation

Fundamental to the Christian thought of the created matter is that God created it and said "it was good" (Gen. 1:25). The good creation was affected by sin, not because of its fault but due to the human person's unfaithfulness to the divine commandment. Christianity upholds the goodness of creation in many ways. The incarnation of the *Logos* shows the place of material creation in Christianity, highlighting that matter is "God-friendly."[668] Moreover, in the Eucharistic Liturgy, the church uses the products of nature to offer thanksgiving which is a modest act of referring creation back to its creator.

In its original state though creation was good, its goodness did not entail perfection. Having created the good creation, God intended further development of creation towards perfection. "Created reality was not made perfect in the sense of being its final goal," writes Payton, "it still had to develop in the direction of ultimate

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[665] Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 227.
[666] Anestis G. Keselopoulos, *Man and the Environment: A Study of St. Symeon the New Theologian,* trans. Elizabeth Theocritoff (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001) 3.
[667] Stăniloae, *The Experience of God,* Vol. II, 1.
[668] Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 226.

perfection."[669] Through the divine command: "fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over…the living thing that moves upon the earth" (Gen. 1: 26) the human person was given a special role to cultivate nature and give names to animals.[670]

The special role of the human person was mainly to be the "king and priest of creation"[671] who brings the rest of creation into communion with God. Unfortunately, however, the human person refused "the vocation to live eucharistically" by returning creation back to its Creator.[672] Violating the divine command, the person "lost the eucharistic life [and] the power to transform it into Life."[673] Instead of controlling nature as the crown of creation, the human person rather preferred to be controlled by it. Moreover, failing to be in communion with God, the person led creation to futility, bondage, and death. Christ redeemed the whole of creation which is now heading to its final glorious goal of transfiguration. But at the present age, looking for its fulfillment, creation is in a defective state, and its destiny is by no means fulfilled.[674] Creation is still suffering, and its travail is seen in the on-going ecological crises, such as "air and water pollution, global warming, depletion of non-renewable resources, destruction of the ozone layer, increasing nuclear radiation, deforestation and desertification of vast areas, etc."[675] At the current stage, since forces of disintegration and division are actively at work in creation, humans should fulfill their God-given task of uniting creation with its Creator. Every person can truly be the priest of creation if "he or she freely turns it into a

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[669] Payton, *Light from the Christian East,* 96.
[670] *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 81.
[671] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 10.
[672] Philip LeMasters, "Incarnation, Sacrament, and the Environment in Orthodox Thought," *Worship,* 81/3 (2007) 216.
[673] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 17.
[674] Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 134.
[675] Prokurat, "Orthodox Perspectives on Creation," 339.

vehicle of communion with God and fellow human beings."[676] This Orthodox perspective of creation signifies the vocation of humans as stewards of God's creation who could offer it back to God in order to make it "an epiphany of the Kingdom of Heaven."[677] It is the responsibility of humans to unveil the transfiguration of the world by being the priests of creation in the "immense cathedral which is the universe of God."[678]

The Orthodox sacramental understanding signifies the role of the human person in uniting creation with its Creator. As we will discuss in the next chapter, the rite of blessing the created matter: bread, wine, incense, the earth, and even rains and winds as in the Ethiopian liturgy[679] demonstrates the sacredness and usefulness of creation. The proper understanding of the worth and goodness of creation entails that there is a need to draw creation closer to God. The Eucharistic Liturgy (*Qeddase*) of the Orthodox Church "consists in taking [the eucharistic] elements from the natural world, …and bringing them into the hands of the human being, the hands of Christ who is the man *par excellence* and the priest of creation, in order to refer them to God."[680] The bread and wine are offered as representatives of the created order, and thus the human person offers the entire world to God through the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Moreover, the eucharistic experience incurs in us communion with the eschatological world that is yet to be realized. Christians who have this realization, granted by the Holy Spirit through the church sacraments, "see their responsibility to transfigure creation – always with God's

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[676] John Zizioulas, "Ecological Asceticism: A Cultural Revolution," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought,* 67 (1997) 23.
[677] LeMasters, "Incarnation, Sacrament, and the Environment in Orthodox Thought," 212.
[678] Ware, *The Orthodox Way,* 65.
[679] In the prayer known as *Ṣäotä Burake* – ጸሎተ ቡራኬ [The Prayer of Benediction], the celebrant priest says: "O Lord…bless the airs [winds as in the Gəʿəz original] of heaven (*benediction towards heaven*), and the rains and the fruits of the earth of this year in accordance with thy grace and make joy and gladness prevail perpetually on the face of the earth (*benediction towards earth*)." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 57, no. 13.
[680] Zizioulas, "Man the Priest of Creation," 185.

grace – in both a spiritual and a material way."[681] This eschatological vision, indeed, enables Christians to work for the preservation and integrity of creation.

Humans also need to value creation because it contributes to the communion of humanity with the creator. The natural creation was made "to be the context for God's incarnation and humankind's deification, and as such, the beginning of the actualization of the Kingdom of God."[682] Certainly, the cosmos provides the precondition for the progress of humanity from creation to deification. At the same time, by growing to their final destiny, *theōsis*, humans need to lead the groaning creation to transfiguration as the entire creation is intended to become a transfigured world. By virtue of their physical existence, human beings are related to the material world, and thus if they move to the direction of deification, they carry the material created reality (the world) with them. Hence, the right understanding of having dominion over all creatures (Gen 1:28) means to be stewards of God's material world, caring for it and maintaining its integrity in anticipation of its future transformation.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the various themes of creation theology in the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition. I have primarily discussed the transcendence of the triune God in the divine essence and the immanence of the same God in creation. The three divine Persons eternally existed prior to creation in communion of love and created the world out of their common will. Creation was not a necessity for the triune God, but God brought creation *ex nihilo* to share the divine love to the created beings. The triune God, who cannot be known in the divine essence, is immanent in creation through the

[681] Prokurat, "Orthodox Perspectives on Creation," 342.
[682] Ibid, 334.

energies (activities) of God, and thus creation serves as a revelation (*Theophania*) of the unknowable mystery. While underlining these basic themes of creation theology, the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical texts demonstrate a profound sense of wonder for God's beautiful work of creation. The speculation, prevalent in these texts, over the material and spiritual worlds of the universe is mainly geared to highlight the unfathomable depth of God's handiwork.

I have also shown that the Ethiopian liturgical texts basically agree with the fundamental Orthodox soteriology. As the sin of the first Adam affected not only humans but also the rest of creation, the whole of created order was in need of salvation from the adverse consequences brought by sin. Through the incarnation the Word of God became part of creation. As a result, the universe has been transformed by the whole Christ event, which was mainly meant to bring creation into communion with God in accordance with God's original plan for the cosmos. Yet the world awaits the fulfillment of its salvation that will be realized after the *eschaton*. Understanding the value of creation and their responsibility as the priests of creation, humans need to contribute to the realization of the *telos* of the created order – communion with God. These are the basic themes of creation theology nuanced in this chapter. The next chapter deals with the sacramental praxis of the Ethiopian liturgy and closely analyzes the creation motifs found in the EOTC's liturgical texts thereby highlighting the ample place given to creation in the Ethiopian liturgical rite.

CHAPTER 3

CREATION-CENTRED LITURGY

Christian worship basically has two major emphases: "*remembrance* and *thanksgiving – anamnēsis* and *eucharistia*."[683] The eucharistic prayers of the church are "elaborate *anamnēsis* or recollection" of God's mighty work in creation and that of the redemptive work of Christ.[684] Hence, "the Eucharist is intrinsically a memorial of creation and redemption together."[685] The eucharistic *anamnēsis* does not only embrace what God has done for us but also the promise of God to transform the whole of creation in Christ.[686] Through doxology, the Eucharist also expresses our gratitude for creation as well as for God's work of salvation through the Lord Christ.

The link between creation and redemption is explicitly demonstrated in the early church's eucharistic prayers, whose background is located in the Jewish liturgical tradition. The Jewish tripartite prayer of blessing over the cup, *Birkat ha-mazon*, consists of: a blessing of God as Creator and provider of food for all humankind; and a remembrance of the salvific work of God for the fore-fathers of the Israelites, which is followed by intercession for the people of God.[687] Praising God for nourishment and for the restoration of Jerusalem was maintained in the earliest eucharistic prayers though with Christian meanings; the material food became the spiritual food of the Eucharist, and the new Jerusalem was seen in terms of the church.[688] Moreover, in some of the early

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[683] Georges Florovsky, "The Worshipping Church," *The Festal Menaion*, trans. Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware (Pennsylvania: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, 1998) 25.
[684] Ibid, 31.
[685] Denis Edwards, "Eucharist and Ecology: Keeping Memorial of Creation," *Worship*, 82/3 (2008) 205.
[686] Ibid, 199.
[687] Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist,* 10.
[688] For example, in the 10th chapter of *Didachē* we find a reworking of the tripartite prayers of the *Birkat ha-mazon*. The prayer first blesses the Holy name of God, and then having recalled God's work of creation it offers thanksgiving to God for bestowing the eternal and spiritual food; the third part is a prayer of

eucharistic formularies we find a direct adoption of the Jewish thanksgiving over the firstfruits of the harvest. For instance, the *Didachē*[689] mentions the handing-over of the firstfruits to the prophets for their livelihood,[690] while the *Apostolic Tradition*[691] recounts the offering of the firstfruits to the bishop (*episcopos* – elder) who in turn offers them to God as a thanksgiving for nourishment.[692]

Being influenced by "the Jewish theology of the divine name, which is closely associated with creation,"[693] the early liturgies of the church embodied various creation themes.[694] The *Clementine Liturgy*,[695] which is the eighth book of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, exhibits an elaborate account of creation which intricately narrates the creation of the heavenly bodies and of the four elements of air, fire, earth, and water, and

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intercession for the church. See Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Text, Translation, Analysis, and Commentary* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004) X: 3-5, 25.

[689] From the Greek διδαχή - training/teaching. *Didachē* is one of the earliest church orders composed by an anonymous author/editor in mid first century. See Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 20.

[690] "So, every first-fruits of the products of the wine-vat and threshing-floor…you will give the first-fruits to the prophets; for they themselves are your high-priests." See Milavec, *The Didache*, 13: 3, 33.

[691] See Paul F. Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins* (London: SPCK, 2004) 135-136 for a short synopsis of the date, composition, and structure of the *Apostolic Tradition* attributed to Hippolytus of Rome.

[692] See *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, trans. Easton, 52. The relevance of thanksgiving over firstfruits to the Christian eucharistic celebration is clearly stated in Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses* where he relates the thanksgiving for creation over the firstfruits with the church's eucharistic service: "Jesus gave to his disciples direction to offer to God the firstfruits of his own created things…and took that created thing, bread, and gave thanks." See Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* IV: 17:5, 450.

[693] David Power, *The Eucharistic Mystery: Revitalizing the Tradition* (New York: Crossroad, 1993) 84.

[694] Historians underline that one cannot confidently speak of the liturgical development of the early church. As Paul Bradshaw admittedly writes, liturgical scholars like himself now "know much less about the liturgical practices of the first three centuries of Christianity than [they] once thought [they] did." See Paul Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) x. However, there is a consensus that the liturgies of the early centuries were influenced by the Jewish meal prayers. For example see Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins,* 32-35; 55-59.

[695] As part of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the last church order composed in A.D. 380, the Clementine Liturgy is supposed to be the "earliest surviving complete text of a liturgy." The liturgy was originally composed as the liturgy of the Catechumens, and it consists of the basic constituents of an anaphora proper. See David A. Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish: An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum* (California: Scholars Press, 1985) 26. See also *The Liturgy of the Eighth Book of the Apostolic Constitutions Commonly Called the Clementine Liturgy,* trans. R. H. Creswell (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1924) 26.

that of the first man.[696] The *Anaphora of St. James*, also known as *The Liturgy of Jerusalem*, bears in its preface a prayer that has a significant creation motif in which God is addressed as the Creator of all visible and invisible creatures and as the One who is hymned by the heavenly and earthly beings.[697]

In the *Egyptian Anaphora of St. Mark*, the *Sanctus* is inter-related with a thanksgiving for God's work of creation.[698] Likewise, the *Egyptian Anaphora of St. Basil* has a pre-*Sanctus* that gives us a "*locus* of the praise of God"[699] as a Creator:

> O Lord God, … you made heaven and earth and the sea and all that is in them. Father of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, through whom you made all things visible and invisible, you sit on the throne of your glory; you are adored by every holy power.[700]

We also find a brief creation motif coupled with a salvific theme in the 6th century Syrian liturgy of Saints *Addai and Mari*. The liturgy glorifies "the adorable and glorious name" of the Trinity for creating the world out of compassion and for saving humans by restoring grace to them.[701] All these suggest that in the early church the Eucharist was an act of glorifying God for creation.[702]

The particular[703] Jewish background of the EOTC and the strong dependence of its liturgy on the ancient church orders and canons have resulted in the prevalence of

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[696] See Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 105-106.
[697] Ibid, 53-54.
[698] Aidan Kavanagh, "Christ and Creation: Observations on Anaphoral Structure" *Creation and Liturgy: Studies in Honor of H. Boone Porter,* ed. Ralph N. McMichael (Washington, D.C: The Pastoral Press, 1993) 8. See also Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 53-54.
[699] Thomas J. Talley, "The Creation Theme in Eucharistic Prayer" *Creation and Liturgy: Studies in Honor of H. Boone Porter,* ed. Ralph N. McMichael (Washington, D.C: The Pastoral Press, 1993) 13. 20. See also Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 70.
[700] Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist, 70.*
[701] Ibid, 42.
[702] Edwards, "Eucharist and Ecology," 205.
[703] I say "particular" because though every church has Judaism at its root, Jewish influences are nowhere more strongly noticed than in the EOTC. Both Edward Ullendorff and E. Isaac trace out the various Jewish beliefs and practices that have shaped the Ethiopian liturgical tradition. Among other things, they discuss how the feasts, fasts, liturgical year, and church buildings of the EOTC were based on Jewish practices. See Edward Ullendorff, "Hebraic-Jewish Elements in Abyssinian (Monophysite) Christianity," *Journal of Semetic Studies*, 1 (1957) 216-256; E. Isaac, "An Obscure Component in Ethiopian Church History: An

creation themes in the Ethiopian liturgical tradition. The Psalter's various songs of creation such as Ps. 19 and 148,[704] and the canticle of the three Jewish youth (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) are chanted as parts of the matins on Sundays.[705] The devoted faithful of the EOTC bring grains of wheat to their parish churches[706] for the making of the eucharistic bread, and during *Qəddase* the assistant priest recites a prayer of blessing for those "who bring oblation, first-fruits, and tithes."[707]

As Peter Jeffery rightly notes, the Ethiopian liturgical tradition is "one of the most diverse and eclectic of the early liturgical traditions."[708] The Ethiopian liturgy is basically shaped by the *Testament of the Lord* [*Mäṣəḥafä Kidan* – መጽሐፈ ኪዳን],[709] the Ethiopian Church Order known as *Sinodos* – ሲኖዶስ [*Synodicon*],[710] and *Didascalia* [*Didəsqəlya* – ዲድስቅልያ][711] which is part of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. These sources belong to the Ethiopian New Testament Canon, though their real nature shows that they are pseudo-apostolic writings.[712] Regarding the significance of these church orders for the Ethiopian

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Examination of Various Theories Pertaining to the Problem of the Origin and Nature of Ethiopian Christianity" *Le Muséon: Revue d'études Orientales,* 85 (1972) 225-258.

[704] As I will discuss later in the section that deals with the Ethiopian lectionary, the lectionary extensively draws short hymns from the Psalms of David, known as *Məsbakat*, and assigns them to be chanted during the celebration of the Eucharist (*Qəddase*) and in the Divine Offices. The selected hymns are correlated with the four Ethiopian seasons and they illustrate the Lordship of God over creation and the divine providence for the whole of creatures.

[705] Yared, *Mə'əraf* [Hymnary] 47-48. Regarding the overall emphasis of the Ethiopian Liturgy on the Old Testament songs and canticles see E. Isaac, "An Obscure Component in Ethiopian Church History," 230.

[706] This is in accordance with the *Ethiopic Didascalia* that orders the people to bring offerings to the church. See *The Ethiopic Didascalia,* trans. Harden, Ch. VIII, 47-48.

[707] See "The Prayer of Oblation," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 23-24.

[708] Peter Jeffery, "The Liturgical Year in the Ethiopian Degg^{w}ā," *ΕΥΛΟΓΗΜΑ: Studies in Honour of Robert Taft, S.J.,* eds. E. Carr, S. Parenti, A. Thiermeyer, E. Velkovska (Rome: Centro Studi S. Anselmo, 1993) 199.

[709] See the brief description on the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord* in chapter 1 on pages 23, footnote 81.

[710] See the brief description on the Ethiopic book of *Sinodos* in chapter 1 on pages 20, footnote 67.

[711] See the brief description on the *Ethiopic Didascalia* in chapter 1 on page 28, footnote 102.

[712] Getatchew Haile, "A Study of the Issues Raised in Two Homilies of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob of Ethiopia," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Orgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 131 (1981) 99. See also Bausi, "The Critical Edition of the Ethiopic Sēnodos," 346. The inclusion of these pseudo-apostolic church orders to the New Testament Canon foreshadows the fact that the "concept of canonicity is regarded more loosely [in the EOTC] than it is among most other churches." See R. W. Cowley, "The Biblical Canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Today" *Ostkirchliche Studien* 23 (1974) 318.

liturgy, Haile asserts that "The liturgy of the Ethiopian Church in all its forms, anaphoras, baptismal ritual, funeral ritual etc., can be understood basically in the light of these sources [*Kidan, Sinodos, Didəsqəlya*]."[713] The Ethiopian Missal as well has an injunction that anyone of the clerics "who is not well acquainted with the *Mäṣəḥafä Kidan,* the book of *Sinodos,* and the *Didascalia*…[should not] enter for service in the church."[714]

The Ethiopic *Sinodos* consists of a book known as *Tə'əzaz Sinodos* (ትእዛዝ ሲኖዶስ), which is the combination of the *Apostolic Church Order* and the *Apostolic Tradition,*[715] and the eucharistic prayer of the latter has been expanded and named the Anaphora of the Apostles – the most commonly used anaphora in the EOTC. Even though the deacons are the ones who prepare the oblation, the Ethiopian Missal has a prayer that reflects the offering of the entire community: "Remember, O Lord, those who offered unto you this offering…accept the gifts of your servants,…and fill their houses with all your good things."[716] In addition to the anaphora of the *Testament of the Lord* [*Mäṣəḥafä Kidan*], various intercessory and baptismal prayers have been adapted to the Ethiopian Missal [*Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase*].[717] Moreover the eucharistic prayers of the early church, known for their creation themes, such as the anaphora of St. Mark, of St. James the brother of the Lord, and that of St. Basil have been in use in the EOTC for centuries.

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[713] Haile, "A Study of the Issues Raised in Two Homilies of Emperor Zär'a Ya'əqob of Ethiopia," 99-100.
[714] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 16, no. 62.
[715] See the translation of the Gəʿəz *Tə'əzaz Sinodos* in *The Statutes of the Apostles or Canones Ecclesiastici,* trans. G. Horner, 127-232. See also the translation of the Syriac "Apostolic Church Order" by J. P. Arendzen, "An Entire Syriac Text of the 'Apostolic Church Order,'" *The Journal of Theological Studies* 3 (1902) 59-80; and Gregory Dix's translation of the *Apostolic Tradition* in his book: *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus,* 1-72.
[716] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 19, nos. 5-7. According to the *Apostolic Tradition*, everyone who was supposed to be baptized "should bring his [her] offering" for the Eucharist. See *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus,* trans. Easton, 45, no. 20. Explaining this practice, Bernard Botte writes that the people were the ones who bring their gifts at the beginning of the meeting, and "the deacon brings them to the altar at the time of the Eucharist." See Bernard Botte, "Christian People and Hierarchy in the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus," *Roles in the Liturgical Assembly: The Twenty-third Liturgical Conference, Saint Serge,* trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1976) 62-63.
[717] For the list of these prayers see chapter 1 page 23, footnote 82.

As a tradition firmly built on the canonico-liturgical sources of the early church, the Ethiopian liturgy embodies prevalent creation themes[718] and cosmic rituals. It is the intent of this chapter, thus, to show that the Ethiopian liturgy is a creation-centered liturgy, which affirms the sacredness of creation through its sacramental use of created elements, and that it reflects a particular cosmology. This will be done by exploring the cosmological presuppositions of the church's sacramental rites and by examining closely the liturgical texts that are enriched with a creation language. In the first section of the chapter I will discuss the sacramental use of matter (bread, wine, water) that underlines the sanctification of the material creation as a whole. This discussion will show that the EOTC's eucharistic liturgy reflects the sacramentality of the world. Also as examples of sacramental cosmology, I will deal with the Ethiopian celebration of *Ṭəmqät* – ጥምቀት [Theophany], whose recurrent theme is the sanctification of the whole cosmos, and the celebration of *Dämära* – ደመራ [Feast of the Cross], in which the four corners of the earth are blessed. This section will be followed by a brief study of the Ethiopian lectionary whose cycle of liturgical seasons closely mirror the cycle of the seasons of nature.

Highlighting the cosmological dimensions of the Ethiopian liturgy, the third section will deal with the cosmic symbolism of the Ethiopian Church architecture and its iconography. This section will show how in Orthodoxy the sacred spaces serve as "the meeting place of heaven and earth,"[719] and the icons as "windows to heaven" which

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[718] The other Eastern liturgical rites as well demonstrate the prevalence of creation motifs. See for example the various creation themes of the Byzantine *Festal Menaion* and their theological implication in Elizabeth Theokritoff's article "The Shepherds, Their Wonder: The Birth of the Creator and the Wonder of Creation," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 102 (2005) 19-25. Highlighting the Roman Canon's lack of "a strong creation motif," Joseph Keenan states that the Fourth Eucharistic Prayer was inspired by the "great Eastern formularies, especially those of the *Apostolic Constitutions, St. James* and *St. Basil*." See his article: "The Importance of Creation Motif in a Eucharistic Prayer," *Worship* 53/4 (1979) 341.

[719] Pauly Maniyattu, "Celebration of the Cosmos in the East Syrian Liturgy," *Christian Orient,* 22/2 (2001) 85.

enable us "to access the realm of transcendence and the dwelling place of eternal beauty."[720] Beyond the actual liturgical assembly, the liturgy of the church extends to the whole cosmos, and the church joins in the celestial praise of the angels. This worship of the whole of creation, as a cosmic liturgy, is represented in many ways in the Ethiopian liturgical tradition. Hymns and chants that signify the universal praise of creatures to the Creator are abundant in the Ethiopian liturgy. The final portion of the third section, will engage these cosmic hymns of all the created beings, highlighting how they could serve as the celebration of the divine glory.

I. Sacramental Cosmology: The World as Sacrament

Christian faith considers the world as fallen and then redeemed through the recapitulation of creation by the divine incarnation, the crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ. This soteriological belief has led to conceiving the world as sacrament.[721] As a leading exponent of Orthodox liturgical theology, Alexander Schmemann envisions the cosmos as one great eucharistic bread.[722] While the human person "was created as a priest," according to Schmemann, "the world was created as the matter of a

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[720] Elizabeth Zelensky and Lela Gilbert, *Windows to Heaven: Introducing Icons to Protestants and Catholics* (Michigan: Brazos Press, 2005) 13.

[721]For this theological perspective, as an example, see the following works: Alexander Schmemann, *The World as Sacrament* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1966), revised and published for the third time as *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982); John Chryssavgis, "The World as Sacrament: Insights into an Orthodox Worldview," *Pacifica*, 10 (1997) 1-24; Theodore Runyon, "The World as Primary Sacrament," *Worship*, 54 (1980) 495-511; Dorothy McDougall, *The Cosmos as the Primary Sacrament*: *The Horizon for an Ecological Sacramental Theology* (Oxford: P. Lang, 2003); Therese B. DeLisio, "Considering the Cosmos as Primary Sacrament: A Viable Basis for an Ecological Sacramental Theology, Liturgy, and Ethics?" *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy* (Valparaiso, Indiana: North American Academy of Liturgy, 2006) 160-184; Kevin W. Irwin, "The Sacramentality of Creation and the Role of Creation in Liturgy and Sacraments," *And God Saw That It Was Good*: *Catholic Theology and the Environment*, ed. Drew Christiansen and Walter Grazer (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1996) 105-146.

[722] Alexander Schmemann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974) 118.

sacrament."[723] Hence, the meaningfulness of the world is drawn from its ability to be the "sacrament" of God's presence. This thought of Schmemann is based on his inspirational understanding of the Eucharist which he regards as "the sacrament of the cosmic remembrance."[724] In the Eucharist, the church offers to God all our life, and even the whole world.[725]

The wider view of the sacramentality of the world presupposes the sacredness of creation and the responsibility of humans for taking care of it. The whole universe has served as a sacred sign that points to a divine reality. Chryssavgis contends that "the world relates in very tangible terms the cooperation between divine and human in history, denoting the presence of God in our very midst. Were God not present in the density of a city, or in the beauty of a forest, or in the sand of a desert, then God would not be present in heaven either."[726] As a sacramental entity, which brings the presence of God in our midst, the world is an object of divine love that needs to be cared for and transformed.[727] The thought of the world as sacrament persuades us to recover our sense of wonder at God's work of creation and to treat the created matter as a means of communion with the divine.[728]

The notion of the sacramentality of the world can be ascertained in the liturgical use of the created materials as signs of divine grace. The Ethiopic term for a sacrament, *məsṭir* (ምሥጢር), is a derivation of the Greek *mysterion* that indicates the potential of the

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[723] Alexander Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission: Reflections on Orthodoxy in the West* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1979) 223.
[724] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 36.
[725] Ibid, 35.
[726] Chryssavgis, "The World as Sacrament: Insights into an Orthodox Worldview," 5-6.
[727] Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, 219.
[728] Kallistos Ware, "The Value of the Material Creation," *Sobornost,* 6/3 (1971) 155.

sacraments to "reveal the dimension of depth and the abyss of mystery in God."[729] This is to say that the transcendent God is revealed through the sacraments of the church. Articulating this stand, Chryssavgis writes: "When God is manifest in time and space, and the Eucharist is God's revelation in bread and wine, then the world becomes the historical and material sacrament of the presence of God, transcending the ontological gap between created and uncreated."[730] Indeed, the sacraments reflect the divine glory, immanent in the whole of creation.

Being redeemed by Christ, the cosmos has regained its sacramental potential. Orthodoxy teaches that the salvation made by Christ enables material things to act as sacraments of communion with God.[731] The Ethiopic *Book of Baptism* says: "by entering to the river Jordan, the Lord Christ sanctified the water,"[732] and the sanctification of the water is understood as the restoration of its sacramental potential. The whole Christ event has rendered the entire creation "secretly sacramental," allowing it to become "a conductor of divine grace, the vehicle of divine energies."[733] Thus, when the church blesses and sanctifies the created matter in its liturgical celebration, it is essentially making manifest what Christ has already accomplished.

The use of creation in the liturgy shows our gratefulness for God's gift of love. By offering back what originally belongs to God, the church regards "all that is in the world as a gift of God; as a sign also of the love of God."[734] This means that in the sacramental rites we give the world back to God in thanksgiving – *eucharistia*. Perceiving the world as the gift and sacrament of God, humans offer something of this world back to God, and

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[729] Chryssavgis, "The World as Sacrament: Insights into an Orthodox Worldview," 8.
[730] Ibid, 5.
[731] Ware, "The Value of the Material Creation," 159.
[732] *Mäṣəḥafä Kristina* [Book of Baptism] trans. Gebre-Ammanuel and Guadie, 134.
[733] Evdokimov, "Nature," 16.
[734] D. Staniloae, "The World as Gift and Sacrament of God's Love," *Sobornost,* 5/9 (1969) 666.

then "God on his part returns this to [them] in the form of gifts offered, containing a new manifestation of his love, in a new and repeated blessing. 'Grace for grace.'"[735] By using the natural elements (water and oil) and human products (bread and wine) in the liturgy, the church shows reverence for God's creation while deepening its relationship with God.

A. The Lifting up and Celebration of Creation in the Eucharistic Liturgy

The Holy Eucharist is the church's sacrament *par excellence* through which the entire creation is transfigured. The Orthodox Church regards the Eucharist "as the foretaste of the final kingdom and as an act whereby material creation is from now transformed in the light of the transfiguration of all things by Christ."[736] When the church puts the eucharistic bread on the paten, symbolizing the burial of Christ,[737] in the bread "all of God's creation is presented, manifested in Christ as the new creation, the fulfillment of the glory of God."[738] Schmemann quotes a Russian poet who said: "Every time the priest celebrates the Eucharist, he holds in his hands the whole world, like an apple."[739] This powerful image is reflected in the institution narrative of the Ethiopian anaphora of the Apostles where the celebrant holds the bread and lifts it up.[740] While the raising of the bread by the celebrant symbolizes the resurrection of Christ,[741] it also represents the transformation of creation by Christ's redemptive act in his resurrection.

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[735] Ibid, 668.
[736] Chryssavgis, "The World as Sacrament: Insights into an Orthodox Worldview," 3.
[737] This symbolism is clearly stated in the Ethiopian Missal's prayer of oblation: "We place it upon this blessed paten in the likeness of the sepulcher in which thee (Christ) have passed three days and three nights." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 25, no. 51.
[738] Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 118.
[739] Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, 222.
[740] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 59, no. 39.
[741] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 123.

The cosmic dimension of the Eucharist is also demonstrated in a prayer that we find in three Ethiopian anaphoras. Paraphrasing the prayer in *Didachē* 9:4[742] for the eschatological gathering of the one church of Christ, the anaphora of John the Evangelist says:

> We who are gathered together to make remembrance of your sufferings and partake in your resurrection from the dead, beseech you, Lord our God, as this [eucharistic] bread which was scattered on the mountains, hills, and in [the wilderness],[743] being gathered together became one perfect bread,[744] likewise gather us together, through your divinity, out of all evil thought of sin into your perfect faith.[745]

With minor variations the same prayer is repeated in the anaphoras named after James of Serough and Gregory of Neo-Caesarea.[746] As the eucharistic bread is made from the grains of wheat, which are gathered from different parts of the ground, the bread sacramentally represents the various created beings of the world or the whole of creation. In the Divine Liturgy the eucharistic elements are not presented as mere fruits of the earth, but "as symbols and even as vehicles of the whole world itself in its entirety."[747] As Schmemann articulates, by placing the bread and wine on the altar "[w]e place ourselves and the world upon the altar; then take a second look at them, and see there Christ: He stands at the center and offers all to the Father."[748] The Eucharist is more than a thanksgiving to God; it is a sacrament, a holy mystery (*məsṭir* – ምሥጢር) through which we offer ourselves and the entire creation to God.

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[742]The prayer in *Didachē* reads: "Just as this broken loaf was scattered over the hills [as grain], and, having been gathered together became one; in like fashion, may your church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom." See *The Didache,* trans. Milavec, 23

[743] Daoud translated the Gəʿəz words "*gädam wå-q^{w}älat* (ገዳም ወቈላት)" as "forests and vales;" but as these Gəʿəz words refer to a desert or lowland, "wilderness" would be a better translation.

[744] In the anaphora of Gregory II [that of Neo-Caesarea] it says "one whole bread." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 241, no. 27.

[745] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 99, no. 91.

[746] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 227, no. 68; and 241, no. 27.

[747] Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, 222.

[748] Ibid, 224.

The eucharistic liturgy, in its correct sense, is "the creation celebration par excellence."[749] It brings all the celestial and earthly beings into communion. Since both creation and redemption have their origin in Christ,[750] the eucharistic liturgy serves equally as *anamnēsis* of the paschal mystery and that of creation. A brief survey of the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*) reveals that as in the case of the early church's liturgy, creation is frequently related to the remembrance of Christ's salvific event. At the very beginning of *Qəddase*, while making the altar ready for the service, the celebrant priest recites a preparatory prayer in which God is referred to as "the wise maker of" humans and "the one who spread out the heavens by his wisdom."[751]

Having declared God as the Lord of creation and source of life, the Divine Liturgy proceeds to an intercessory prayer[752] that beseeches for divine providence over creation. The prayer recited by the chief deacon, interspersed with the *Kýrie eléison* of the people, implores God for the peace of the whole world; for the safety of those who travel by sea; for the hungry, that God my send them their daily bread; for the waters of the rivers, that may God fill them unto their due measure; and for a favourable climate (rains and the abundance of fruits of the earth).[753] Beyond concern with human

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[749] Peter R. Akehurst, *Liturgy and Creation: A Re-appraisal of Regationtide and Harvest Festivals*, (Manchester: Grove Books, 1974) 20.
[750] Power, *The Eucharistic Mystery*, 314.
[751] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 12, no. 41.
[752] This prayer, known as *Bä'əntä Qəddəsat* – በእንተ ቅድሳት [Concerning Holy Things] by its incipit, is adapted from the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord*. See *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 79-85.
[753] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 27-30, nos. 66-97. The EOTC also has specific litanies (intercessory prayers) for the rains [*Mästäbq^{W}ə' bä'əntä zənamat* – መስተብቊዕ በእንተ ዝናማት], for the fruits of the earth [*Mästäbq^{W}ə' bä'əntä fəre mədr* – መስተብቊዕ በእንተ ፍሬ ምድር], and for the rivers [*Mästäbq^{W}ə' bä'əntä mayatä afəlag* – መስተብቊዕ በእንተ ማያተ አፍላግ]. These prayers appear at the end of *Tə'əzaz Sinodos* (ትእዛዝ ሲኖዶስ), one of the books found in the Ethiopian Church Order, and they have been adapted to a liturgical use. They are recited at the Liturgy of Hours [*Sä'atat*] and some of the Cathedral Offices. While the prayers mainly ask God to send the rains and fill "the waters of the rivers up to their measure" for the abundance of the harvest, they also bespeak of the need for the spiritual growth of the Church members. For instance, the prayer for the rains ends as follows: "O Lord...work with us according to [your] clemency, and nourish our mind with the doctrine [Gə'əz, teaching] of the Godhead, and with understanding which is from you. Through your only begotten Son to you with him and with the Holy Spirit be glory and dominion,

livelihood, this supplication expresses the Ethiopian liturgy's high esteem for creation and its hope for the transformation of the cosmos.

Shortly before the Gospel reading, the assistant priest similarly prays for the abundance of God's bounty:

> Remember, Lord, the dew of the air and the fruits of the earth, bless them and keep them without loss. Remember, Lord, the down-coming of the rains, the waters, and the rivers, and bless them. Remember, Lord, the plants and the seeds and the fruit of the fields of every year, bless them and make them abundant.[754]

In the prayer known as "The Prayer of Benediction [*Ṣälotä Burake* – ጸሎተ ቡራኬ]," which is addressed to the triune God, the assistant priest also prays for a blessing over the cosmic order: "Bless the airs of heaven, and the rains and the fruits of the earth of this year, in accordance with your grace; and make joy and gladness prevail perpetually on the face of the earth."[755] While these prayers reveal the value given to creation in the liturgy, they also reflect God's power of sustaining life. The EOTC's supplication for God's providence and sustenance over the world also shows the church's belief that the Creator is not alien to creation but rather takes intimate care of the created order – a doctrine of creation known as *creatio continua*.

Most of the Ethiopic anaphoras incorporate various creation themes and narratives that are related to salvation history. Without overshadowing the paschal mystery, which is the principal reason for a eucharistic celebration, the creation motifs articulate the ubiquitousness of God's majesty over creation. The overarching theme of the creation language in the anaphoras is adoration offered to God as the maker of creation whose exquisite beauty evokes a great sense of wonder. For instance, addressing God as

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both now and ever and world without end. Amen." See Horner, *The Statutes of the Apostles*, 225. See also *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 46-47.

[754] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 44-45, nos. 197-199.

[755] Ibid, 57, no. 13.

"mighty in the clouds, higher than heaven, and glorious in all his ways,"[756] the anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers elucidates an inspiring amazement on God's work of creation: "Who [does] like [God] live in the highest heaven… and sit upon the firmament? [God] establishes upon the [waters],[757] builds with very small particles, wraps with invisible things…strengthens with wind, hangs the water up and calls it sky."[758]

Acknowledging God's lordship over creation, the anaphoras also offer thanksgiving to God. This is explicitly stated in the anaphoras that begin with a word of thanks. The preface of the anaphora of the Apostles begins, saying: "We give you thanks, O Lord, in your beloved Son our Lord Jesus…this Word is he who is from you, and through whom you [made] all things by your will."[759] Though creation is mentioned here parenthetically, the praise offered to God the Father is for making the whole of creation through the Word. God is also praised for the work of redemption, in the sending of the "Son, the Saviour and Redeemer."[760]

The two basic reasons for thanking God – creation and redemption – are more elaborately stated in the Ethiopic anaphora of the Lord and that of Gregory Nyssa. "We give you thanks, [H]oly God, the perfecter of our souls and giver of our life," chants the celebrant at the preface of the anaphora of the Lord. And the reason for praising God is

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[756] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 123, no. 13. The Gəʿəz phrase, which Daoud translated as "glorious in all his ways," reads "*səbbuḥ bäkʷəlu* – ስቡሕ በኵሉ." The correct translation, however, "praised by all," indicates the cosmic worship offered to God by all creatures as clearly stated on no. 15 of the same page: "Heaven and earth together with all their worlds, sea and rivers and all things that are in them glorify him [God]."

[757] This refers to God's power of spreading out the earth on the waters (Ps. 136: 6) as explained in the commentary of the Ethiopic Missal. See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 222, no. 29.

[758] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 125, no. 29. Reiterating the division of waters and the creation of the firmament (Gen. 1:6), the expression here signifies that by the divine power the firmament which is known as sky was made from the waters, and then it was spread above, being supported by wind. See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy], 222, no. 30.

[759] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 57, nos. 4-5.

[760] Ibid, 56, no. 4.

explained as: "because you have desired that we should be saved through you."[761] The anaphora named after Gregory of Nyssa, which is celebrated during Lent on the four days that precede Palm Sunday and on Palm Sunday itself, begins with the following chant: "We give thanks unto the doer of good things unto us, the merciful God, the Father of our Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ."[762] The "good things" that God made for us, as elaborated in the commentary of the anaphora, are God's good deeds of creation.[763] Within the preface, the anaphora itself expounds the "good things" for which we thank God: "This is he who made heaven, and this [is] he who built the earth."[764]

God's goodness in creation is also seen "by holding all the world,"[765] that is, through the divine providence which sustains the whole of creation. As the holder of all the world (*Aḫaze K^{W}əlu* – አኀዘ ኵሉ), the triune God, in the same anaphora of Gregory, is beseeched to confer a cosmic blessing:

> O Holy Trinity, who holds all the world, who has done great and wonderful deeds through the power of your word. Bless the east and the west, the north and the south, the north-east and the south-east, (the north-west and the south-west), bless the heaven, the earth, the sea, the rivers, the source of water, and all the spring of water. Bless the winds of the sky and the rains. Bless the sun, moon, and stars. Bless the mountains and hills, the trees, herbs and the fruit of the earth.[766]

This eucharistic prayer lifts up the whole cosmic order to God for a divine blessing.

The most detailed celebration of creation is presented in the Ethiopic anaphora of St. Epiphanius. Having briefly enumerated the divine attributes, such as holiness, omnipotence, and incomprehensibility, the preface of the anaphora ventures into an extensive creation account. The anaphora's creation narrative begins with God's making

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[761] Ibid, 81, no. 18.
[762] Ibid, 173, no. 4.
[763] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy], 361.
[764] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 174, no. 10.
[765] Ibid, 175, no. 24.
[766] Ibid, 179, nos. 56-59

light out of darkness and with the division of waters: "He (God) made light out of darkness, he knows how to divide clouds, he divides water at his pleasure."[767] Then the creation of the earth and of the seas within the earth are illustrated as follows:

> He (God) built the earth and prepared its boundaries, and established its ends in the way he saw, and strengthened its corners. He fenced the sea with doors when it went out of its mother's womb,[768] he made the clouds to be its (the sea's) clothes, and wrapped it with mist; he limited it and put into it doors and locks and said to it: Reach here and do not go beyond your limit, but your storm will move in you.[769]

For the Almighty God to think is to act, and the whole of creation moves according to the divine will.

God's lordship over creation is further contemplated in the anaphora where waters and clouds are personified:

> Through his [God's] command frost comes out of its treasure and the wind blows under heaven. He leads [sends] the rain along the way of the wilderness … where [mortal humans] do not live. He establishes the course of water and opens the winter every year, and brings the summer back in its due time. He calls the clouds with his word, and water answers him trembling. He sends the thunderbolt and it goes, and answers him saying: "what shall I do?" He counts the clouds through his wisdom, and hangs the heaven over the earth.[770]

As the Creator of the visible and the invisible worlds, God governs every created realm. The Creator knows the creatures under and above the heavens, and "the door-keepers of hell are afraid [of] him."[771] God is ceaselessly hallowed by "the fiery cherubim and the seraphim dressed in light."[772] The luminaries: sun, moon, and the stars are the "work of his [God's] hands," and this Divine Mystery resides in an unknowable place, veiled by

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[767] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 187, 17.
[768] Here the word "sea" represents also the "oceans" of the world though it is used in singular, and "when it went out of its mother's womb," means "when it came into existence" or "when it was created" as elaborated in *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 383.
[769] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 187, nos. 18-19.
[770] Ibid, 187-188, nos. 23-25.
[771] Ibid, 187, no. 22.
[772] Ibid, 188, 27.

"the lightning of glory.[773] This eucharistic *anamnēsis*, thus, provides an all-encompassing cosmology, which is also reflected in the texts of the feast of *Ṭəmqät* – ጥምቀት [Theophany].

B. *Ṭəmqät* [Theophany]: The Blessing of the Waters

In the Orthodox tradition, the main motif of the feast of Epiphany (*Theophania*) is the sanctification of the entire cosmos. When the Orthodox Church celebrates the baptism of the Lord it mainly commemorates the new creation inaugurated by the baptism of Christ, and the church's ceremony of the blessing of the waters signifies the renewal or re-birth of the whole of creation.[774] The re-creation of humanity is also highlighted in this service. At the baptism of Christ, the heavens were opened and the mystery of the Trinity was revealed (Mt. 3: 16-17). By revealing the creative energy of its Creator, the cosmos became "theophanic."[775] The Holy Spirit, who was hovering over the waters at creation, also descended in the form of a dove while Christ was being baptized and sanctified the entire creation. Highlighting the renewal of creation through Christ and the Holy Spirit, Dumitru Stăniloae writes: "It is only through Christ, as God incarnate, that the parts of creation have begun to recompose themselves so as to make possible its future transfiguration, for from Christ the unifying and eternally living Spirit is poured out over creation."[776]

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[773] Ibid, 188, nos. 32-33.
[774] Stanley Harakas, "Earth, Water, Light: The Renewal of Creation in Eastern Orthodox Epiphany Rites" *The Living Pulpit*, 2, no. 2, (1993) 14.
[775] Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 224.
[776] Stăniloae, *The Experience of God,* Vol. II, 185.

As in other Eastern Orthodox Churches, the celebration of *Ṭəmqät* in the EOTC commemorates the baptism of Christ at the River Jordan.[777] *Ṭəmqät* literally means baptism, and the season in which the feast falls is known as *Zämänä Asətärəʾyo* – ዘመነ አስተርእዮ (Season of [Divine] Revelation – *Theophania),* which attests to the manifestation of God through the Nativity of Christ and the revelation of the triune God at Jordan. The biblical account of the baptism of Christ is understood as a "*Theophany* of the Trinitarian nature of the one God,"[778] and the feast is accompanied by the blessing of the waters in a nearby river or pond. As the EOTC in its *Qəddase* prays for the abundance of the rains and the waters of the rivers,[779] the church's use of water for the feast of *Ṭəmqät* is another affirmation of the sacredness of created matter and its potential to be used sacramentally. Moreover, as the eucharistic bread and wine represent the whole of creation, the water of baptism as well "represents and stands for the entire cosmos."[780]

The use of a created element, water, as a means of grace is explicit in the ritual of the feast of *Ṭəmqät*. In a colourful liturgical procession, the priests carrying the *Tabots* (replicas of the Ark of the Covenant) accompanied by the faithful, and the deacons with their processional Crosses venture to a selected river or pond. The *Tabots* are usually placed inside erected tents. Following a vigil service, the Divine Liturgy will be

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[777] In an attempt to provide a parallel between the feast of *Ṭəmqät* [Theophany] and the Israelites' crossing of the River Jordan (Joshua 3:3-6), E. Isaac, an Ethiopian Jewish scholar, calls the former "the Feast of Immersion." Though the Israelites' crossing of Jordan and their entering to the Promised Land could serve as a symbol of our regeneration through the baptism of Christ, the Ethiopian feast of *Ṭəmqät* is not a remembrance of the Israelites' march to the Holy Land. Overlooking the Christian aspect of the feast of *Ṭəmqät* and its theological significance that reflects the sanctification of the whole of creation through the blessing of the waters, Isaac erroneously refers to the feast as "the Feast of Immersion." While he discusses the rituals used for the celebration of *Ṭəmqät*, he neither uses the word baptism nor states the dominant motif of the celebration, i.e. the baptism of Christ. See E. Isaac, "An Obscure Component in Ethiopian Church History," 229.

[778] Harakas, "Earth, Water, Light," 14.

[779] See for example, *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 30, no. 96.

[780] Alexander Schmemann, *Of Water and the Spirit: A Liturgical Study of Baptism* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974) 42.

celebrated at midnight. In the morning, the priests bless the river or pond in the name of the triune God: "Blessed [is] the Lord, Almighty Father, our God; And Blessed is the only Son, our Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ; And Blessed is the Holy Spirit, the *Paraclete,* the comforter and cleanser of us all."[781] After the blessing ceremony, the people rush into the waters because they believe that through the church's sacramental rite they have received "communion with the sacramental world, some healing of [human] estrangement from the good creation."[782] Thus, "cosmic matter becomes a conductor of grace"[783] – a sacrament.

While the dominant motif of the feast is the sanctification of the waters of the River Jordan, this also denotes the sanctification of the whole of creation. In the vigil service of *Ṭəmqät* the River Jordan is greeted since its sacramental power was renewed by the descent of the Holy Spirit: "Peace to River Jordan whom John blessed, being enlightened by the Holy Spirit."[784] The chant of the Psalmist: "When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; the very deep trembled" (Ps. 77:16) is applied to the waters of Jordan,[785] and the personification of Jordan implies its awareness of the presence of Christ. As creation was corrupted due to the sin of the human person, through Christ's baptism at Jordan the whole created order was renewed. The above verse of the Psalmist, hence, also signifies that the waters were conscious of their reconciliation to God at the Baptism of Christ.[786]

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[781] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 21, no. 20.
[782] Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, 221.
[783] Paul Evdokimov, *The Art of the Icon*: *A Theology of Beauty* (Redondo Beach: Oakwood Publications, 1996) 119.
[784] See *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 117.
[785] Ibid.
[786] Harakas, "Earth, Water, Light," 15.

Through the baptism of Christ water has regained its regenerating power. Due to the Fall, water, over which the Spirit had hovered at the beginning of creation, lost its life-giving power. The dragons were lurking in the waters (Ps. 74:13) so that water became "a lair of dragons, the natural stronghold of evil powers."[787] But when Christ was baptized in the river Jordan, the devil was removed from the waters. In the English translation of the Ethiopic *Gädlä Ḥäwaryat* (ገድለ ሐዋርያት), the book which deals with the acts and deaths of the twelve apostles, we find Satan's confession of his defeat at Jordan: "when He (Christ) was baptized in the river Jordan it was He Who removed me from my place of abode."[788] Having removed the evil power, Christ transformed water into a channel of grace and unveiled the potential which originally had been placed on it.[789]

Underlying Jordan's awareness of the divine power revealed in it, *Ṭəmqät'*s antiphon says: "when fire engulfed the river, the waters were troubled."[790] The "divine beauty of Christ was revealed at Jordan," and it was testified by God the Father and by the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove.[791] Thus, Jordan was overwhelmed by this divine scene: "The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back" (Ps. 114: 3).[792] John the Baptist as well was astonished: "John said, I saw him, but could not understand him; today the heavenly is baptized by water."[793] Through Christ's baptism the waters of the world, including the whole cosmic matter, were sanctified.

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[787] Theokritoff, "Creation and Salvation in Orthodox Worship," 106.
[788] According to the book, when St. Peter was on his way to Carthage, Satan appeared to him and told him how he would fight the followers of Christ. Confessing his removal from the river Jordan by the baptism of Christ and Christ's victory over death, Satan told Peter that he would fight the Christians with all his power so as to take them astray from following Christ. See *Gädlä Hawaryat*: *Histories of the Lives of the Apostles,* trans. E. A. Wallis Budge (Leipzig: W. Drugulin, 1901) 510-513.
[789] Theokritoff, "Creation and Salvation in Orthodox Worship," 106.
[790] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 117.
[791] Ibid, 116.
[792] *Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* [Lectionary] 480.
[793] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 118.

The sanctification of created matter by the baptism of Christ is intertwined with the redemption given to the whole of creation. This can be noted in the chanting of the *Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at* [Mystagogia], a doctrinal text that highlights the victory of Christ over the devil, at the vigil service of Epiphany (*Ṭəmqät*). The text states that "having submitted himself to death," Christ "broke asunder the bonds of death whereby the devil before had oppressed us."[794] Becoming fully human, the *Logos* conquered the sin that had brought death, and liberated humanity from its bondage.[795] "He (Christ) has been raised up from the dead, and He has trodden down *Sheol* (Hell), and by His death He has destroyed death."[796] The usage of this text at *Ṭəmqät* underscores the Orthodox teaching of salvation that we were saved through the whole Christ event. The baptism of Christ is part of his redemptive act as chanted in the hymnary for *Ṭəmqät*: "The Son of God was baptized in the river Jordan in order to redeem us."[797]

Highlighting the salvific significance of Christ's baptism, the hymnary also says: "the Son of God descended from the heavens to the waters."[798] Without taking this chant literally, one can see the emphasis given to the baptism of Christ as a means of saving humanity and the rest of creation. The Son of God came to the world to save the human person as stated in the parable of the lost sheep (Mt. 18: 10-14). Appropriating this parable to the salvific act of the baptism of Christ, the hymnary again asserts: "having left the 99 tribes of the angels, he (the Son of God) stood in the middle of the river."[799] The Son of God came to this world and was baptized to renew our relationship with God. Besides sanctifying the River Jordan and the waters of the world, Christ's baptism at

[794] See "The Ethiopic Version of the Mystagogia," trans. Hallok, 68.
[795] Ibid, 71.
[796] Ibid, 72.
[797] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 116.
[798] Ibid, 116.
[799] Ibid, 117.

Jordan has transfigured the cosmos. Thus, being renewed and sanctified, creation has been returned to its original relationship with God.[800] As in the other great feasts, at *Ṭəmqät* this achievement is celebrated with a characteristic rhetorical stance as if it happened today: "today, there is a great delight due to the baptism of Christ."[801]

At the celebration of the feast of *Ṭəmqät the* saved humanity and created matter are united to worship God. The midnight celebration of the Divine Liturgy for the feast of *Ṭəmqät* reflects the cosmic liturgy illustrated in the *Apostolic Tradition*:

> It is needful to pray at this hour (midnight), for those very elderly who gave us the tradition taught us that at this hour all creation rests for a certain moment, that all creatures may praise the Lord: stars and trees and waters stand still with one accord and all the angelic host does service to God by praising Him, together with the souls of the righteous.[802]

At the midnight liturgy of *Ṭəmqät,* which is an outdoor service, the clergy and the laity join in the praise of the celestial hosts and other creatures. Humans offer thanksgiving to God in unison with the visible stars and the surrounding river. The glory of God is revealed, and thus "the earth and the waters and the [lighted taper] itself reach their own potential when they become vehicles manifesting the presence of God and when in their existence they serve to exhibit the saving, loving, caring, outreaching energies and activities of God."[803] The feast of the Baptism of Christ, indeed, entails a liturgy of the entire cosmos offered to God.

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[800] Theokritoff, "Creation and Salvation in Orthodox Worship," 105.

[801] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 117. The same is true for the feasts of Nativity (Christmas) and Easter. Every year when these feasts are celebrated, the EOTC declares the birth of Christ and his resurrection as if they happened today, i.e. on the days of the feasts. See for example the Christmas antiphon: "Today the Sun of righteousness has been born." See *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 108

[802] See *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, trans. Easton, 56. The Ethiopian *Horologium*, known as *Sä'atat,* which is prayed from midnight till sunrise daily in monasteries and during the Lent and the fast of the assumption of Mary in parish churches, begins with this text of the Apostolic tradition. See Giyorgis, *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat*, 1.

[803] Harakas, "Earth, Water, Light," 15.

As water is sacramentally used and sanctified at the feast of *Ṭəmqät,* the EOTC also has another liturgical celebration in which wood and plants are used to glorify God.

C. *Dämära* [Feast of the Cross]: The Blessing of the Four Corners of the Earth

In addition to the usual created material elements (wheat, grapes, water, and oil) used for the sacraments, we find a sacramental appropriation of woods and plants in the EOTC's liturgical celebration of the feast of the Cross. The celebration is marked by the performance of various songs and chants around the *Dämära* (ደመራ), which is a large heap of dry wood embellished with plants and flowers.[804] After the senior ecclesiastic has blessed the *Dämära* in the four directions,[805] it "is left till the twilight, when the people gather to set it ablaze."[806] This symbolic representation is derived from the traditional story for the finding of the true Cross of Jesus Christ by Empress Helena. The *Dämära* is kindled to commemorate the bonfires which the Empress ordered to be lit in order to announce the finding of the True Cross.[807]

Besides its historical significance, the celebration of *Dämära* entails the blessing of creation. The *Dämära* itself is prepared from woods, plants, and the seasonal lilies,[808] and a Cross made from plants is placed on top of the *Dämära*. By blessing the *Dämära* towards the four corners of the earth, the clergy are blessing the whole earth and the earthly creatures represented by the plants and woods. At the celebration, the cantors

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[804] Mersha Alehegne and Denis Nosnitsin, "Dämära (ደመራ)," *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica,* Vol. 2, ed. Siegbert Uhlig, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003) 73.
[805] In a similar liturgical practice, the Eastern Orthodox Churches bless the four corners of the earth at the "feast of the Exaltation of the Cross." See Evdokimov, *A Theology of Beauty,* 118.
[806] Alehegne and Nosnitsin,"Dämära," *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, 74.
[807] Ibid, 73.
[808] The celebration of *Dämära* takes place on the 16th day of the Ethiopian month *Mäsəkäräm* – መስከረም (September 26) that is the eve of the feast of the Cross. During the month of *Mäsəkäräm*, which comes at the end of the rainy season, yellow lilies known scientifically as "*Delphinium dasycaulon*" appear. The flowers are related with the celebration of *Mäsəqäl* – መስቀል [Cross], and thus they are called in Ethiopia "*Mäsəqäl* flowers." See Alehegne and Nosnitsin, "Dämära," *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, 73.

chant: "Today is the feast of [Christ's] Cross; in the heavens above, and on earth he made peace for all."[809] By the redemption made on the Cross, the heavenly beings were reconciled with the earthly ones, and the blessing towards the four directions of the earth at the feast serves as a symbolic ritual of putting "the natural order under the saving sign of the invincible Cross."[810]

God's use of the Holy Cross as the instrument of salvation has affected the nature of the trees and that of creation in general. According to the biblical narrative of the Fall, "humanity misused a tree and polluted the world" (Gen. 3: 1-7).[811] But "God cleansed His world by the tree of the Cross."[812] By the blood of Christ shed on the Cross, the travailing creation has been sanctified and "freed from bondage."[813] The God "who made the tree an instrument of His saving work is the same God who planted it in the beginning for the physical life and health of His material world."[814] This conviction resonates the EOTC's sacramental use of various kinds of woods and plants at the feast of the Cross.

The EOTC views the Cross as the life-giving tree through which the curse upon earth has been revoked. It is a symbol of salvation, and "the pledge (*aräbon* − አረቦን) of our inheritance," which is the new heaven and earth that we look for.[815] "The church saw [Jesus] crucified; his blood was shed on *Golgotha*, and his beauty shined like the sun; so now the church celebrates the feast of the Cross,"[816] says one of the chants of the feast. Traditionally it is believed that the Cross of Christ was raised at the place (*Golgotha*) where Adam had been buried. Hence, as Evdokimov articulates it is possible to say that

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[809] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 24.
[810] Evdokimov, *A Theology of Beauty*, 118.
[811] Theokritoff, "Creation and Salvation in Orthodox Worship," 103.
[812] Ibid.
[813] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 23.
[814] Theokritoff, "Creation and Salvation in Orthodox Worship," 104.
[815] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 24.
[816] Ibid, 23.

"the roots of the cosmic tree go down to hell and its top touches the sky."[817] Since the Cross is the sign of the salvation made for the whole of creation, the EOTC's celebration of the Cross symbolically underscores the cosmic salvation and the sacramental potential of the created matter. Besides the above-discussed liturgical rituals, which embody the whole created order in their sacramental symbolism, the Ethiopian lectionary as well devotes a considerable place for the celebration of creation. The following section shows how the cycle of the liturgical seasons of the Ethiopian lectionary reflects the cycle of nature's seasons.

II. The Ethiopian Lectionary: A Liturgical Calendar that Embodies Creation

The prominent place given to creation is evident in the Ethiopian lectionary whose temporal division mirrors the four Ethiopian seasons.[818] As Andrew Pearson puts it "the pattern of the Christian Year has its origin in the agricultural rhythm of the Mediterranean region,"[819] and this is very true for the Ethiopian liturgical year. The liturgical year basically has two features: the sanctoral and the temporal. While the former commemorates the great feasts of the Lord and that of the saints, the latter consists of various divisions.[820] *Degg*^{W}*a* (ድጓ), the antiphonary for the year, divides the temporal into four main liturgical seasons: *Zämänä Yoḥannəs* – ዘመነ ዮሐንስ (Season of

[817] Evdokimov, *A Theology of Beauty*, 140.

[818] The four Ethiopian seasons that correspond to the traditional seasons of the Northern Hemisphere are: *Mäṣäw* – መፀው [The Windy Season] from *Mäsəkäräm* (መስከረም) 26 [October the 6th] – *Taḫsas* (ታኅሣሥ) 25 [January the 3rd]; *Ḥagay* – ሐጋይ [The Dry Season] from *Taḫsas* 26 [January the 4th] – *Mägabit* (መጋቢት) 25 [April the 3rd]; *Ṣädäy* – ጸደይ [The Sowing Season] from *Mägabit* 26 [April the 4th] – *Säne* (ሰኔ) 25 [July the 2nd]; and *Kərämət* – ክረምት [The Rainy Season] from *Säne* 26 [July the 3rd] – *Mäsəkäräm* 25 [October the 5th]. See Worqneh, *Ṭənətawi Yä-Ityoṗəya Təməhrət* [Ancient Education of Ethiopia] 90- 93. See also Emmanuel Fritsch, *The Liturgical Year of the Ethiopian Church*: *The Temporal Seasons and Sundays* (Addis Ababa: Ethiopian Review of Cultures, 2001) 73.

[819] Andrew Pearson, *Making Creation Visible: God's Earth in Christian Worship* (Cambridge: Grove Books Ltd., 1996) 4.

[820] Bernard Velat, "Études Sur Le Me'erăf," *Patrologia Orientalis*, 33 (1966) 20.

John), *Zämänä Asətäməḥro* – ዘመነ አስተምህሮ (Season of Supplication), *Zämänä Ṣom* – ዘመነ ጾም (Season of Fasting), and *Zämänä Fasika* – ዘመነ ፋሲካ (Paschal Season).[821] The first season is commenced on the Ethiopian New Year's day (September the 11th or the 12th in leap years),[822] which corresponds to August the 29th of the Julian calendar,[823] and ends on the last day of the third Ethiopian month (*Ḫədar* [ኀዳር] the 30th = December the 9th).[824] *Zämänä Asətäməḥro*, beginning on *Taḫsas* (ታኅሣሥ) the 1st (Dec. the 10th) comprises the significant seasons of Advent, *Zämänä Asətärəʾyo* – ዘመነ አስተርእዮ [Theophany/ Manifestation], and ends before the beginning of the Great Lent [*Zämänä Ṣom*]. The Lenten period is followed by *Zämänä Fasika*, which includes the Eastertide period (Easter, Ascension, Pentecost), ending with the season of the rains [*Zämänä Kərämt* – ዘመነ ክረምት].[825]

Though these are the four main divisions of the Ethiopian liturgical year, within these divisions there are various minor liturgical seasons that echo the natural events of

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[821] Kidane, "Ethiopian (or Gəʿəz) Worship," 171. See also Kidane's detailed study on *Degg^{W}a* (ድጓ): Habtemichael Kidane, "Il 'Degg^{W}a' – libro liturgico della Chiesa d'Etiopia," *Orientalia Christiana Analecta: The Christian East, its Institutions and its Thought: A Critical Reflection*, Vol. 251, ed. Robert Taft (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 1996) 353-388. Merging the fourth division into the third, some scholars contend that *Degg^{W}a* has a three-fold division. Fritsch follows the three-fold division. See Fritsch, *The Liturgical Year of the Ethiopian Church*, 74. For a detailed classification of the liturgical year in *Degg^{W}a* see Jeffery, "The Liturgical Year in the Ethiopian Degg^{W}ā," 215-234.

[822] Getatchew Haile states that the Syrians used to celebrate their New Year on October 1st following the Roman Lunar Calendar. Later in A.D. 460 they changed it to September 1st in commemoration of the martyrs of the church. The Ethiopian and Coptic New Years are based on the Old Syrian Calendar, for in both cases the New Year falls on the 1st day of the Ethiopian month *Mäsəkäräm* and the Coptic *Tout*. The Western equivalent date for *Mäsəkäräm* 1 is September 11 and September 12 in leap years. See Getatchew Haile, *Baḥrä Ḥassab* [Computus] (Avon, MN: Image Makers) 65. Both Coptic and Ethiopian Christian calendars consist of 12 months, each comprising 30 days, with a 13th month containing five days or six in leap years. In Ethiopia the 13th month is called *Ṗag^{W}əmen* (ጳጉሜን), derived "from the Greek *Epagomenai hêmerai,* i.e. supplementary days." See Fritsch, *The Liturgical Year of the Ethiopian Church,* 23. See also Jeffery, "The Liturgical Year in the Ethiopian Degg^{W}ā," 211.

[823] Julius Caesar is thought to have prepared his calendar in 46 B.C. whereas Pope Gregory made his own correction on the Julian calendar in A.D. 1582. See Haile, *Baḥrä Ḥassab* [Computus] 66. This has caused the 7 year (during September-December) and 8 year (January-August) differences between the Julian calendar still followed by the Coptic and Ethiopian Orthodox Churches, and the Gregorian one, which is accepted in the West.

[824] Fritsch, *The Liturgical Year of the Ethiopian Church,* 74.

[825] Ibid.

the four Ethiopian seasons.[826] For instance, during the rainy season [*Kərämt* – ክረምት] the lectionary [*Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* – መጽሐፈ ግጻዌ] has liturgical seasons, each consisting of a few Sundays, known as seed, cloud, lightning, thunder, sea, rivers, dew, crows, dawn, and light.[827] On these Sundays that are named after nature, the EOTC praises God for sending the rains and for blessing the land with vegetation. While the anaphora of St. Epiphanius is usually chosen for eucharistic celebrations on most of the Sundays of the rainy season due to its impressive contemplations on God's marvelous work of creation, the selected Gospel readings reflect the features of the Ethiopian winter [*Kərämt*] which is characterized by heavy rains, clouds, storms, and lightning. On the first Sunday of the season, Mt. 16: 1-12 is read with a special emphasis on Jesus' reply to the Pharisees' request for a sign: "When it is evening, you say, 'it will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'it will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening." The Gospel readings for the rest of the Sundays of this season include: Mt. 13: 1-31 (the parables of the sower, the weeds, and the seed); Mt. 8: 23-27, Mk. 6: 45- 52 (Jesus' calming of the storm); and Lk. 10: 17 –24 (a reference to a lightning).[828]

The assigned chants of the Psalter for the Sundays of the winter season highlight the lordship of God over creation. The chant on the first Sunday liturgy of the winter season proclaims God's omnipotence: "You [God] established the luminaries and the sun. You have fixed all the bounds of the earth; you made summer and winter" (Ps. 74: 16-17). God is also praised as the one who "covers the heavens with clouds; prepares rain for the earth, and makes grass grow on the hills" (Ps. 147: 8).[829] Referring to the cultivation

[826] The Lectionary also varies from the *Degg*^{W}*a* by "including many feasts and fast periods that do not occur in the *Degg*^{W}*ā*." See Jeffery, "The Liturgical Year in the Ethiopian Degg^{W}ā," 209.
[827] *Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* [Lectionary] 138-142.
[828] Ibid.
[829] Ibid, 138.

of the land in the rainy season, one of the chosen antiphons from the Psalter for the Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*) reads: "You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it. You water its furrows abundantly settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth" (Ps. 65: 9-10). Other selected major chants of this season include: Ps. 145:15: "The eyes of all look to you [God], and you give them their food in due season;" Ps. 104:14: "He [God] causes the grass to grow for the cattle;" Ps. 77:17: "The clouds poured out water, the skies thundered;" and Ps. 135: 7: "He is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth; he makes lightning for the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses."[830] These chants explicitly convey God's mighty deeds over creation.

The various antiphons of the Divine Offices of the winter season are equally reflective of divine providence and sustenance. The commencement of the season is announced by the following antiphon:

> The sound of the footsteps of the rains has been heard;[831] when it rains the hungry are satisfied. The sound of the footsteps of the rains has been heard; when it rains, the poor rejoice….[God] is the Lord of the Sabbath; He is the Father of mercies. He commences [makes] the winter yearly.[832]

Furthermore, reflecting on the lordship of God over creation, the antiphon states that when God orders the clouds to pour the rains, they listen to the divine command. "The one who sows hoping in you [O Lord] will harvest the richness of your grace,"[833] says the

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[830] Ibid, 141.
[831] This is to say that it has started raining heavily.
[832] "Mäzəmur Zä-Kərämt – ዘመዝሙር ዘክረምት [Song of the Rainy Season]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 68-69.
[833] Ibid, 69.

final part of the antiphon, signifying the farmer's trust in and total dependence on God's providence that makes the grain, buried in the soil, bear fruit.[834]

We also find impressive creation motifs in the antiphons that are correlated with Gospel readings for the eucharistic liturgies of the winter season. On the Sunday when the parable of the sower (Mt. 13:1-23) is read in *Qəddase*, in the Divine Office the following antiphon is chanted:

> Bless [O Lord] the earth and enrich it gracefully;…order the clouds to pour the rains on the earth and the rivers to be filled to their limits. Jesus told them the parable of the sower; He [the Lord] makes the harvest and pleases the souls of the poor…He is our God who satisfies the hungry. [O Lord] you made the heaven your throne, and the earth your footstool. You wrapped the sky with a fog.[835]

The antiphon affirms that Jesus Christ, the Word of God Incarnate, is the Lord who rules over creation. He stilled the storm (Mt. 8: 23-27); walked over the waters (Mt. 14: 22-33); and opened the eyes of the man who was born blind (Jn. 9:1-12). Another wintry antiphon highlights Christ's lordship over creation, saying "the earth saw him and praised him, whereas the sea worshipped him."[836] Indeed, as expressed in the Gospel narratives, the people were stunned to see the Lord whom the whole of creation obeyed.

Towards the end of the rainy season the EOTC commences its New Year's Day, known as *Rəʾəsä Awədä Amät* – ርእሰ ዓውደ ዓመት [The Principal Feast of the Year], by blessing the material elements that are to be used for the eucharistic services throughout the year and by offering thanksgiving to God for creation. The Ethiopian New Year's Day, which falls on September 11th (12th in the leap years) corresponding to the Jewish

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[834] Fritsch, *The Liturgical Year of the Ethiopian Church,* 305.
[835] "Mäzəmur Zä-Kərämt [Song of the Rainy Season]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 71.
[836] Ibid, 73.

New Year,[837] is declared as the crown of the year based on Ps. 65: 11: "You crown the year with your bounty." [838] The anaphora of John the Evangelist, which could alternatively be chosen for the Liturgy of the New Year's Day, has an intercession "for the fruit of the crop produced yearly, so that it may be blessed [by God's] mercy."[839] On the Ethiopian New Year's Day, the martyrdom of John the Baptist and, more generally, his ministry are celebrated. As the Gospels begin with the ministry of John the Baptist so does the Ethiopian liturgical year.[840] Moreover, the commemoration of John the Baptist serves as a fore-runner for Advent, a liturgical season that leads to the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord and to the season known as *Asətärəʾyo* – አስተርእዮ (Manifestation [of God]).

Interestingly, the Ethiopian Church's New Year celebration corresponds to a third century canonical prayer of the early church in which God is praised for the created nourishment and beseeched to bless the crown of the year. We find the prayer in the canons attributed to Hippolytus of Rome:

> We give thanks to you, Lord, almighty God, because you have made us worthy to see these fruits which the earth has produced this year. Bless, Lord, the crown of the year which is of your bounty, and may they satisfy the poor of your people. Your servant (name of the priest), who has brought these things which are yours, because he fears you bless him from your holy heaven, and all his house, and pour upon him your holy mercy, that he may know your will in everything and cause him to inherit heavenly things; through our Lord Jesus Christ, your dear Son, and the Holy Spirit, to the ages of ages, Amen.[841]

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[837] Ullendorff, "Hebraic-Jewish Elements," 245.
[838] *Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* [Lectionary] 2.
[839] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 97, no. 69.
[840] Jeffery, "The Liturgical Year in the Ethiopian Degg^{w}ā," 215.
[841] Paul Bradshaw, *The Canons of Hippolytus* (Nottingham: Grove Books Limited, 1987) 34.

The special blessing ceremony of the Ethiopian New Year's Day[842] also recalls the early church's tradition of blessing the fruits of the earth. Following the Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*) of the New Year's Day, the celebrant priest declares the days for the fasts and feasts of that particular year, such as Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and blesses the wheat, grapes (raisins), and incense reciting the prayer of thanksgiving.[843] Thus, whenever *Qəddase* is celebrated throughout the year, the eucharistic elements (bread and wine) are made from the wheat and grapes (raisins) blessed on New Year's Day. The EOTC's special blessing service ostensibly testifies to the sacramental potential of created material things that could serve as objects of divine glory.

During the season of harvest, which follows the rainy season and begins after the celebration of the New Year, the liturgical chants offer thanksgiving for God's bounties. The first 40 days of the season are known as *Zämänä Ṣəge* – ዘመነ ጽጌ (Season of Flower), and the chants mainly thank God for beautifying the land with the flowers and for making the harvest abundant. The scriptural chants and readings during the Eucharistic liturgies of this season include: Ps. 67:6 "the earth has yielded its increase; God our God, has blessed us; let all the ends of the earth revere him;" Ps. 92:12, Ps. 103:14-15, Ps. 128:2;

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[842] This ritual may have been influenced by the "blessing of the fruits" stated in the *Apostolic Tradition*. According to this church order, the people are supposed to bring the firstfruits to the bishop who blesses them, saying: "We give thee thanks, O God, and we offer thee the first-fruits; which thou has given us to enjoy, nourishing them through thy word, commanding the earth to bring forth her fruits for the gladness and the food of men [*sic*] and all beasts. For all these things we praise thee, O God, and for all things wherewith thou hast blessed us, who for us [adorn] every creature with diverse fruits. Through thy Servant Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whom be to thee glory, world without end. Amen." See *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, trans. Easton, 52, no. 28. See also the 40th statute of the *Tə'əzaz Sinodos*, which is part of the Ethiopic Church Order and translated by G. Horner, *The Statutes of the Apostles*, 178-179.

[843] The first portion of the prayer of thanksgiving reads: "We give thanks unto the doer of good things unto us, the merciful God, the Father of our Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ: for he has covered us and [helped] us; he has kept us and brought us near and received us unto himself, and undertaken our defense, strengthened us, and brought us unto this hour. Let us therefore [beseech] him [so] that the Almighty Lord our God keeps us in this holy day and all the days of our life in all peace." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 22, nos. 31-32.

and Mt. 6:25-34, Jesus' reminder for us to consider the lilies of the field and the birds of the air, and not to worry about what we eat and dress.[844]

The aforementioned references to fruits and flowers are not simple correlations with the events of the season; rather they serve as symbols of Christ, who is called "the fruit of life" in the Ethiopic *Theotokia*.[845] *Maḥəletä Ṣəge* – ማሕሌተ ጽጌ [The Chant of Flower], the special hymnary chanted during the Season of Flower, inspired by the biblical metaphor: "A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots" (Is. 11:1) symbolizes the shoot by St. Mary, the descendent of Jesse and David who brought forth the redemptive fruit, Christ. One of the chants in the hymnary reads: "O Mary, you are a miraculous shoot that blossomed the redeemer."[846] The same hymnary, highlighting the virgin birth of Christ, symbolically uses the staff of Aaron that blossomed without being watered (Num. 17: 1-8): "O Mary, you are the staff of Aaron that came out without any stem and brought forth a flower with no water or dew."[847] This typology signifies that as Aaron's staff blossomed without being planted or watered, likewise St. Mary gave birth to Jesus with no human seed.

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[844] *Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* [Lectionary] 123-124.
[845] "Wəddase Maryam [Praise of Mary]," *Mäzəmurä Dawit* [Psalter] 3.
[846] See "Maḫəletä Ṣəge [The Chant of Flower]," *Mädəbäl Zä-maḫəlet* – መድበል ዘማኅሌት [Corpus of Liturgical Chants] (Asmara: Kokäbä Ṣəbaḥ Printing Press, 1988) 126. The Syriac liturgical tradition as well symbolizes Christ by blossomed grapes and olives. As quoted by Robert Murray, in his *Hymnen de Virginitate* St. Ephrem says: "the prudent olive has no fear of the cold which terrifies all. Under the scourges of freezing winter its leaves stand fast, as though faithful. They are an image of the faithful who persevere in Christ the Olive." See Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (London: T & T Clark, 2006)112. A quotation from Aphrahat's *Hymnen de Nativitate* reads: "Blessed be the Shepherd, who became the Lamb for our atonement! Blessed be the Vineshoot, which became the Chalice for our salvation! Blessed also be the Grape, the source of the Medicine of Life! Blessed also be the Farmer, who became the wheat which was sown and the sheaf which was harvested." See Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 119-120.
[847] See "Maḫəletä Ṣəge [The Chant of Flower]," 117.

Following the rainy season, which lasts for three months, the Ethiopian highlands are beautified by freshly blossomed lilies. Testifying to this natural phenomenon, one of the antiphons, mentioned in the lectionary by its incipit[848] says:

> The rainy season has passed in due time…Behold the flowers have blossomed: nard, cinnamon, almonds, and mandrake gave fruit in the garden…let us thank [God] who has granted us his goodness.[849]

The Lord, who adorned the sky with the stars while creating the heavens, is praised for "beautifying the land with flowers."[850] Moreover, a great sense of wonder for God's beautiful work of creation is exhibited in most of the chants. For instance, the antiphon known as *Kinä Ṭəbäbu* – ኪነ ጥበቡ [His (God's) Wisdom][851] reads:

> Alleluia (three times). The skillfulness of he, who is above heaven, is a marvel and a wonder. He has shown his mercy upon us. He who crowned the sky with bright starts has shown his mercy upon us. And he has adorned the earth with pure flowers. He has shown his mercy upon us….The good fragrance of the saints is like the lily of the valleys: they are blooming, the cinnamon and the nard.[852]

This way the EOTC expresses gratefulness to God for the bountiful gift of creation.

During the Season of Flower, the Church, the Bride of Christ, also praises her Heavenly Bridegroom [*Märəʿawi Sämayawi* – መርዓዊ ሰማያዊ] based on the Songs of Solomon. One of the hymns of the season reads: "The bride praises him saying: 'come, Beloved, let us go out to the fields if the vine is blooming and if the pomegranate has given its fruit."[853] She acknowledges her Bridegroom as the Word of God through whom

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[848] See "Ḫäläfä Kərämt – ኃለፈ ክረምት [Winter Has Passed]," *Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* [Lectionary] 124.
[849] Fritsch, *The Liturgical Year of the Ethiopian Church,* 118; "Mäzəmur Zä-zämänä Ṣəge – መዝሙር ዘዘመነ ጽጌ [Song of the Season of Flower],"*Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 11.
[850] See "Mäzəmur Zä-zämänä Ṣəge [Song of the Season of Flower]" 11.
[851] *Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* [Lectionary] 124.
[852] Fritsch, *The Liturgical Year of the Ethiopian Church,* 120; "Mäzəmur Zä-zämänä Ṣəge [Song of the Season of Flower]" 8.
[853] Fritsch, *The Liturgical Year of the Ethiopian Church,* 119; "Mäzəmur Zä-zämänä Ṣəge [Song of the Season of Flower]," 7. The quote is from Song of Solomon 7:11-12. According to the Ethiopian biblical tradition the section 5: 9 - 8: 4 of the Song of Solomon is thought to be "the praise of the Bride [Church] to her Bridegroom [Christ]." See S. Strelcyn, *Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts in the British Library Acquired Since the Year 1877* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978) 23.

creation was made (Jn. 1:3)[854] and as the "Lord of the Sabbath" (Mt. 12:8).[855] As articulated in the Ethiopian anaphora of John the Evangelist, the Bride (the Church) exalts and worships her Lord[856] and Bridegroom who saved her from death and who "for her sake was [slapped][857] in the court of judgment so that [he] might set her free by [his] blood, and that she might be fenced around with [his] cross and kept by [his] crucifixion against temptation until she shall enter the marriage feast in heaven."[858] This way, as I will discuss in the next chapter, the church proleptically experiences the *eschaton* in her earthly worship.

The above two sections have demonstrated the place given to creation in the Ethiopian liturgy. This notion will be further nuanced in the following section from different angles: the cosmic symbolism of the church building and its icons; and the concept of the cosmic liturgy as manifested in the liturgical sources of the EOTC.

III. The Cosmic Liturgical Space: The Meeting Place of Heaven and Earth

The liturgy of the church celebrated in temporal space and time has a cosmological dimension. Since the entire creation in its spatial and temporal dimensions is represented in the Divine Liturgy,[859] the church's liturgy is "a celebration where terrestrial space and heavenly space meet."[860] In this celebration the earthly church is united with the heavenly church (communion of saints), and thus the temporal and spatial

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[854] See "Mäzəmur Zä-zämänä Ṣəge [Song of the Season of Flower]" 7.
[855] Ibid, 9.
[856] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 100, no. 99.
[857] Here Daoud uses the word "smitten." But "slapped" is the more literal translation of the Gəʿəz verb "*ṣäfəʿa* – ጸፍዐ" which refers to Christ in the anaphora: "*täṣäfaʿəkä bäwəstä awəd* – ተጸፋዕከ በውስተ ዐውድ," meaning you were slapped in the court of judgment, i.e. when Jesus was tried in front of Pilate. See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [Book of Liturgy] 74, no. 52.
[858] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 95, no. 52.
[859] Pauly Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth: The Theology of Liturgical Spacetime in the Eastern Syrian Qurbana* (Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam [St. Thomas Christian Fellowship], 1995) 113.
[860] Ibid, 6.

differences between them are overcome.[861] The main goal of the eucharistic celebration is to enter into the realm of the new space and time that brings heaven to earth,[862] and the church building serves as the center of this cosmic worship. In the following sections I will discuss the cosmological dimensions of the Ethiopian liturgy in light of the cosmic symbolism of the Ethiopian Church architecture and the various cosmic songs of the liturgical texts.

A. The Cosmic Symbolism of the Ethiopian Church Building

The origin of the Ethiopian Church architecture should be sought in the pre-Aksumite period.[863] Before the rise of Aksum as a kingdom in the second century A.D., various temples were built in Ethiopia that looked "closely akin to south-Arabian structures of similar age."[864] For instance the renowned temple at Yeha, North Ethiopia, which still has "walls in superb dry-stone masonry," standing high above the ground is dated from the fifth or fourth century B.C.[865] After the conversion of the royal emperors Abrəha and Aṣəbha (Ezana and Saizana) to Christianity in the second quarter of the fourth century A.D., edifices of Christian basilica were built based on the local practice of architecture.[866] While St. Mary's Cathedral of Aksum retains Aksumite features such

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[861] J M. Pathrapankal, "Christian Life and Heavenly Liturgy in the Syro-Malabar Rite," *The Malabar Church*: *Symposium in Honour of Rev*. *Placid J. Podipara C.M.I.*, ed. Jacob Vellian (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1970) 61.
[862] Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth,* 60.
[863] Aksum was one of the powerful kingdoms outside the Roman Empire during the earliest times of Christianity. According to Roderick Grierson, by the second century A.D. the Aksumite Kingdom was known to Greek and Latin literature. Grierson writes: "Although the epigraphic evidence begins in the fifth century B.C., there is no mention of a kingdom in Ethiopia in Greek or Latin sources until the second century A.D., when Ptolemy refers to 'Aksum where the palace of the king is located.'" See Roderick Grierson, "Dreaming of Jerusalem," *African Zion: The Sacred Art of Ethiopia,* ed. Roderick Grierson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) 7.
[864] David Buxton, *The Abyssinians* (Southampton: Camelot Press Ltd., 1970) 86.
[865] Ibid.
[866] Though Abrəha and Aṣəbha are traditionally believed to be the builders of St. Mary's cathedral of Aksum, the first church in Ethiopia, some scholars contend that the cathedral could not be built earlier than

as "stepped podium and indented plan,"[867] the church of Abrəha and Aṣəbha was a rock-hewn church, carved from the living rock of a mountain[868] that reflected the structure of the carved monolithic stelae of Aksum. In fact, due to the relation of the Aksumite Kingdom with the Byzantine and middle-eastern Christians, new features unknown to the pre-Christian Aksumite architecture were introduced.

According to the EOTC's tradition, there are basically four kinds of church buildings. The most ancient churches are monolithic, hewn from a single rock, which are identified by archeologists as "hypostyle halls."[869] Among the ancient architectures in Ethiopia, we also find cave churches that are built in remembrance of the suffering of the early Christians who used to worship in *catacombs*. Most of the urban churches in Ethiopia are basilican type, "the most common typology officially present in the whole of the Christian world."[870] These churches are mainly rectangular, subdivided into aisles, "starting from the narthex at the entrance all the way to the apse at the end."[871]

The prevalent church architecture in Ethiopia is the circular type with a tripartite alignment. Ullendorff asserts that the typically circular Ethiopian Church structure "is clearly derived from the threefold division of the Hebrew temple" (I Kin. 6: 5-6; 19; II Chr. 3:7).[872] The round church building, in some cases also octagonal or rectangular, is

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the 6th century A.D. One of the reasons given for this contention is that even if the royal brothers were baptized by St. Frumentius in the 4th century, "Christianity did not become the official religion of the Aksumite state until the reign of Emperor Kaleb [the first quarter of the 6th C. A.D.]." See for example, Marilyn Heldman, "Architectural Symbolism, Sacred Geography and the Ethiopian Church," *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 22/3 (1992) 225.

[867] Buxton, *The Abyssinians,* 97.

[868] Sylvia Pankhurst, *Ethiopia: A Cultural History* (Norwich: Fletcher and Son Ltd., 1955) 132.

[869] Mario Di Salvo "The Typology of Ethiopian Churches from the Basilica to the Centrally Planned Churches in Their Structural and Symbolic Aspects," *Churches of Ethiopia: The Monastery of Nārgā Śellāsē,* eds. Stanislaw Chojnacki and Osvaldo Raineri (Milano: Skira Editore S.P.A., 1999) 63.

[870] Ibid, 59.

[871] Ibid.

[872] Ullendorff, "Hebraic-Jewish Elements in Abyssinian (Monophysite) Christianity," 235. Mario Di Salvo contends that even though the various ancient Ethiopian churches were inspired by the tripartition of the

divided into three concentric ambulatories. The outside ambulatory is called *Qəne Maḥəlet* – ቅኔ ማሕሌት [Choir], the place where the cantors sing hymns. According to Ullendorff, this outer part "corresponds to the *hāsēr* of the Tabernacle or the '*ulām* of Solomon's temple."[873] The second chamber is known as *Qəddəst* (ቅድስት), where liturgical processions take place and the Holy Communion is administered to the faithful. Ullendorff states that this chamber represents "the *qodes* of the Tabernacle or *hēkāl* of Solomon's Temple."[874] The innermost and the most sacred place of the Ethiopian Church building is known as *Mäqədäs* – መቅደስ [Sanctuary] or *Qəddəstä Qəddusan* – ቅድስተ ቅዱሳን [Holy of Holies], the equivalent to the "*qodes haqqodasim* of the Tabernacle and the *dəbir* of the Temple."[875] The sanctuary is usually square in shape, and consists of the altar on which the *Tabot* (ታቦት),[876] the replica of the Ark of the Covenant, is placed.

One can discern many symbolic dimensions in the early Ethiopian Church architecture. As one example, by virtue of its dedication, St. Mary's Cathedral of Aksum was an emulation of the Holy Zion Church of Jerusalem, built by Maximus of Jerusalem in 340 A.D.[877] While *Aksum Ṣəyon* was 125 cubits in length and 53 cubits in width, it had five aisles like the Church of Zion in Jerusalem.[878] This emulation denotes the keen interest of the earliest Ethiopian Christians to make their city and church a replica of the

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Jerusalem temple model (sanctuary; nave; and chamber, I Kin. 6:5), this three-fold structure "is a phenomenon shared by the whole of the Paleo-Christian enclave." See Di Salvo, "The Typology of Ethiopian Churches," 64. However, one cannot deny that the three concentric parts of the Ethiopian round churches and the placing of the *Tabot* [replica of the Ark of the Covenant] in the *Mäqədäs* [Sanctuary] or *Qəddəstä Qəddusan* [Holy of Holies] is a wholly distinct tradition, derived from the Jewish temple.

[873] Ullendorff, "Hebraic-Jewish Elements," 235.

[874] Ibid.

[875] Ibid.

[876] The EOTC offers the eucharistic elements on the *Tabot* [a consecrated altar-slab] which is placed on the altar. Similar altar-slabs are also found in the Eastern Churches. The altar-slab is called *tablitho* in the Coptic and Syrian Orthodox Churches, whereas the Assyrian Church calls it *dapa.* See Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth,* 159.

[877] Heldman, "Architectural Symbolism, Sacred Geography and the Ethiopian Church," 227.

[878] Ibid, 228.

holy city of Jerusalem, the Temple of heaven. The concept is strongly reflected in the naming of Aksum, the ancient city in North Ethiopia which was the "ceremonial center of the Aksumite empire," as the New Jerusalem.[879] In fact, as the legendary inheritor of the Ark of the Covenant, Aksum is "the second Zion."[880]

In both its disposition and nature, the church is the symbol of the heavenly Jerusalem. When a new church building is consecrated according to the Ethiopian tradition, the altar is anointed with *Myron*, and various hymns are chanted at the four corners of the building. One of the hymns, underlying the heavenly nature of the church reads:

> The church has been built to be the symbol of heaven; [it is] a place where [we get] forgiveness of sin. David chanted that [God said] 'this is my abode forever [Ps. 132:14].'…the walls of the Church are adorned by pearls. It has been built with pearls of sapphire and chalcedony[881]….The Almighty established the church; and its beauty outshines the sun.[882]

As the Bride of Christ, cleansed with "the washing of water by the word," the Church shines "in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle" (Eph. 5:27). This biblical concept is reflected in St. Yared's antiphonary [*Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* – ጾመ ድጓ]: "Symbolizing her [the church] by the stars of the sky, I praise its beauty; my sister, the Bride [of Christ], my kind dove, is peaceful, and shines like the sun."[883] The Ethiopian canon law, known as *Fətḥä Nägäst* – ፍትሐ ነገሥት (The Law of the Kings),[884] has an injunction which reads that

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[879] Ibid, 225.
[880] Di Salvo "The Typology of Ethiopian Churches," 64.
[881] These are two of the precious stones with which the foundations of the wall of the heavenly Jerusalem were adorned as stated in the Book of Revelation 21: 18-20.
[882] *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 192.
[883] *Ṣomä Dəgg^{W}a* [Fasting Hymnary] 65.
[884] *Fətḥä Nägäst* is a collection of laws, originally written in Arabic by a Coptic writer Abul Fadail Ibn al-Assal. It was translated to Gəʿəz in the 15th century by Petros (Peter), the son of Abdal Sayd. See *The Fetha Nagast*: *The Law of the Kings*, trans. Paulos Tsadua (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2009) xv and xvii.

"a church should be lighted with many lamps, in the likeness of heaven."[885] Even though the church is built on earth, its destiny is heaven. This is the idea behind the hymn that symbolizes the church by a grapevine [*Ḥärägä Wåyən* – ሐረገ ወይን] whose "roots are under the earth whereas its branches reach heaven."[886]

The church is heaven on earth where the heavenly worship takes place. When St. Yared the hymnologist was brought by *Abba* Arägawi[887] to the monastic church of *Däbrä Damo* (ደብረ ዳሞ), which was built on the top of a hardly accessible mountain, he was impressed by the beauty of that church.[888] Then he chanted: "The heavenly angels visit this church; they visit her, since she is the house [abode] of the Lord. I went around the church, and saw the beauty of its architecture. This church is a place of worship, a holy tabernacle where people get forgiveness of sin."[889] By celebrating the Divine Liturgy, the church joins in the heavenly praise of the angels. While on earth, the church marches to the heavenly Jerusalem, where the myriads of angels and the spirits of the righteous praise God unceasingly.[890] As we join in the celestial praise, the invisible angels as well celebrate the Divine Liturgy in unison with humans on earth. Thus, "the church has a [worship] that looks like that of the angels; and it is the figure of the heavenly chamber."[891] The sacred liturgical space is a transformed place where the earthly space

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[885] See *Fetha Nagast*: *The Law of the Kings,* trans. Paulos Tsadua, 11.
[886] See "Ziq Zä-zämänä Ṣəge – ዚቅ ዘዘመነ ጽጌ [Flower Season Hymn]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wä-mäzəmur* [Festive Hymnary] 39.
[887] One of the 9 Syrian saints who came to Ethiopia at the end of the 5th century and contributed to the spread of Christianity in the country by translating the Scripture and establishing churches.
[888] Elias Abrha, "Yä-Ityoṗəya Betäkərəstyan Zema [Hymnody of the Ethiopian Church]," *Yä-Ityoṗəya Orətodokəs Täwaḥədo Betäkərəstyan Tarik* [History of the Ethiopian Orthodox *Täwaḥədo* Church] (Addis Ababa: Mega Printing Press, 2008) 100.
[889] Ibid, 101.
[890] Pathrapankal, "Christian Life and Heavenly Liturgy in the Syro-Malabar Rite," 60.
[891] *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 88.

and heavenly space meet; it is an image of the Kingdom of God where the heavenly and earthly beings unite in praising God.[892]

The sacred liturgical space represents the whole of creation, making the church a microcosm that links the heavenly and earthly realities. As "the sacred space of the church penetrates the cosmic space,"[893] the liturgical blessings sanctify the entire cosmos. For instance, the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*) has a prayer of blessing [*Ṣälotä Burake* – ጸሎተ ቡራኬ] in which the winds of the sky [*Näfasatä Sämay* – ነፋሳተ ሰማይ] and fruits of the earth are blessed.[894] There are also processions in the *Qəddase* that represent the apostles' proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom throughout the world.[895] As the sacred space in the liturgy is a transformed heavenly space,[896] for the liturgical assembly, heaven becomes earth. Moreover, the heavenly persons (communion of saints) are present in the liturgy of the earthly church, and the events commemorated in liturgy are of the "new time dimension, which knows neither beginning nor end."[897] That is why we remember the departed souls in the diptychs, believing that the souls are in our midst while we celebrate the Divine Liturgy.

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[892] Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth,* 60.
[893] Evdokimov, *A Theology of Beauty*, 119.
[894] Blessing the air and the ground with his hand-cross, the priest recites the prayer: "Bless the airs of heaven, and the rains and the fruits of the earth of this year in accordance with your grace, and make joy and gladness prevail perpetually on the face of the earth." See "*Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 57, no. 13.
[895] One example is the procession that takes place shortly before the Gospel reading. Moreover, the reading of the lections from the Pauline epistles by the chief deacon, facing west; from the general epistles by the assistant deacon, facing north; from the Acts of the Apostles by the assistant priest, facing south; and the Gospel reading by the celebrant, facing east symbolize the spreading of the Good News by the apostles throughout the world. See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 91.
[896] Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth,* 113.
[897] Ibid.

As a sacred space where heaven and earth meet, a church building is an icon of the whole cosmos.[898] The *Qəddəstä Qəddusan* [Holy of Holies or *Sancta Sanctorum*][899] of the Ethiopian Church building represents heaven, whereas the nave (*Qəddəst*) symbolizes the earth.[900] The altar is the "table of the Kingdom" where the bread of life is offered.[901] The Ethiopic equivalent term for altar is *Mänbär* – መንበር [Throne], and as its meaning implies it serves as the symbol of the throne of God. The paten, placed on the altar emulates the tomb of the Lord, as clearly stated in the *Prayer of Oblation* addressed to Christ: "we place it [the eucharistic bread] upon this blessed paten in the likeness of the sepulcher in which you have passed three days and three nights."[902] The three doors of the church toward the east, north, and west directions are the symbols of the three angelic worlds [planetary heavens], known in the Ethiopian tradition as *Iyor* (ኢዮር), *Rama* (ራማ), and *Erär* (ኤረር).[903] While the internal and external pillars of the church building represent the prophets and apostles on whose teachings the Christian doctrines are based, the candles exemplify the doctors of the church.[904]

In a distinctly Ethiopian practice, an ostrich egg is placed under the Cross of the dome, conveying a message that as an ostrich ardently gazes on her eggs when she wants

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[898] Archimandrite Vasileios, *Hymn of Entry: Liturgy and Life in the Orthodox Church*, trans. Elizabeth Briere (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984) 71.
[899] Di Salvo "The Typology of Ethiopian Churches,"67.
[900] In the Ethiopian churches, though there are icons on the doors of the sanctuary, there is no equivalent term for the Byzantine *iconostasis* that divides the sanctuary and the nave. However, the division between the sanctuary and the nave as the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of Earth respectively, is understood in the EOTC.
[901] Referring to the altar as the table of the holy mysteries, a hymn in the Ethiopic Liturgy of Hours says: "in the likeness of the Cherubim, we have deacons for the service of the holy mysteries on this table." See *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥassab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 90.
[902] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 25, no. 51.
[903] Kinfa Gabriel Altaye, *Sərə'atä Betäkərəstyan* [Church Orders] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Printing Press, 1991) 20.
[904] See "Yä-Qəddase Tarik [History of the Liturgy]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 8.

to hatch them, we too need to be focused on our spiritual thoughts.[905] The egg under the cross of the dome also symbolizes new birth, and hence resurrection. *Betäləḥem,*[906] the Ethiopian equivalent for the *Diakonikon,* is situated at the east direction of the church building, reminding us of Paradise (the Eden Garden in the East). Though the first humans lost the privilege to eat the tree of life due to disobedience, we are now allowed to enjoy the tree of life through the holy mysteries[907] that are prepared at *Betäləḥem.* The deacon's proclamation in the liturgy: "look to the east"[908] also denotes our interest to look back to our lost home, the Eden Garden of the East. It also signifies our earnest waiting for the second coming of the Son of Man (Christ) who will come from the east like the lightning that shines from the east to the west (Mt. 24:27). Christ, "the bright morning star" (Rev. 22:16) and "the sun of righteousness,"[909] has already inaugurated the new age of the Kingdom of God. As the dawn breaks, the eastern horizon brightens up with beautiful colours; and thus, we turn to the beauty and brilliance of God's light as we praise the triune God, facing east. Reflecting this meaning, according to the Ethiopian tradition, the church building is built "towards the East."[910]

Icons: Windows to Heaven.

One of the factors that make a church building an image of heaven is its internal adornment with icons. A typical Orthodox Church building with its beautiful iconography

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[905] Ibid, 9.
[906] Like the *Pastoporion* in the Eastern Orthodox Churches or the Syrian *Diakonikon,* in the Ethiopian tradition *Betäləḥem* (Eng. Bethlehem) serves as a place for the preparation of the eucharistic bread.
[907] In the Ethiopian *Theotokia*, the Holy Eucharist is symbolized by the Tree of Life. See "Wəddaase Maryam [Praise of Mary]," *Mäzəmurä Dawit* [Psalter] 10.
[908] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 58, no. 26.
[909] *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥassab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 111.
[910] See *The Ethiopic Didascalia,* trans. Harden, 74. The tradition of facing towards the east while praying, and building the church edifice in the eastern direction is upheld by the Eastern Churches. See for example the plan of the East Syrian Church building in Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth*, 154.

becomes "an expression (epiphany) of the new heavens and the new earth in the place where the mystery of salvation was revealed and accomplished."[911] Orthodoxy perceives the icon "as a microcosm, which links together the divine and created worlds."[912] Though made from the created matter, icons represent transfigured reality, that is "an image of the transfigured, or divinized world."[913] Beyond their physical limits, icons reveal something greater, conveying eternal meaning and acting as a "window, or passageway, between human beings and God."[914] Articulating briefly the immense significance of icons, Kallistos Ware writes:

> The icons which fill the church serve as a point of meeting between heaven and earth. As each local congregation prays Sunday by Sunday, surrounded by the figures of Christ, the angels, and the saints, these visible images remind the faithful unceasingly of the invisible presence of the whole company of heaven at the Liturgy. The faithful can feel that the walls of the church open out upon eternity, and they are helped to realize that their Liturgy on earth is one and the same with the great Liturgy of heaven. The multitudinous icons express visibly the sense of 'heaven on earth.'[915]

Besides teaching the faithful, icons also become channels of divine light and meaningful symbols of God's grace. Moreover, icons signify an expression that glorifies the human person and the rest of created beings,[916] and thus the transfiguration of the whole of creation.

The term *icon*[917] is usually associated with the Byzantine Orthodox tradition. However, "this, does not preclude the existence of another classification of sacred icons:

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[911] Marc Metzger, "Liturgy and Cosmos," *Concilium: Liturgy and the Body,* eds. Louis-Marie Chauvet and François Kabasele Lumbala (London: SCM, 1995) 43.
[912] Mariamna Fortounatto and Mary B. Cunningham, "Theology of the Icon," *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*, eds. Mary Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 136.
[913] Ibid, 137.
[914] Ibid.
[915] Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 271-272.
[916] Petro B. Bilaniuk, "The Ultimate Reality and Meaning Expressed in Eastern Christian Icons," *Studies in Eastern Christianity,* ed. Mark A. Lodico, 3 (1983) 3.
[917] The Ethiopic equivalent word for *icon* is *sə'əl* (ሥዕል), which literally means depiction or picture. *Sə'əl* is different from *məsəl* – ምስል (statue), and as in the case of the Eastern Churches, in the EOTC the saints are

the fascinating and unique 'African' production of Ethiopia."[918] As Richard Pankhurst in his preface to Milos Simovic's book correctly asserted: "Ethiopian art, with all its beauty, was essentially Christian art, and has aptly been described as Byzantine art on African soil."[919] Even though the Ethiopian Christian art belongs to the Middle Eastern art, which is "characterized by fertile invention and symbolism," Byzantine influence is also noted.[920] The spirit of sacred painting in Ethiopia is a derivation "from interpretations of the art of the Byzantine world."[921] Nevertheless, though foreign influence is noted in the Ethiopian iconography, "it remained based on the subconscious and timeless reflection of native African forms."[922] Yet Ethiopian religious art is distinct from other African arts. For instance, while "sculpture was the primary medium of creative expression of the people of Western, Central and Southern Africa"[923] in the EOTC only paintings are accepted; neither a statue nor sculpture is allowed to represent Christ or any of the saints.

Icons in the Ethiopian tradition convey a great sense of holiness and sanctity. Upon the completion of the artists' wall painting or when a certain icon on a portable panel is brought to a church, the icon will be consecrated with a prayer that beseeches God "to send the Holy Spirit on the [icon], so that it will be sanctified and blessed."[924]

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not represented by statues. In the Ethiopian church buildings only wall paintings or icons on portable panels are allowed.

[918] Stanislaw Chojnacki, *Ethiopian Icons: Catalogue of the Collection of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies Addis Ababa University* (Milan: Skira Editore, 2000) 5.

[919] See "Preface," Milos Simovic, *Daughter of Zion: Orthodox Christian Art from Ethiopia* (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 2000) 8.

[920] Pankhurst, *Ethiopia: A Cultural History*, 128.

[921] Chojnacki, *Ethiopian Icons,* 9.

[922] Ibid, 19. Written records suggest the existence of wall paintings in Ethiopia as early as the 7th century. Panel paintings were introduced in the middle of the 15th century. These paintings originally appeared as religious art, so that the EOTC has served as "the wellspring of the pictorial art of Ethiopia." Exhibiting their creativity, throughout the centuries, the traditional artists of the Ethiopian Church were able to produce "a unique and prodigious body of church murals, manuscript miniatures and panel paintings on wood." See Chojnacki, *Ethiopian Icons*, 19.

[923] Chojnacki, *Ethiopian Icons*, 19.

[924] Seifesellassie Yohannis, "Holy Images in the Church," *Ethiopian Church Treasures and Faith,* ed. Jacques Mercier (Paris: L'archange Minotaure, 2009) 59.

The icons, which appear either as wall paintings, or on portable wooden panels, altar vessels, on the cover of the Gospels and other liturgical books, are meant to express fervent spirituality and dogma in an Ethiopian context.[925] Ethiopian iconography allows "little individuality outside the given canons. Its images try to open a window into a higher, unchanging reality of divinity."[926] The underlying principles of Ethiopian art have remained constant by virtue of its didactic character. Its purpose is to describe in colour the Christ event and to portray the saints in forms that are intelligible to the believer.[927]

The portrayal of creation in iconography underlines the cosmic dimension of the church building. Since the church is "a sacrament of the city of heaven, and a sign of glorified humanity,"[928] the depiction of the heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, as well as the animals and the fruits of the earth in the liturgical architecture signifies "the cosmic score of Christian worship."[929] This cosmic consciousness is vividly reflected in the monastic church of *Däbrä Damo*, North Ethiopia. The church has "a beautiful paneled ceiling of the narthex, whereon are carved with skill and grace, numerous animals, alternating with interlaced ornament."[930] Such a work is not a simple artistic creativity, but an expression of the church's teaching on the sanctified nature of creation which is brought to life through the Christ event. Thus, "a church is, the prefiguration of the new heavens, and of the new earth where all creatures will gather around their Creator."[931]

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[925] Simovic, *Daughter of Zion,* 17.
[926] Ibid, 18.
[927] Chojnacki , *Ethiopian Icons*, 19.
[928]M. Francis Mannion, "Rejoice, Heavenly Powers! The Renewal of Liturgical Doxology," *Pro Ecclesia* 12/1 (2003) 55.
[929] Ibid, 57.
[930] Pankhurst, *Ethiopia*: *A Cultural History*, 144
[931] Leonid Ouspensky, *Theology of the Icon,* trans. Anthony Gythiel, Vol. I (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1992) 30.

This belief is the basis for the construction and decoration of the Ethiopian church buildings.

Characteristic of Ethiopian icons is unifying the past with the present by surpassing history. There are a number of churches, like the church at *Däbrä Bərhan* (ደብረ ብርሃን) in the province of Gondar dedicated to the Trinity (*Däbrä Bərhan Śəllase* – ደብረ ብርሃን ሥላሴ) whose "walls are covered with pictures from top to bottom."[932] The multitude of the icons of the saints in the walls of the church together with the "most decorative ceiling with numerous winged heads of cherubs,"[933] present the real nature of an icon, which is expressing "the unifying power of the Liturgy."[934] As humans and angels are united in the Divine Liturgy to offer thanksgiving to God, the depiction of the angels and that of the departed saintly members of the church inside a church building denotes the unity of the earthly and heavenly creatures – communion of saints.

The icons in the church also unify people of the past with those of the present. The unifying aspect of the icons is reflected in David Buxton's description of the wall paintings of *Däbrä Sina* – ደብረ ሲና [Mount Sinai] Church in Ethiopia:

> To see the painted walls of a Debra-Sina-type church one must pass round the ambulatory which encircles the Holy of Holies in a clock wise direction, beginning with the eastern wall...The pictures portray patriarchs and prophets and those events of the Old Testament which foreshadow events of the New. There is Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, anticipating Christ's sacrifice. There is Daniel among the lions, and Jonah with the whale – both incidents which were taken to symbolize Christ's resurrection after three days. The adjoining south wall shows the Visitation, the Nativity, the Massacre of the Innocents and Flight into Egypt – i.e. the First Coming of Christ. Alongside these scenes the Second Coming is shown as well – a Last Judgment surmounting a fiery scene of the Devil chained in [H]ell. This wall also carries the Apostles (with St. Paul) and the Nine Saints who were in a sense the Apostles of Ethiopia.[935]

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[932] Buxton, *The Abyssinians,* 151.
[933] Ibid.
[934] Vasileios, *Hymn of Entry,* 83.
[935] Buxton, *The Abyssinians,* 151-152.

Such a scene epitomizes the strong link between the past, the present, and the future in one setting. As the Old Testament was the shadow of the New Testament, and the Church of the New Covenant experiences the forthcoming Kingdom of God in its sacramental life, the paintings of *Däbrä Sina* Church eloquently speak of this historical interrelatedness.

While the church building itself is an icon of God's dispensation, the icons that we see in the church also present to us the story of the salvation of humankind. According to the EOTC's tradition, as in the case of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, icons inside a church building are not "arranged fortuitously, but according to a definite theological scheme, so that the whole edifice forms one great icon or image of the kingdom of God."[936] In a typically Ethiopian Church building, the icon that represents the Trinity with the four living creatures (Cherubim) and the twenty-four Elders (Seraphim) is placed on the top of the doors of the sanctuary which is adorned with the icons of the archangels. The icon of the crucifixion, usually depicted with the skull of Adam underneath, is painted on the wall of the sanctuary. On the altar, the icon of St. Mary, enthroned and putting her beloved Son on her lap, is placed.[937] Icons that show the series of the whole Christ event are painted on the eastern wall of the nave, whereas the icons of the twelve apostles with their halos, including St. Paul, encircle the dome. Inside the dome, Christ the head of the church is painted, mostly enthroned as a King and separating the just from the wicked – a representation of his second coming. The patriarchs and the prophets of the Old Testament and the saints of the New Testament are

[936] Ware, *The Orthodox Church,* 217.
[937] Chojnacki, *Ethiopian Icons*, 29.

depicted on the northern and southern walls of the nave in the basilicas and in the walls of the second ambulatory (*Qəddəst*) in circular churches.[938]

As the various icons of the church building present to us the most important events of sacred history and the beginning of the age to come, the sacred space of the church serves as a transformed place where humans are united with the angels to praise God. The eucharistic elements, fruits of the earth, represent created matter and thus the liturgy of the church is the song of the whole of creation – a cosmic liturgy. Now I proceed to the discussion of the all-encompassing aspect of the church's liturgy.

B. The Cosmic Liturgy

The cosmos consists of "the worlds of angels, principalities and powers, the corporeal, the material, the spiritual, and the energetic," including the unknown regions of God's creativity.[939] All the created celestial and earthly beings praise their Creator in unison. Hence, the whole cosmos is understood as "the liturgy of God,"[940] and the cosmic liturgy refers to "the 'ontological praise' built into the nature of created things – that praise from all creatures evoked so eloquently in the psalms." [941] Signifying this consciousness of the cosmic liturgy, a hymn in the Ethiopian Liturgy of Hours (*Sä'atat*) asserts that at midnight "the stars of the sky; the light of the sun and that of the moon; lightning and clouds; angels, archangels, and the rest of the celestial hosts; the seas, rivers, and streams; fire, water, the rains, and winds; together with the souls of the righteous praise God."[942] Having stated this, the hymn encourages us to join in this cosmic praise. Indeed, "Heaven and earth together with all their worlds, sea and rivers

[938] Yohannes, "Holy Images in the Church," 60.
[939] Mannion, "Rejoice, Heavenly Powers! The Renewal of Liturgical Doxology," 43.
[940] Maniyattu, "Celebration of the Cosmos in the East Syrian Liturgy," 89.
[941] Theokritoff, "Creator and Creation," 74.
[942] *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 87.

and all things that are in them glorify him (God);"[943] and as a priest of creation the human person sacramentally offers the whole of creation to God.

The liturgy of the church, extending beyond the liturgical assembly of the faithful, gathers up all creation into itself. When the church celebrates the liturgy, "the entire body of the gathered church joins with the celebrant in the offering, albeit in differing ways; and inanimate matter makes its contribution too."[944] This liturgy is extended to the whole cosmos and to the heavenly communion of saints as a cosmic liturgy. The cosmic liturgy, therefore, is the liturgy of the waiting ones whose liturgical assembly makes use of the created symbols as a way to heaven.[945] For us, the earthly members of the liturgical assembly, the cosmic liturgy is the only way to participate in the heavenly liturgy. "This liturgy enables us to be in heaven through the cosmos."[946] Indeed, it is the desire of humans to encounter the divine, and transcend the created space and time.[947]

There is, hence, a concelebration of the earthly and heavenly liturgies. As stated in the Ethiopic Liturgy of Hours, "the spiritual hosts of angels sing with a voice that is never silent,"[948] and the unceasing praise of the angels is joined by the rest of creatures "that give humble thanks to God."[949] This feature of the cosmic liturgy is illustrated in the Book of Revelation, where we find the angelic hymn accompanied by the praise of "every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them" (Rev. 5:13). The Book of Revelation also signified that the heavenly liturgy of the angels was performed in the midst of the raising of incense

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[943] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 123, 15
[944] Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 231.
[945] Maniyattu, "Celebration of the Cosmos in the East Syrian Liturgy," 89.
[946] Ibid, 90.
[947] Ibid.
[948] *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 105.
[949] Ibid, 106.

that represented the prayers of the saints (Rev. 8:3-5). In this, we see an "immediate relation between the heavenly liturgy and the prayers of the faithful on earth."[950] Due to the intimate union of the earthly church with the heavenly church, the liturgy in heaven becomes the source of energy and strength for the church here on earth. As I will discuss in the next chapter, through the eucharistic liturgy the church proleptically experiences the Kingdom of God which will be fully revealed after the *eschaton*.

Since the earthly liturgy is the icon of the heavenly liturgy, the officiating clergy symbolize the various angelic hosts. According to the Ethiopian tradition, the celestial powers are divided into nine ranks as: angels, dominions, principalities, authorities, thrones, masters, powers, cherubim, and seraphim,[951] and the nine minor and major clerical orders serve as symbols of these angelic ranks. The cantors (*Mäzäməran* – መዘምራን), who serve in the various Divine Offices of the EOTC, are figures of the angels, whereas the readers (*Anagunəsṭis* – አናጉንስጢስ) symbolize the dominions. The principalities are symbolized by the sub-deacons (*Nəfəq Dyaqonat* – ንፍቅ ዲያቆናት), and the authorities by deacons (*Dyaqonat* – ዲያቆናት). The priests (*Qäsawəst* – ቀሳውስት) are symbols of the thrones, and the archmandrites or corepiscopi (*Qomosat* – ቆሞሳት) that of the masters. The episcopi (*Ėpisqoposat* – ኤጲስቆጶሳት), bishops (*Ṗaṗasat* – ጳጳሳት) and archbishops (*Liqanä ṗaṗasat* – ሊቃነ ጳጳሳት) symbolize the powers, seraphim, and cherubim respectively.[952] A hymn in the Liturgy of Hours (*Sä'atat*) praises the priests as the earthly *seraphs*, who offer the oblation and raise incense, whereas the deacons are

[950] Pathrapankal, "Christian Life and Heavenly Liturgy in the Syro-Malabar Rite," 59.
[951] See "Yä-Qəddase Tarik [History of the Liturgy]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 7. For the details on the angelic ranks see Pseudo-Dionysius' work: "The Celestial Hierarchy, VI" *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1987) 160-161.
[952] See "Yä-Qəddase Tarik [History of the Liturgy]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 7.

symbolized by "vigilant angels who spread their wings for the service of the divine mystery on the table of sacrifice."[953] In general, the clergy, "representing the cherubim in the liturgical singing of the thrice-holy hymn, are caught up in heaven." [954] The representation of the invisible hosts by the priests and deacons denotes the heavenly character of the church's liturgy.

Our participation in the heavenly liturgy is no more conceivable than in the singing of the angelic hymn known as the *Sanctus*. Since their creation, the innumerable armies of the angels have been hallowing God, saying: "Holy, [H]oly, [H]oly, Lord of hosts (*Ṣäba'ot* – ጸባኦት), heaven and earth are full of the holiness of your glory." [955] When we sing the *Sanctus* at the Divine Liturgy we join the angels in their unceasing hymn (Isa. 6:2-3, Rev. 4:8), and ask God to "receive our hallowing" together with that of the angels'.[956] The hallowing of the various ranks of the angels and our joining in their praise is beautifully illustrated in the anaphora of St. Cyril:

> Seraphim together with their leaders, cherubim [in their hallowing], [957] the angels in their ranks, the watchful according to their armies, the heads of the watchful according to their tribes, the angels of fire according to their light, and the spiritual according to their position – give thanks, hallow, cry aloud,…and say: Holy, [H]oly, [H]oly, Lord of hosts, heaven and earth are full of the holiness of thy glory.[958]

After the celebrant has recited this, the deacon exclaims: "answer," and the people reply by chanting the *Sanctus.* As the celebrant explains following the people's reply, by

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[953] *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat Wå-Baḥrä Ḥässab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 90.
[954] Vasileios, *Hymn of Entry*, 73.
[955] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 29.
[956] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 58, no. 30.
[957] The Gəʿəz word here "*Kirubel Bäqəddasehomu* – ኪሩቤል በቅዳሴሆሙ," refers to their hallowing or thanksgiving; not to their "sanctification" as translated by Daoud.
[958] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 210, no. 8. A similar expression of this hallowing of the angelic powers is found in the anaphora of St. Basil: "And before [you] do stand the angels, the archangels, the judges, the thrones, the authorities, the dominions, and all the powers…It is you whom the cherubim full of eyes, and the seraphim with six wings encircle, and praise without ceasing, saying: Holy, [H]oly, [H]oly, Lord of hosts, heaven and earth are full of the holiness of thy glory." *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 157, nos. 10-16.

chanting the *Sanctus* we are praising "together with them (the angels)."[959] Thus, at the *Sanctus* "heaven and earth [are] made one Church; neither heaven is heaven, nor earth is earth because the time and space composite have been dissolved; for heaven is the heaven of earth and earth is the earth of heaven."[960] The *Sanctus* transforms the sacred liturgical space and links the heavenly and earthly liturgies while the church awaits fulfillment in the *eschaton.*

In the Ethiopic anaphora of St James the brother of the Lord, the *Sanctus* is presented as a chant of the entire cosmos. The cosmic liturgy of the anaphora begins with: "The heavens and all the powers in them; the sun, the moon, and all the stars; the earth, the seas, and all the created beings in them praise you."[961] And the praise is joined by "the heavenly Jerusalem," the "church of the first-born," which is the triumphant church of Christ or the communion of saints whose names "are written in heaven."[962] This cosmic praise is joined by the innumerable hosts of "the angels, archangels, thrones, principalities, dominions, the many-eyed cherubim, and the six-winged seraphim" who unceasingly sing: "Holy, [H]oly, [H]oly, Lord of hosts, heaven and earth are full of the holiness of your glory."[963] The all-encompassing dimension of the praise signifies that the whole of creation is filled with the glory of God, and it offers a cosmic liturgy to God.

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[959] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 210, no. 11.
[960] Maniyattu, "Celebration of the Cosmos in the East Syrian Liturgy," 89.
[961] See "Akk^{W}åtetä Q^{W}ərban Zä-Qəddus Yaʼəqob ∃ḫ^{W}əhu Lä-∃gəziʾənä [Anaphora of St. Jacob the Brother of the Lord]," *Missale Ethiopicum*, 107.
[962] Ibid.
[963] Ibid, 108.

Conclusion

The key area in this chapter has been the ample place given to creation in the liturgical tradition of the EOTC. As liturgy is mainly a celebration of the vicarious suffering of Christ through which the whole of creation was transformed, thanksgiving for creation is the indispensable part of the church's liturgy. Creation motifs in the liturgy underscore the sacred dimension of the created matter. Moreover, without creation motifs we cannot have a basic structure for the worldview, because "it is creation which provides the framework for the views with its ultimate beginnings and eschatological completion."[964] As in the beginning creation had been sacred that revealed the glory of God, when the church celebrates its liturgy by presenting the bread and wine as the representatives of the entire creation, the church attempts to return creation to its original purpose. This liturgical praxis also reflects the sacramentality of the world.

The church's use of created materials in the liturgy also signifies the person's responsibility for the protection of creation. By offering bread and wine in the Eucharist as the bearers of Christ's sacramental body and blood, the church emphasizes the sacredness of creation, which should not be abused for human selfish desire. When humans add to the corruption of creation, besides violating God's own purposes, they oppose the sacramental approach to creation that needs sanctification through its communion with God. As Ralph McMichael puts it "a church which fervently seeks to heal the brokenness of creation – the ecological crisis – is a church which is exercising its priesthood to the end that not only will creation be brought into the fullness of

[964] Joseph Keenan, "The Importance of the Creation Motif in a Eucharistic Prayer," 354.

redemption, but so will the church."[965] This was the very purpose of making creation the center of the eucharistic prayers of the early church. I have shown that the EOTC has maintained the early church's practice of embodying creation in the liturgy as vividly exhibited in its *Qəddase* and other sacramental praxes, such as the celebration of *Ṭəmqät* and *Dämära*.

The chapter has also discussed the cosmological dimension of the liturgy, pertaining to the symbolism of the sacred space in the Ethiopian tradition. As the EOTC's liturgy honours created matter, its liturgical space as well mystically gathers the whole of creation. A typically Orthodox church building with its icons that reflect the transfiguration of creation serves as a meeting place of heaven and earth where both the celestial and earthly beings praise God in unison. It also signifies a transformed space where the cosmic liturgy takes place. While the church proleptically participates in the heavenly liturgy, it looks for its fulfillment in the *eschaton*. The next and final chapter of this thesis will discuss the eschatological character of the Ethiopian liturgical tradition, highlighting the tradition's teaching about the transfiguration of creation into the Kingdom of God.

[965] Ralph N. McMichael, "The Redemption of Creation: A Liturgical Theology" *Creation and Liturgy: Studies in Honor of H. Boone Porter,* ed. Ralph N. McMichael (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press, 1993) 159.

CHAPTER 4

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL DIMENSION OF THE ETHIOPIAN LITURGY

One of the significant features of the Christian liturgy is its eschatological nature that enables the church to experience the Kingdom of God proleptically. Alexander Schmemann underscores the centrality of the *eschaton* for the liturgical life of the church, by stating that the "whole newness" of the liturgy of the church lies in its "eschatological nature as the presence here and now of the future *parousia,* as the epiphany of that which is to come, as communion with the world to come."[966] The unique function of the liturgy is to reveal to us the Kingdom of God. In its correct sense, the Heavenly Kingdom is "the goal, the meaning and the content of the Christian life."[967] In the eucharistic liturgy, we foretaste the glory of the Kingdom.

While the Ethiopian liturgy, in its cosmic dimension, embodies creation as the sacred work of the triune God, it also demonstrates an eschatological dimension that signifies the culmination of creation. As the anaphora of Athanasius asserts, the *parousia* is the first day of the new age when the coming Kingdom will be inaugurated: "The Father will grant to his Son the kingdom and the judgment, then there will be revealed the power of a new lightning and a fearful sound of thunder which ear has not heard and eye has not seen from the beginning."[968] That day "will exist forever," and while the "old ceases [to exist], the new will be confirmed."[969] On the Lord's Day, which is the day of

[966] Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 43.
[967] Ibid, 40.
[968] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 145, no. 71.
[969] Ibid, 144, no. 67.

his second coming,[970] the world will be transformed into "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1).

The Ethiopian liturgy clearly signifies our anticipation of the coming Kingdom of God. In the daily matins the clergy chant: "we praise you (God) without rest in our hearts, [picturing] your kingdom."[971] As the Divine Liturgy is "the journey of the Church into the dimension of the Kingdom," [972] the Ethiopian *Qəddase* demonstrates the otherworldliness of the sacred space. While commencing the anaphora by the dialogue, the celebrant says: "life up your hearts,"[973] inviting the lifting up of ourselves and the ascension of the church to the table of God's Kingdom as well.[974] This is more evident in the acclamations of the deacon in two Ethiopian anaphoras: "Lift up your hearts unto heaven"[975] and "Let your thought be above and your heart in heaven."[976] As a proleptic experience of the Heavenly Kingdom, the Divine Liturgy serves as the realization of the future *eschaton* in the here and now.

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[970] In the Ethiopian tradition, Sunday (the Christian Sabbath) is believed to be the day when Christ will return. For instance, the commentary on the anaphora of St. Athanasius of Alexandria says: "on the first day God [started] creating creatures; on the first day of the week (Sunday) the Lord Christ rose from the dead, and he will return on this same day." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 318. We also read in the same anaphora that "When this day [the Christian Sabbath (Sunday)] rules there will be a new work and a new thing….At that time the graves will be opened and the dead that waxed old from the beginning of the world will rise in the twinkling of an eye." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 144 -145, nos. 69 and 71.This anaphora is dedicated to the honour of the Christian Sabbath. See for instance, expressions, such as: "Come, let us exalt; come, let us praise; come, let us honour; come let us celebrate the chief of the holy days which is the holy Sabbath of the Christians." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 145, no. 55.

[971] See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 251 and 252. The Gəʿəz phrase "*Bä'albabinä Nastämasəl Amsalä Mängəstəkä* – በአልባቢነ ናስተማስል አምሳለ መንግሥትክ," which Daoud translated as "we know in our hearts your kingdom," should have read: "we picture (envision) your kingdom in our hearts," since the Gəʿəz verb *Astämasälä* (አስተማሰለ) indicates symbolizing or picturing; but not knowledge. The English translation of the Syriac Testament of the Lord agrees with the Gəʿəz text. The whole sentence reads: "we cease not always in our hearts picturing the image of Thy kingdom in ourselves." See *Syriac Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 96; *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 199.

[972] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 26.

[973] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 56, no. 3.

[974] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 37.

[975] See "Anaphora of the Lord," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 79, no. 2. A more literal translation of the Gəʿəz text here: "*Bäsämay Yähalu Ləbkəmu* – በሰማይ የሀሉ ልብክሙ" would be "Let your hearts be in heaven." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 63, no. 2.

[976] See "Anaphora of John Chrysostom," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 198, no. 3.

This chapter is devoted to explore the eschatological dimension of the Ethiopian liturgy. Eschatology[977] in the Ethiopian tradition is influenced by the various Jewish apocalyptic[978] writings of the Second Temple Period: the book of Enoch (I Enoch),[979] the apocalypse of Ezra (IV Ezra or II Esdras III-XIV), [980] and *Jubilees*. [981] Some pseudepigraphal works of early Christian times, such as, the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the Pseudo-Clementine literature as well have a strong influence on Ethiopian eschatology.[982] In the 15th century Ethiopia, there were debates on the millennial reign of Christ and the banquet on Mount Zion (*Misaḥ Bä-Däbarä Ṣəyon* – ምሳሕ በደብረ ጽዮን) which were thought to take place at the second coming of Christ.[983] As the period was the time when most of the local Ethiopian anaphoras were composed, the debates had a lasting impact

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[977] Derived from two Greek words *eschatos* (the end or the last thing) and *logos* (discourse/teaching), eschatology deals with the last things, states, and events that would take place at the end of the world. See Stanley Samuel Harakas, *Orthodox Christian Beliefs: Real Answers to Real Questions from Real People* (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publishing Company, 2002) 281.

[978] Derived from the Greek verb *apocalypto,* to reveal, an apocalypse is a revelation mainly about heavenly mysteries or the end of the world. See John J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Ancient World," *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology,* ed. Jerry L. Walls (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 40.

[979] The Book of Enoch, usually known as I Enoch, is a pseudonymous writing thought to be composed during the first two centuries B.C. by various authors who "belonged to the true succession of the prophets." The book deals with the various courses of the luminaries, angelology, demonology, and apocalyptic issues. See *The Book of Enoch,* trans. Charles, x. See also *Enoch, a New Translation: The Ethiopic Book of Enoch, or 1 Enoch, Translated with Annotations and Cross-References in Consultation with Archbishop Melkesedek Workeneh,* trans. Daniel C. Olson (N. Richland Hills, TX: Bibal Press, 2004) 10-18.

[980] The apocalypse of Ezra (Salathiel or Esdras in the Latin version) is known as *Mäṣəḥafä Ǝzra Sutu'el* – መጽሐፈ ዕዝራ ሱቱኤል [Book of Ezra Salathiel] in the Ethiopic O.T. Canon. The work is a collection of various visions composed by a Jewish author around A.D. 100, and ascribed to the biblical figure of Ezra the scribe. The apocalypse of Ezra has numerous parallels with other apocalyptic writings, such as I Enoch and II Baruch, and among other things it deals with the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, the Roman Empire, the end of the world, and the eternal fate of souls. See Steven Kaplan, "Apocalypse of Ezra," *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica,* Vol. 2, ed. Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2003) 482. See also *II Esdras (The Ezra Apocalypse): With Introduction and Notes,* ed. W. O. E. Oesterley (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1933) xi and xii.

[981] Gianfrancesco Lusini, "Eschatology," *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica,* Vol. 2, ed. Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2003) 380.

[982] Ibid.

[983] For instance see *Abba* Giyorgis' homily on *Däbarä Zäyət* [Mount of Olives] in his "Il Libro del Mistro: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 203-209 and Zär' a Ya'əqob's "Das Maṣḥafa Milad (Liber Nativitatis) und Maṣḥafa Sellāsē (Liber Trinitatis)," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium,* Scriptores Aethiopici, ed. Kurt Wendt, Vol. 235, Tom 43 (Louvain: Secrétariat Du Corpus, 1963) 31-44.

on the eschatology of the Ethiopian liturgy. Thus, in order to examine the Ethiopian liturgy's perspective on the culmination of the world into the Kingdom of God, the first part of this chapter will deal with selected eschatological themes namely, millenarianism, the messianic banquet, the resurrection of the dead, and the transformation of the existing creation. While studying these themes based on the general eschatological tradition of the EOTC, emphasis will be given to their final reception in the Ethiopian liturgy.

The second part of the chapter will demonstrate to what extent the Ethiopian liturgy is eschatologically oriented. In doing so, the liturgical texts that denote the anticipation of the Kingdom and its liturgical symbolism will be studied. In Orthodoxy, the Eucharist is regarded as the sacrament of the Heavenly Kingdom.[984] In this world while the church is journeying to its goal, which is God's Kingdom, the Eucharist serves as a "proleptic realization" of that goal.[985] The Eucharist is a foretaste of the messianic banquet of the eschatological wedding feast (Rev. 19: 7-9). Therefore, studying closely the interpretation of the messianic banquet in the Ethiopian liturgical tradition, I will show that the Ethiopian liturgy asserts the eschatological character of the Eucharist. Towards the end of the chapter, I will deal with the concept of the liturgical time, the meaning of the *Sanctus*, and the eschatological aspects of some selected prayers from the EOTC's missal that reflect the proleptic experience of the Kingdom in the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy.

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[984] Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 43.

[985] Byron Stuhlman, "The Theme of Creation in the Liturgical Theology of Alexander Schmemann," *Creation and Liturgy: Studies in Honor of H. Boone Porter*, ed. Ralph N. McMichael (Washington, D.C.: The Pastoral Press, 1993) 120.

I. Eschatology in the Ethiopian Tradition

The eschatology of the EOTC is mainly based on the biblical teaching of this doctrine. The translation of the Bible into Gəʿəz has brought major eschatological ideas from both the Old Testament and New Testament books in Ethiopia. The traditional Ethiopian commentaries on the books of the major prophets, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and from the New Testament on the Gospels and the Revelation of John elaborately demonstrate the EOTC's view on the end of the world. Besides, Ethiopian eschatology is greatly influenced by the Jewish apocalyptic literature, especially by the first book of Enoch and the fourth book of Ezra (II Esdras III-IV). The inclusion of these pseudepigraphal apocalyptic works into the Ethiopian Old Testament Canon[986] has made it inevitable for the EOTC to accept their eschatological teachings that are mainly characterized by the destruction of evil and the establishment of the reign of God.[987] Other features of apocalyptic literature, such as the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, the imminent expectation of the end of the world and its annihilation,[988] and a sense of rapid approaching doom[989] have also shaped the eschatology of the Ethiopian Church.

The influence of Judeo-Christian apocalyptic literature is also evident in the Ethiopian liturgy. The ideas found in the liturgy regarding the temporary abode of the human souls and the final destiny of the world are inspired by the Jewish apocalypses

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[986] For the list of the books accepted in the Ethiopian O.T. and N.T. Canons see "Holy Scriptures," *EOTC Faith and Worship,* eds. Archbishop Mekarios and et al, 45-47.
[987] Lusini, "Eschatology," 380.
[988] For instance, stating the destruction of the world on the Day of Judgment explicitly, I Enoch 1:6 says: "The lofty mountains will be shaken, fall, and crumble to dust. The high hills will be laid low, melting like wax before the flames. The earth will be torn open, and all that is upon will perish, and judgment will come upon everyone." See *Enoch,* ed. Olson, 27.
[989] Brian E. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 7.

that are well accepted in Ethiopia. In fact, the Ethiopian biblical and liturgical commentaries show that some of the apocalyptic concepts were revised. For instance, as discussed below, the millennial reign of Christ on earth (Rev. 20:4-6), which had some influence in the Ethiopian literature during the 14th –15th centuries, is now understood differently by the EOTC. Discussing briefly the eschatological teachings of the EOTC on millenarianism, the resurrection of the dead, and the transformation of the world in light of the church's biblico-liturgical tradition, this section will demonstrate how the Ethiopian liturgy envisions the transformation of the cosmos into the Kingdom of God.

A. Christ's Millennial Reign and the Banquet on Mount Zion

Millenarianism, the teaching about the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth with the saints, was a controversial issue during the Golden Period of Ethiopian literature (15th century).[990] Both *Abba* Giyorgis and Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob earnestly defended this position in their writings.[991] The teaching is based on Rev. 20:1-4 which states that those who did not worship the beast (devil) would come to life and reign with Christ for a thousand years. This reign is understood by Zär'a Yaʿəqob as the kingdom of the saints[992] or the wedding of the saints.[993] The millennial reign follows the coming of the anti-

[990] Other issues included whether Christ would come alone or with his Father and the immortality of the soul. Refuting the position of a certain Bitu, who said that Christ would come without his Father, *Abba* Giyorgis argued for the coming of Christ, sitting on the right hand of his Father. See *Abba* Giyorgis' homily on *Däbarä Zäyət* – ደብረ ዘይት [Mount of Olives] in his "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣtir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 185-200. Also in opposition to Arsis and his friends, who contended that the human soul would die after it is separated from its body, Abba Giyorgis defended the immortality of the human soul. See his paschal homily in his "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣtir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 177-211.

[991] See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣtir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 203-209 and Zär'a Yaʿəqob, "Das Maṣḥafa Milad (Liber Nativitatis) und Maṣḥafa Sellāsē (Liber Trinitatis)," *CSCO,* Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 235, Tom 43 (1963) 31-44.

[992] Zär'a Yaʿəqob, "Das Maṣḥafa Milad (Liber Nativitatis) und Maṣḥafa Sellāsē (Liber Trinitatis)," *CSCO,* Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 235, Tom 43 (1963) 35.

[993] Ibid, 32.

Christ, and it is thought to be a thousand year banquet[994] on Mount Zion (*Misaḥa Däbarä Ṣəyon* – ምሳሐ ደብረ ጽዮን).[995] This idea of the banquet is supported by a reference from the book of Isaiah 25:6: "On this mountain [Mount Zion] the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear." While the banquet is preserved for the just (the dead in Christ) who "will rise first" (I Thes. 4:16), the undeserving sinners would not rise during the thousand year reign.[996]

The concept of the millennial reign of Christ in the Ethiopian tradition was closely associated with the prediction for the end of the world. In the Jewish apocalyptic literary genre, the seven days of the creation story had been given a millenarian interpretation. Based on Psalm 90:4: "For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past," the whole history of the world was considered as a giant

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[994] Drawing heavily from Scripture, Irenaeus discusses the millennial earthly kingdom of the saints. In the kingdom, the righteous are supposed to enjoy banquets: "These are [to take place] in the times of the kingdom, that is, upon the seventh day, which has been sanctified, in which God rested from all the works which He created, which is the true Sabbath of the righteous, which they shall not be engaged in any earthly occupation; but shall have a table at hand prepared for them by God, supplying them with all sorts of dishes." See "Against Heresies," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,*V, XXXIII, 562. See also chapter XXXIV of the same book (Book V).

[995] Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 204. Zär' a Yaʿəqob differs from *Abba* Giyorgis on the place where the millennial feast would be served. Quoting Rev. 14: 1 "there was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion," *Abba* Giyorgis asserts that after the anti-Christ has been destroyed, Christ will make the banquet on Mount Zion for the righteous. But according to Zär' a Yaʿəqob the millennial banquet will take place on a city which is now hidden from humans. To support his claim, he quotes II Esdras 7:26-28: "for behold, the time shall come, and it shall be, when these tokens, of which I told thee before, shall come to pass,…even the city coming forth, and she shall be seen, that now is withdrawn from the earth. And whosoever is delivered from the foresaid evils, the same shall see my wonders. For my son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and shall rejoice them." See *II Esdras,* ed. Oesterley, 68-69. The city is prepared for the just who will reign with Christ, and the devil and his armies are not able to approach it. According to Zär' a Yaʿəqob, while the earth will pass away at the end, the hidden city remains incorruptible. See Zär' a Yaʿəqob, "Das Maṣḥafa Milad (Liber Nativitatis) und Maṣḥafa Sellāsē (Liber Trinitatis)," *CSCO,* Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 235, Tom 43 (1963) 34-38.

[996] Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990) 204.

"week" of seven thousand years.[997] This Jewish concept was adopted by the Ethiopian tradition, and thus the declaration of Christ to his disciples in the second part of the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord* that he would come back after 150 years[998] was interpreted based on this Jewish eschatological idea. The 150 years were understood to be 1500 years; if these years (1500) are added to 5500 years (the time between the creation of the world and the birth of Christ according to the Ethiopian tradition), we will arrive at 7000. This means that the world was thought to come to an end in 7000 A.M. (*Anno mundi,* i.e. since the creation of the world) or in 1500 E.C. (Ethiopian Calendar), which is equivalent to A.D. 1508.[999] Thus, both *Abba* Giyorgis (A.D. 1365-1426) and Zär'a Yaʿəqob (A.D. 1408-1468), given the time when they lived, zealously defended the millennial reign of Christ believing that it would take place in the near future.[1000]

In fact Millenarianism was not a theory wholly accepted without any opposition in Ethiopia. Expressing their disagreement with the position of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob, the Ǝsṭifanosites rejected the concept of the banquet during the millennial reign. They contended that if there were any banquet for the righteous, it had already begun on the day of salvation.[1001] Moreover, as no one knew the date for the end of the world, it would

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[997] Willy Rordorf, "Sunday: The Fullness of Christian Liturgical Time," *Studia Liturgica,* 14/1 (1980/1981) 91.

[998] According to *Le Testament en Galilée de Notre-Seigneur Jésus Christ,* while the Lord Christ was explaining to his disciples the signs of his second coming, they asked for the exact date when he would come back. Then he replied: "When the 150 years since the time of Pentecost and Pascha are completed, the coming of my Father would take place." Then the disciples asked him why he told them about the coming of his Father while they were asking when he would come back. Answering this question, Christ said: "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me." See "Le Testament en Galilée de Notre-Seigneur Jésus Christ," *Patrologia Orientalis,* 9, trans. L Guerrier and S. Grébaut (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1913) 199.

[999] Getatchew Haile, "The Cause of the Ǝsṭifanosites: A Fundamental Sect in the Church of Ethiopia," *Paideuma* 29 (1983) 109.

[1000] Especially for Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob, the defense of Millenarianism was closely connected to the eschatological role traditionally assigned to the Ethiopian emperors. According to a belief going back to the 6th – 7th C., any Ethiopian emperor was thought to be the earthly representative of the heavenly King (Christ) and the defender of the Orthodox faith. See Lusini, "Eschatology," 380.

[1001] Haile, "The Cause of the Ǝsṭifanosites" 109.

be impossible to predict when Christ would return. The opposition to the millennial banquet was expressed by the Zämika'elites with a more convincing argument. As reported by Zär'a Yaʿəqob himself, they argued that "there is no millennial reign of the righteous other than the current time [the time of the incarnation of the Lord], and the banquet is the flesh and blood of Christ."[1002] For them, the Mount of Zion is the church where the eschatological meal (Holy Eucharist) is served.[1003]

The EOTC's biblico-liturgical commentaries evince that the church finally moved to the position of the opponents of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob. As expounded in the commentary on the Johannian apocalypse, the thousand-year reign of the saints with Christ (Rev. 20: 4-6) is interpreted as "the era of the incarnation."[1004] The "thousand years" in the reference do not indicate a definite number of years, and thus they refer to the time since the incarnation of the *Logos* until the end of the world.[1005] The binding of Satan (Rev. 20: 2) is understood as the victory gained by the redemptive work of Christ over death, sin, and the enemy (Satan).[1006] Underlining this victory, in its daily matins, the Ethiopian Church prays: "We offer this holy glory to you [Christ, the eternal King] who have given us the faith with which you have made us to break the bonds of death….You have granted us [the victory] to tread down all the powers of the enemy

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[1002] Zär'a Yaʿəqob, "Das Maṣḥafa Milad (Liber Nativitatis) und Maṣḥafa Sellāsē (Liber Trinitatis)," *CSCO,* Vol. 235, Tom 43 (1963) 40.
[1003] Ibid, 43.
[1004] *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church,* trans. Roger W. Cowley (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983) 352. See also *Mäṣaḥəfətä Ḥaddisat Śäläsətu: Nəbabu Ǝna Tərəg^{W}amew* [Commentary on the Three New Testament Books] ed. Mahari Tirfe (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing Press, 1958) 465. The interpretation of "the thousand years" as the time of the incarnation of Christ is shared by the Eastern Orthodox Church. Stanley Harakas explains that according to the teachings of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the "thousand years" in Rev. 20:4 refer to "the time of the Incarnation of Christ to the time of the coming of the Anti-Christ, that is, the period between the coming of Christ and the beginning of the end-times." See Harakas, *Orthodox Christian Beliefs,* 104.
[1005] Sibuh Damte, *Ših Amät Ǝna Ḥasawe Mäsiḥ* [The 1000 Years and the Anti-Christ] (Addis Ababa: Təqur Abay Abay Press, 2005) 15.
[1006] Ibid, 24.

through the Spirit."[1007] Moreover, referring to a millennial banquet, in the preliminary service of the Divine Liturgy, the celebrant prays: "O Lord…lay your holy hand upon this paten which is full of goodness, and on which food of a thousand years is prepared by those who love your holy name."[1008] But the "food of a thousand years" is taught to be the Holy Eucharist. The commentary on the missal explains that as we partake of the Holy Eucharist in this world we will also continue enjoying it in the world to come.[1009] As I will discuss later, this understanding reflects the eschatological character of the Eucharist.

Some modern Orthodox theologians reject the teaching of Christ's millennial reign on earth. Answering a question on the so-called millennial reign of Christ on earth, Stanley Harakas cautions that the description in Revelation 20 should not be taken literally. Though the early church had some people who taught some forms of "Millenarianism," Revelation 20 does not deal with the end of the world, but it underlines the Messianic ministry of Christ or the period of Christ's first coming when "the controlling power of the Devil is contained."[1010] As clearly stated in the Scripture, the Lord's Kingdom is not of this world (Jn. 18:36) and it has no end (Lk. 1:33). Though the Kingdom "has entered into this world," and is realized in the assembly of the church, it is the "the Kingdom of the age to come."[1011] At the *paraousia*, the dead will rise for judgment and the existing creation will be transformed into a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1). Now I turn to the discussion of these eschatological themes according to the Ethiopian tradition.

[1007] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 251.
[1008] Ibid, 12, no. 43.
[1009] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 30.
[1010] Harakas, *Orthodox Christian Beliefs*, 283.
[1011] Alexander Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986) 72.

B. The Resurrection of the Dead and the Transformation of Creation

The doctrine of the resurrection of the body is the heart of Christian eschatology.[1012] While gnostic philosophy regards the material body as evil and the liberation of the soul from the body as the highest good, Christian belief in the resurrection of the human body signifies the sacredness of created matter. The Ethiopian anaphora of the Nicene Fathers asserts that Christ was risen from the dead in a real body: "Remember [O Lord] that the body which you did take from the holy Virgin [Mary] is the body which rose from the dead on the third day."[1013] Christ assured the reality of his resurrection to the doubting disciple, Thomas, by asking him to put his hand into his pierced side (Jn. 20:27). As Christ was risen in his glorious body, the dead will rise in the likeness of his glorified body (Phil. 3:20-21). Our corruptible bodies "will be raised incorruptible" (I Cor. 15:52).

Ethiopic sources of the 14th century reveal that there was a debate on the resurrection of the human body. Referring to the fourth chapter of the *Ascension of Isaiah,* a pseudonymous apocalypse, some groups argued for the anti-materialistic position.[1014] The *Ascension of Isaiah* 4:16-17 reads: "the saints will come with the Lord, wearing their garments which is placed in the seventh heaven…they will stay in this world, and then return [in their spirits] clad with their heavenly garments while their bodies will be left in this world."[1015] According to this reference, the corruptible human bodies will dissolve, and the souls that left their bodies on earth shall wear the

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[1012] Hilarion Alfeyev, "Eschatology," *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*, eds. Mary Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 111.
[1013] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 134, no. 125.
[1014] Lusini, "Eschatology," 381.
[1015] *Ascensio Isaiae,* ed. Dillmann, 18.

imperishable heavenly garments. The flesh is part of the earthly world, so that it will perish together with the world. This "gnostic-like attitude" was officially rejected by the EOTC, and a treatise entitled: *Nägär Bä'əntä Yikəhdu Tinśa'e Mutan* – ነገር በእንተ ይክህዱ ትንሣኤ ሙታን [Against Those Who Deny the Resurrection of the Dead] was written.[1016]

Ethiopian scholars further affirmed their belief in the resurrection of the body while debating with Jesuit missionaries in the 16th century. Criticizing the local practice of circumcising boys on the eighth day after their birth (before they are baptized on the fortieth day), the missionaries argued: "the boys won't enter [the Kingdom of Heaven] since a small part of their bodies was not baptized."[1017] The missionaries thought that the practice of circumcision in Ethiopia would prevent the small portion of the body from being resurrected. In their response to this objection, the Ethiopian fathers contended that a circumcision that took place before baptism could not prevent anyone from being saved. To support their argument they referred to the Jewish Christians of the early church who were circumcised before their baptism.[1018] The Ethiopian fathers also argued that "every [human] flesh, which is left on earth, will be resurrected."[1019] Even "the unbaptized portion of human flesh will be risen, and the whole body will be united with its soul."[1020] This is a bold confession of faith on the resurrection of the human body, and once again this belief, as in the case of the church's sacramental use of the created material things, signifies the importance and sacredness of matter.

The belief in the resurrection of the human body is also explicitly asserted in the Ethiopian anaphora of St. Jacob of Serough. Borrowing the idea of the triple blowing of

[1016] Lusini, "Eschatology," 381.
[1017] See "Märəs Amin [Port of Faith]" *Scritti teologici etiopici dei secoli XVI-XVII*, ed. Enrico Cerulli, Vol. 1 (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1958) 252.
[1018] Ibid, 253.
[1019] Ibid.
[1020] Ibid, 254.

the horn on Judgment Day from the Book of Clement [*Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos*],[1021] the anaphora illustrates the steps for the rising of the dead bodies and their union with their respective souls. "At the first blowing of the horn," according to the anaphora, "the dust of bodies scattered through all the ends of the world, above and beneath, in the sea and on the land, that which is in the stomachs of the beasts and that which waxed old and perished after death; and the pieces of the body, fallen on earth, will be gathered in their previous position."[1022] The gathering of the bodies from elsewhere in the world is followed by the second blowing of the horn, which leads to the joining of the bones "with flesh and blood."[1023] Finally, "at the third blowing of the horn, the dead will rise in the twinkling of an eye, the righteous and the sinners, carrying their works which followed them from the earth and which they did in all the days of their life."[1024] While these expressions reflect the EOTC's belief in the resurrection of the dead they also underline God's life-giving power.

The teaching on the resurrection of the dead [*Tinśa'e Mutan* – ትንሣኤ ሙታን], according to the Ethiopian tradition, is intertwined with an eschatological speculation about the fate of the human soul known as "individual eschatology."[1025] The soul is immortal by nature, so that it does not die with its body at death.[1026] After the soul has been separated from its body by death, it returns to God (Ecc. 12:7) and faces a partial

[1021] See *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 219.
[1022] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 229, no. 90.
[1023] Ibid, 229, no. 91.
[1024] Ibid, 229, no. 92.
[1025] Andrew Louth, "Eastern Orthodox Eschatology," *The Oxford Book of Eschatology,* ed. Jerry L. Walls, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) 239.
[1026] Refuting the heresy of Arsis who denies the immortality of the soul, Abba Giyorgis extensively quotes from the canonical and apocryphal sources. By discussing the seven ways or modes of bliss or torment for the souls of the righteous and that of the wicked respectively as described in II Esdras 7: 81-101, *Abba* Giyorgis contends that the soul's either blissful or haunting experience after death (its separation from the body) proves that the soul does not die together with its body. See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993) 176- 179. See also *II Esdras,* ed. Oesterley, 83-85.

judgment.[1027] If the soul belongs to a righteous person, who was in communion with God in his/her earthly life, it will be allowed to stay until the Last Judgment Day in a temporary abode, known as Paradise (*Gännät* − ገነት). [1028] The Ethiopian liturgy acknowledges Paradise as a transitory dwelling place of the souls of the righteous:

> In one treasury there will be gathered wheat without tares. There will be put and kept the souls of the righteous until all are rewarded according to their deeds. There are pleasure and happiness. There is Adam the Father of all. There are Abel, Seth and Enoch the patriarchs together with all their seed.[1029]

According to the commentary on the anaphora of the Nicene Fathers, the "treasury" in the above quote is Paradise[1030] where the souls of the redeemed saints have been reposed since the day Christ released the souls from the prison of Hades (I Pet. 3:19). All the souls of the Old Testament patriarchs and that of people of faith, whom the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews calls "a cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1), are not yet in the

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[1027] There are varied opinions on how soon the soul faces this partial judgment. As stated in *Mängädä Sämay* − መንገደ ሰማይ [Journey to Heaven], a book that deals with the stages which a newly departed soul will undergo before reaching its final destiny, as soon as the soul departed from its body it is confronted by the angels of darkness and the angels of light who ask the soul about its faith. If the soul belongs to a believer who had a relationship with God, the angels of light take it to the Lord Christ for judgment. But the unbeliever's soul will be haunted by the angels of darkness, and then the angels of light bring it to the Lord for judgment. See Getatchew Haile, "Journey to Heaven: The Popular Belief of Reward and Punishment in Ethiopian Christianity," *Studia Aethiopica: In Honour of Siegbert Uhlig on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday,* eds. Verena Böll, Denis Nosnitsin (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2004) 55-63. According to *Abba* Giyorgis, however, this partial judgment does not take place until the fortieth day since the separation of the soul from its body. In his *Mäṣəḥafä Mestir* [Book of Mystery], he writes: "In their church order our fathers the Apostles told us to commemorate the souls of our brothers [and sisters] on the third day [since its separation from its body], in view of the resurrection of Christ; on the thirtieth day, since the Israelites mourned for Moses for thirty days; and on the fortieth day, because on this day the soul stands in front of God, its Creator, [for judgment]." See Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistro: Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 532, Tom. 97 (1993), 199-200. The church order which *Abba* Giyorgis referred to was *Mäṣəḥafä Sinodos* (መጽሐፈ ሲኖዶስ), also known as the Ethiopian Church Order. But *Mäṣəḥafä Sinodos* mentions only the third, seventh, and fortieth memorial days. See "Canoni Di Simone Cananeo," *Il Sēnodos Etiopico,* ed. Bausi, 53.

[1028] In the Ethiopian tradition, Paradise (*Gännät* − ገነት) is thought to be a pleasant place located between heaven and earth. See *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 12; Moges Equba-Giyorgis, *Märəḥa Ṣədəq Bahlä Haymanot* [Path of Righteousness: A Religious Tradition] (Toronto: Tana Printing Press, 2000) 48-9. Paradise is also mentioned as a place of delight and rest in the apocalypse of Ezra (II Esdras 8:52): "For unto you [the righteous] paradise is opened, the tree of life is planted, the time to come is prepared, plenteousness is made ready, a city is built, and rest is allowed." See *II Esdras,* ed. Oesterley, 108.

[1029] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 128, nos. 64-65.

[1030] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 292.

Kingdom of God,[1031] but in Paradise waiting for the remaining children of God. The writer's expression about the cloud of witnesses in Heb. 11:39-40: "Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect" indicates the waiting period.

While the souls of the just enjoy their temporary stay in Paradise as a foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven (*Mängəśtä Sämayat* – መንግሥተ ሰማያት), the souls of the wicked are left in Hades (*Si'ol* – ሲኦል)[1032] until the second coming of Christ.[1033] In the Ethiopian eschatological tradition, the torment in the fire of Hades or Hell is taken literally so that it does not have any symbolic representation.[1034] The horrible torment that the souls of the wicked are said to suffer in *Si'ol* (Hades) will finally be followed by the eternal

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[1031] *Yä-Qəddus Ṗawlos Mälə'əktat Tərəg^{W}ame* [Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul] (Addis Ababa: Tənsa'e Zä-Guba'e Press, 1996) 469.

[1032] The Ethiopic term *Si'ol* (ሲኦል), a variant of the Hebrew word *Sheol*, refers to a place where the souls of the wicked are thought to be punished. It does not mean "grave" or "pit" as the Hebrew word connotes. In the English translation of the Ethiopic Book of Enoch (I Enoch) *Sheol* is mentioned as a place of punishment: "Woe to you sinners who have died!…Know this! Your souls will be taken down into *Sheol*, and there they will be in great distress – in darkness, in snares, and in a blazing fire." See "Enoch 103:5-7" *Enoch,* ed. Olson, 248.

[1033] II Esdras 7:78 asserts that after an individual's soul departed its body, it will enter into the state of misery or bliss based on the person's spiritual life while living on earth. See *II Esdras,* ed. Oesterley, 87. The intermediate state either Paradise or Hades (*Si'ol*) is a foretaste of what the soul will experience in the world to come. To support this teaching, the Ethiopian fathers refer to the promise, which Jesus gave to the repentant thief to be in Paradise (Lk. 23:43), and the suffering of the soul of the rich man in Hades (*Si'ol*)-(Lk. 16: 19-25). See Equba-Giyorgis, *Märəḥa Ṣədəq* [Path of Righteousness] 49.

[1034] In modern theological scholarship Hell is not understood as a place but as a terrible internal state. The biblical imagery of Hell, such as everlasting fire and darkness signify the awful state of separation from God. See Florovsky, "The Last Things and the Last Events," *Creation and Redemption,* Vol. III, 261; Harakas, *Orthodox Christian Beliefs,* 267. Florovsky also cautions us not to take the biblical imageries about the *parousia* and the everlasting life that follows it literally: "Of the future we can speak but in images and parables. This was the language of the Scripture. This imagery cannot be adequately deciphered now, and should not be taken literally." See Florovsky, "The Last Things and the Last Events," *Creation and Redemption,* Vol. III, 261; Harakas, *Orthodox Christian Beliefs,* 254. The main reason why modern scholars are reluctant to take the eternal punishment in the unquenchable fire or Hell literally is because the idea does not fit coherently with the concept of a loving and benevolent God. "Is it just to mete out an infinite punishment for a finite sin?" poses Ted Peters, and finally admits that the issue of everlasting hell is "a difficult matter to settle." See Ted Peters, *God: The World's Future* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000) 337.

punishment in Hell (*Gähännäm* – ገሃነም), which is described in the Ethiopian liturgy as "the sea or river of fire."[1035] The departed souls stay in their temporary abodes, Paradise [*Gännät*] or Hades [*Si'ol*]), until the Judgment Day when a general resurrection of bodies (*Tinśa'e Zä-guba'e* – ትንሣኤ ዘጉባዔ) will take place.[1036] After the final judgment the souls that had been in Paradise (*Gännät*) and Hades (*Si'ol*), being united with their bodies, would enter the Kingdom of Heaven (*Mängəstä Sämayat*) for eternal life and Hell (*Gähännäm*) for eternal punishment respectively (Mt. 25:31-46).[1037]

Due to the partial aspect of the judgment after death and the temporality of the punishment in Hades (*Si'ol*), the EOTC prays for the departed souls. Relying on God's

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[1035] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 145, no. 73. The Ethiopic biblico-liturgical sources are explicit about the eternal punishment that awaits those who refused to accept God's unfailing love. But in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* there is a surprising passage that echoes Origen's thought of universal salvation (*Apocatastasis*). In the portion which is claimed to be a dialogue that took place between the Lord Jesus and his disciple Peter, having illustrated the signs of his second coming and the judgment that follows Jesus finally told him that at the end "We [the Persons of the Trinity] will forgive all the work of our hands [our creatures]." According to the apocalypse, this concept of universal salvation is hidden from humans so that "they may not lax in their moral life expecting a universal gift of salvation." See Grébaut, "Littérature Éthiopiénne Pseudo-Clémentine," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, 15 (1910) 314-5. *Apocatastasis*, however, is not officially accepted in the EOTC.

[1036] Melketsedek, *Ethiopian Church Teaching,* 36.

[1037] Equba-Giyorgis, *Märəḥa Ṣədəq* [Path of Righteousness] 49. In Eastern Orthodox tradition Paradise or Hades are known as temporary abodes of souls. As Andrew Louth put it "On the fortieth day [from death], the soul undergoes its particular judgment and then is assigned to an intermediate state, a state of waiting in Paradise or Hades, provisional in comparison with heaven and hell, to await the decisions of the last judgment." See Louth, "Eastern Orthodox Eschatology," 240. In the Ethiopic book: *Mängädä Sämay* [Journey to Heaven] there is an elaborate description regarding the intermediate status of Paradise or Hades and the transfer of the souls from these places to their eternal abodes (Heaven or Hell). According to the book, following the partial judgment after death the human soul will be given a tour to both the Heavenly Kingdom and Hell. This is meant to let the soul of the righteous know that it will be transferred to the Heavenly Kingdom after the Last Judgment Day and to show the soul of the wicked what the suffering in Hell looks like for those who refuse to be in communion with God. If the soul belongs to a believer, according to the book, the Lord Christ passes the following order to the angels of light: "Since this soul is a believer, it deserves the Kingdom of Heaven, not the fire of Hell. Until I later (re)unite (it) with its body (and) let it into the perfect Kingdom of Heaven, take it (and) show it, for three days, the Kingdom of Heaven, and four days the fire of Hell, (and) keep it in Paradise with the saints." See Haile, "Journey to Heaven," 58. The soul of a wicked person as well will be given a tour to the Heavenly Kingdom and Hell before it is left to stay in Hades (*Sheol*): "Since this soul is heathen, it does not deserve the Kingdom of Heaven but the fire of Hell. So, until I (re)unite it with its body (and) make it enter into the perfect fire of Hell, show it the Kingdom of Heaven four days and the fire of Hell three days (and) put it at the darkness of Bärbaros [Hades] with the sinners." See Haile, "Journey to Heaven," 64. This idea of giving tour to the souls might have been influenced by the seven ways or modes of bliss or torment, which the souls experience by visiting various celestial and terrestrial habitations, as described in the apocalypse of Ezra. See *II Esdras,* ed. Oesterley, 83-85.

infinite love, the church intercedes for her members: "We beseech God, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to repose the souls of [the members of our Church] in the land of delight and rest, and raise their bodies as promised and grant them the Kingdom of Heaven."[1038] Though the concept of the "toll houses"[1039] in which the soul is detained and tested of the sins that it has committed[1040] is not known in Ethiopia, the EOTC's intercessory prayer for the dead [*Mästäbqʷəʿ Bäʿəntä Mutan* – መስተበቁዕ በእንተ ሙታን] implores God to grant the departed souls a free pass without any detention.[1041] The idea of the souls' passing may have been adapted from the speculation about the challenge which the souls are said to face as described in the book: *Mängädä Sämay* – መንገደ ሰማይ [Journey to Heaven]. According to the book, shortly after it left its body the soul is met by the angels of light and angels of darkness who would like to take it into their company. If the soul belongs to an unbeliever, the angels of darkness throw it into "the sea of fire." Conversely, the soul of a believer is carried by the angels of light, and it passes over the sea of fire.[1042] The intercessory prayer seems to refer to this pass to be granted to the souls of the members of the church.

As the Ethiopian eschatological thought on the fate of the human soul is inspired by apocalyptic writings, these writings also have greatly influenced the EOTC's teaching on the consummation of the cosmos. The Jewish apocalypses are characterized by

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[1038] See "MästäbqʷəʿZä-mutan – መስተበቁዕ ዘሙታን [Intercessory Prayers for the Dead]," *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 217.

[1039] Also known as *telonai* (staffed), the toll houses represent the various testing steps at which the soul is examined. Referring to the account in the story of Basil the younger (10th century), Andrew Louth enumerates twenty toll houses which the soul is tested of: "vain words, lies, calumnies, greed, laziness, theft, avarice, usury, injustice, envy, pride, anger, rancor, murder, magic, sexual impurity, adultery, sodomy, heresy, and lack of compassion [cruelty of heart]." The passage of the toll houses represents what is required from someone to pass from sin and temptations of the world to the holy presence of God. See Louth, "Eastern Orthodox Eschatology," 240.

[1040] Harakas, *Orthodox Christian Beliefs*, 285.

[1041] See "MästäbqʷəʿZä-mutan [Intercessory Prayers for the Dead]" *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 217.

[1042] See Haile, "Journey to Heaven," 57.

predictions of cosmic upheaval and destruction of the world. For instance in I Enoch 1:6 we read that on the Last Judgment Day "The lofty mountains will be shaken, fall, and crumble to dust. The high hills will be laid low, melting like wax before the flames. The earth will be torn open, and all that is upon will perish."[1043] While the earth and everything upon it are predestined for destruction, "the first heaven will pass away, and a new heaven will appear" (I Enoch 91:16).[1044]

The apocalypse of Ezra (II Esdras) as well speaks about the contrast between two worlds (this world and the world to come). This world has to pass away so that the new world can come: "and the world shall be turned into the old silence seven days, like as in the first beginning; so that no man shall remain. And after seven days the world [the new world], that yet awakes not, shall be raised up, and that [this world] shall die [which] is corruptible" (II Esdras 7:30 and 31).[1045] According to this apocalypse, at the end times the earth would be as it was in the beginning: "the earth was waste and void" (Gen. 1:2). There will be a "metamorphosis of all creation"[1046] on earth for seven days. Inspired by the apocalypse of Ezra, the Ethiopian anaphora of Athanasius states this condition: "the earth will rest for seven days while there will not be in it any moving thing of all the living creatures."[1047] Finally the earth will pass away and be replaced by the new heaven and earth.

In line with the aforementioned Jewish apocalyptic writings, the Ethiopian eschatological tradition reflects a fiery consummation of creation. In the second part of the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord* we read that "on that day [Lord's day] the whole of

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[1043] *Enoch,* ed. Olson, 27.
[1044] Ibid, 223.
[1045] *II Esdras,* ed. Oesterley, 69.
[1046] Ibid, 72.
[1047] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 145, no. 70.

creation will be subject to burning by fire."[1048] The reference echoes the description in II Pet 3: 9-13 which asserts that on the Lord's Day the heavens and the earth would be burnt up. The Ethiopian liturgy as well points to the annihilation of the existing world. The anaphora of Athanasius states that when Christ returns "the existing heaven will be destroyed and the earth will pass away."[1049] According to the commentary on the daily matins (*Kidan Zä-nägəh* – ኪዳን ዘነግህ), as "God has brought this world from nothing (non-being) into being, he will also change it from being to non-being."[1050] This is a quite nihilistic approach to the destiny of the world.

Though Ethiopian eschatology upholds the passing away of the existing creation, it is not without hope for a future life. The anaphora of Athanasius denotes that following the destruction of the existing heaven (firmament) and earth, there will be a new world.[1051] The coming new world is the "new heaven and earth" which will appear after the former heaven and earth have passed away as illustrated in the apocalypse of John (Rev. 21:1). For the Ethiopian commentators, the coming of "a new heaven and earth" does not mean that God will create a new world *ex nihilo* after letting this world pass away. What is called in Rev. 21:1 "a new heaven and a new earth" is the Heavenly Jerusalem or the Kingdom of Heaven (*Mängəstä Sämayat*) that has been existing since the creation of the world (Mt. 25:34).[1052] The Kingdom of Heaven is called "a new heaven and a new earth" because it will be revealed only on the coming Day of the Lord,

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[1048] See "Le Testament en Galilée de Notre-Seigneur Jésus Christ," trans. Guerrier and Grébaut, 87.
[1049] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 145, no. 70.
[1050] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 28.
[1051] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 144, no. 69.
[1052] See "Ra'əyä Yoḥannəs – ራዕየ ዮሐንስ [Revelation of John]," *Mäṣaḥəfətä Ḥaddisat Śäläsətu* [Commentary on the Three New Testament Books] ed. Tirfe, 468. See also *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*, trans. Roger Cowley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 357.

replacing the current heaven and earth which will vanish.[1053] The Kingdom of Heaven will be given to the children of God who had been in communion with God while living on earth. No human soul, however, is allowed to enter the Kingdom of Heaven before the end of the world. The departed souls are reposed temporarily either in Paradise (*Gännät*) or Hades (*Si'ol*) waiting for their final destination – the Kingdom of Heaven or Hell respectively.[1054] While this earth, the firmament, Paradise and *Si'ol* (Hades) will vanish, the Heavenly Kingdom and Hell that will be revealed on the Day of Judgment will remain forever.[1055]

The Ethiopian eschatological tradition underlines the passing away of the world (heaven and earth) and its replacement by a new heaven and earth. It is not clear, however, if the passing away of the cosmos and the coming of the new world mean the renewal of creation into a better state where righteousness would dwell forever. In the commentary of the Ethiopian doctors, the burning up of heaven and earth in II Pet. 3:9-13 is taken literally, so that it is understood as a consummation of creation by fire.[1056] But our Christian hope is that the groaning creation, which is in travail due to human sin, will be fully redeemed and "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom 8:21). As our bodies will be resurrected and glorified, the cosmos as well awaits transfiguration, which is its release from sin and corruption.[1057] Our salvation achieved in Christ also extends to the material world, and thus the

[1053] Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 357.
[1054] Equba-Giyorgis, *Märəḥa Ṣədəq* [Path of Righteousness] 49.
[1055] Ibid. See also Giyorgis, "Il Libro del Mistero: Maṣḥafa Mesṭir," *CSCO*, Scriptores Aethiopici, Vol. 515, Tom. 89 (1990)199-200.
[1056] See "Mälə'ktä Ṗeṭros Dagəmit – መልእክተ ጴጥሮስ ዳግሚት [II Epistle of Peter]," *Mäṣaḥəfətä Ḥaddisat Śäläsətu* [Commentary on the Three New Testament Books] ed. Tirfe, 274.
[1057] Orthodox theology promotes the transformation of the world at the end times. Asserting this Orthodox tradition, Metropolitan John Zizioulas writes: "space and time are capable of receiving transfiguration; and that the Kingdom of God is not something that will displace material creation, but will transfigure it, cleansing it from those elements which bring about corruption and death." See his article "The Eucharist and the Kingdom of God," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 60 (1995) 44.

fulfillment of the redemption of creation would be realized by its anticipated transformation.

As discussed in the previous two chapters of this thesis, the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition demonstrates the sacredness of creation and its redemption through the salvific work of Christ. Hence, one can safely suggest that the Ethiopian eschatological thought on the final destiny of the world should consistently reflect the completion of creation's redemption through its transformation; but not its destruction. The Orthodox eschatological doctrine is not a "catastrophic eschatology," rather it is a hopeful belief which witnesses to the "final liberation of all creation, of humanity and the world from all principalities and powers and dominions of the history of the world."[1058] The Ethiopian traditional fathers need to be clear on their teaching about the passing away of the existing creation and its replacement by a new heaven and a new earth.

The biblical references for the passing of the world (Mt. 24: 35; II Pet. 3:11; Rev. 21:1), which the Ethiopian traditional fathers take literally, could be understood in a more positive way. As agreed by various modern scholars[1059] these references highlight the renewal of the existing world into a new heaven and earth. In both the Epistle of Peter and the Johannine Revelation the new heaven and earth are mentioned, and that the recurrent theme in the references is transformation. In their commentary on the Book of

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[1058] Athanasios Yevtic, "Eschatological Dimensions of the Church," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 38/4 (1993) 102.

[1059] For instance Edward Rommen argues that II Pet. 3:7-13 indicates a fiery transformation or complete renewal that leads to a new heaven and a new earth where the righteous shall dwell; it does not show the annihilation of the cosmos. See Edward Rommen "Last Things: The Eschatological Dimensions of the Church," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 33/3 (2009) 116. Charles Davis as well contends that though II Pet. 3:7-13 seems to suggest a conflagration in which everything will be burnt up, if examined carefully, the text reveals that "this world will pass from its present condition into a new condition in which all that is due to sin will have been purged away." See Charles Davis, "The End of the World: New Heavens and a New Earth," *Worship,* 34/6 (1960) 306. See also Gale Haide's extensive study on II Pet. 3 and Rev. 21: "What is New About the New Heaven and the New Earth: A Theology of Creation from Revelation 21 and II Peter 3," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society,* 40/1 (1997) 37-56.

Revelation, the Ethiopian traditional fathers expound that the Heavenly Jerusalem is called "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1) because "it remains firmly established in renewal."[1060] Also commentating on Rev. 21:5: "Behold, I will make everything new," the fathers understood this to mean that the Lord will renew all.[1061] This concept of renewal, thus, signifies the complete transformation of the created order. The coming Kingdom is "a new heaven and a new earth" so that it does not need renewal; what is to be renewed and transformed is the current groaning creation. Moreover, the "passing away" of this world suggests the end to its finitude (finiteness). This means that "the finite and time-bound" category of the world will finally be transcended.[1062] The form, fashion, and "image of the world"[1063] that has been marred by sin and corruption will pass away, whereas the whole of the cosmos will be glorified.

I have briefly explained the Ethiopian eschatological perspective on the consummation of the world. Even though the Ethiopian liturgy, being influenced by apocalyptic writings, is not clear on how the current cosmos will be transformed into the Kingdom of God, the liturgy is firmly oriented to the coming Kingdom. In the following section I will show that the Ethiopian liturgical tradition regards the Eucharist as the messianic banquet of the Kingdom, and that the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy demonstrates an eschatological character centered on the proleptic experience of the Kingdom.

[1060] See "Ra'əyä Yoḥannəs [Revelation of John]," *Mäṣaḥəfətä Ḥaddisat Śäläsətu* [Commentary on the Three New Testament Books] ed. Tirfe, 468. See also Cowley, *Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John,* 357.
[1061] Ibid.
[1062] Peters, *God: The World's Future,* 335.
[1063] Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology,* 74.

II. Liturgy as the *locus* of Eschatology

The expectation of the Kingdom of God was an important element of the early church's liturgy. The words of Jesus at the Last Supper while passing on the cup to his disciples: "I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes" (Lk. 22:18) have an eschatological orientation as they refer to the messianic banquet of the Kingdom. Though the relationship between the Last Supper and the earliest eucharistic prayers is not clear, the latter demonstrate the same eschatological character. For instance, in the *Didachē* we read about the gathering of the Church into the Kingdom (*Didachē* 9:4 and 10:5).[1064] The coming of the Lord was also declared in the Aramaic word *Maranatha*: O Lord, come (*Didachē* 10:6).[1065] During the fourth century, the recitation of the institution narrative which contained the eschatological words of Jesus became "the most important part and the climax of the Eucharistic prayer."[1066]

While the eschatological character of the liturgy of the early church has been maintained by the Eastern liturgies, Orthodoxy envisions a proleptic experience of the *eschaton* in the Eucharist. As Schmemann contends, the sacraments are not merely channels of grace; they are rather "the *locus,* the very center of the Church's eschatological understanding and experience."[1067] Thus, "the whole Liturgy is to be seen as the sacrament of the Kingdom of God."[1068] By celebrating the liturgy on earth, we

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[1064] *Didachē* 9:4 reads: "Just as this broken [loaf] was scattered over the hills,…in like fashion, may your church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom." And *Didachē* 10:5: "Remember, Lord, your church, to save [her] from every evil and to perfect [her] in your love and to gather [her] together from the four winds [as] the sanctified into your kingdom which you have prepared for her." See Milavec, *The Didache,* 23; 25.
[1065] Ibid, 25.
[1066] Gerard Rouwhorst, "How Eschatological Was Early Christian Liturgy?" *Studia Patristica*, 40 (2006) 105.
[1067] Alexander Schmemann, "Liturgy and Eschatology," *Sobornost,* 7/1 (1985) 10.
[1068] Ibid.

have entrance into the *eschaton*, and we will be beyond time and space.[1069] In fact the "realized eschatology" in the sacraments of the church does not mean the fulfillment of the eschatological hope, but rather the sacramental experience exhibits the tension of "already, but not yet."[1070] In the Eucharistic liturgy we foretaste the joy of the heavenly liturgy, but as the Kingdom is not yet fully revealed we ask the Lord to "remember us in [his] kingdom, as [he] did remember the thief on the right hand."[1071] The Kingdom inaugurated by the Christ event will be revealed fully after the Second Coming of the Lord. The current time "in between, living by faith in the 'already' of Jesus' resurrection and the 'not yet' of the ongoing history of the world's suffering, is the eschatological time of the Church."[1072] The Kingdom is already in our midst, and yet it is still to come. It is not to be understood in a futuristic sense or as a mere promise, but as something that we can taste here and now through the liturgy of the church.[1073]

A. The Eucharist as the Sacrament of the Heavenly Kingdom

The Holy Eucharist is the central expression of the Christian eschatological hope. Since the Eucharist recalls the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus and anticipates the future fulfillment, it brings into juxtaposition the past, present, and the future.[1074] As Zizioulas contends, the eucharistic remembrance is mainly about the "remembrance of Christ before the throne of God in the Kingdom which is to come. In other words, the eucharistic remembrance is in fact a remembrance, a foreshadowing, a foretaste and a

[1069] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 37.
[1070] Theokritoff, "Embodied Word and New Creation," 230.
[1071] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 59, no. 34.
[1072] Bruce Morrill, "The Beginning of the End: Eschatology in the Liturgical year and Lectionary," *Liturgical Ministry* 12 (2003) 70.
[1073] Schmemann, "Liturgy and Eschatology," 9.
[1074] Glen Olsen, "Time and Expression in the Eucharist," *Worship* 80/4 (2006) 317.

'fore-gift' of Christ's future Kingdom."[1075] According to Zizioulas, in the Platonic thought it is impossible to pass from an image to its archetype, but this is quite possible in the biblical understanding. Even though the archetype always comes before its type (image), the Kingdom of God, which is the archetype of the Eucharist, lies in the future. Therefore, "*[t]he Eucharist is the result of the Kingdom which is to come*."[1076] The Kingdom gives the Eucharist its true being, and the Eucharist serves as the image of the Kingdom.[1077]

As a foretaste of the messianic banquet, the Eucharist is also the manifestation of the Kingdom of God. Reflecting this idea, the preliminary prayer of the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy beseeches for a blessing over the paten "on which food of a thousand years is prepared."[1078] The millennial meal here refers to the Eucharist whereas the "thousand years" represent "the time of perfection,"[1079] that is the age after the present time "which knows no waning or eventide, and no successor, that age which ends not or grows old."[1080] In the Lord's Prayer, which is focused on the Kingdom, the "daily bread" that we ask for is the meal of that Kingdom – the Eucharist.[1081] As we now partake of the Eucharist in this temporal time, we will continue enjoying it eternally in the Kingdom.[1082] Schmemann agrees with this stand when he writes: "the eucharist is the sacrament of the beginning and the end, of the world and its fulfillment as the kingdom of God, then it is completed by the Church's ascent to heaven, to the 'homeland of the heart's desire,' the

[1075] Zizioulas, "The Eucharist and the Kingdom of God," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 58 (1994) 3.
[1076] Ibid, 7.
[1077] Ibid.
[1078] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 12, no. 43.
[1079] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 30.
[1080] See St. Basil's "De Spiritu Sancto, XXVII," *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church,* Vol. VIII, eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989) 66, no. 42.
[1081] See *Anədəmta Wånəgel* [Gospel Commentary] 130.
[1082] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 30.

status patriae – the messianic banquet of Christ, in his kingdom."[1083] This is what Christ promised to us when he said: "...as my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint one for you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom" (Lk. 22:29-30). The Eucharist, indeed, is the sacrament of God's Kingdom.

Through the Eucharist, the church enters to the Joy of the Lord. The faithful rejoice as they quietly recite the short prayer having received the holy mysteries: "fill my mouth with praise, my heart with joy and my soul with gladness,"[1084] and this personal delight of each believer extends to be the joy of the whole church. Schmemann asserts that entering to the joy of the Lord (Mt. 25:31) means entering into the Kingdom of God. Entrance to the Kingdom is achieved in no other way but through the Eucharist. To use Schmemann's words: "we have no other means of entering into that joy, no way of understanding it, except through the one action which from the beginning has been for the Church both the source and the fulfillment of joy, the very sacrament of joy, the Eucharist."[1085] This is the final purpose of the eucharistic celebration.

As the Eucharist is the entrance of the church into the joy of the Lord, in it the church ascends to the "heavenly sanctuary, to the table of Christ."[1086] This proleptic experience of the church will be fulfilled in the Kingdom as stated in the anaphora of Athanasius: "At that time [the *parousia*] when all is fulfilled there will be pitched a tent of light for his elect and his righteous and there will be stretched a curtain of fire of seven divisions for them. There will enter the High Priest Jesus Christ into the mystery and he will have the priests stand at his right hand and the deacons at his left hand to show them

[1083] Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 36.
[1084] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 69, no. 119.
[1085] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 25.
[1086] Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 27.

the order of the mystery."[1087] As we now joyously gather to celebrate the Eucharist, in the Kingdom we enter with the risen Lord into "the bridal chamber."[1088]

The eschatological character of the Eucharist is also evinced in its chosen day of celebration. The Lord's Day (Sunday), the first day of the week chosen for Eucharistic celebration, is also the first day of the new creation. The coming Kingdom will be revealed on this day "which [will] exist forever."[1089] Referring to the eternity of the Lord's Day, the anaphora of Athanasius purports that on this day "there will not be the light of the sun or the moon or the stars."[1090] This day is also known as "the Eighth Day,"[1091] since as the day of the Messianic fulfillment it is outside of the boundaries of the cycle of the week. "The Eighth Day is the day beyond the limits of the cycle outlined by the week and punctuated by the Sabbath – this is the first day of the new Aeon, the figure of the time of the Messiah."[1092] Thus, the celebration of the Eucharist on the Lord's Day envisages that the church's worship is a proleptic participation in the future *Basileia* (Kingdom). The Kingdom is manifested in the church's Eucharist, and the usage of the term "the eighth day" for the day of the eucharistic celebration signifies that the new age of the Kingdom has already begun. The designation: "the eighth day" also

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[1087] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 147, no. 93-94.
[1088] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 29.
[1089] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 144, no. 66.
[1090] Ibid, 144, no. 69..
[1091] Explaining why the Lord's Day can be called both the first and eighth day, St. Basil writes: "We pray standing, on the first day of the week, but we do not all know the reason. On the day of the resurrection (or 'standing again' Grk. ἀνάστασις) we remind ourselves of the grace given to us by standing at prayer, not only because we rose with Christ, and are bound to 'seek those things which are above,' but because the day seems to us to be in some sense an image of the age which we expect, wherefore, though it is the beginning of days, it is not called by Moses *first*, but *one*. For he says 'There was evening, and there was morning, one day,' as though the same day often recurred. Now 'one' and 'eighth' are the same, in itself distinctly indicating that really 'one' and 'eighth' of which the Psalmist makes mention in certain titles of the Psalms, the state which follows after this present time, the day which knows no waning or eventide, and no successor, that age which ends not or grows old." See "De Spiritu Sancto" XXVII: 66, 42.
[1092] Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology,* 77.

underlines the manifestation of the Day of the Lord, which Schmemann calls "the joyful day of the Kingdom."[1093]

Even though the Eucharist is celebrated in remembrance of the death and resurrection of the Lord, this sacrificial character also reflects the eschatological dimension of the Eucharist. Christ's words of institution at the Last Supper: "this is my body" and "this is my blood" refer to his sacrifice as the paschal lamb. He has "redeemed us with the sacrifice of his body, and bought us with the sprinkling of his blood."[1094] He is our "paschal lamb," who "has been sacrificed" for the remission of our sins (I Cor. 5:7). The Eucharist represents the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (Jesus – Jn. 1:29) on Calvary as stated in the celebrant's prayer of the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy: "Lord my God, behold the sacrifice of thy Son's body which pleases thee. … And behold the pure blood of thy Messiah, which was shed for me upon Calvary."[1095] Again highlighting the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist, the Ethiopian *Qəddase* refers to it as "the Lamb" which is slain by the hand of the celebrant priest: "Let the Lamb come that we may see him with our eyes, slay him with our hands and rejoice in him."[1096] The sacrifice of our Paschal Lamb in the Eucharist, however, is neither a remembrance nor a repetition of the lamb of the Jewish Passover (Exodus 12:6); but rather it is "the sacrifice of the *perfect, eschatological* paschal Lamb."[1097]

As Christ calls the sacrifice of his blood a "New Covenant" (Lk. 22:20) this designation signifies the eschatological purpose of his sacrifice. The word "Covenant" refers to the "Kingdom of Heaven," and thus whenever the church repeats Christ's words

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[1093] Ibid, 80.
[1094] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 193, no. 86.
[1095] Ibid, 67, nos. 105-106.
[1096] Ibid, 195, no. 99.
[1097] Zizioulas, "The Eucharist and the Kingdom of God," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 59 (1995) 23.

of institution, "our thoughts are directed towards the coming and establishment of the Kingdom of God."[1098] In the preliminary service of the Ethiopian *Qəddase,* correlating the Eucharistic sacrifice with its eschatological dimension, the celebrant reads:

> Who has seen a bridegroom that, at his marriage [*sic*],[1099] sacrifices his body and is fed on forever? The Son of God has done a new deed in the world which no one…has done like him since the creation of the world. At his marriage [*sic*] he has ordained on the table, before his guests, his holy body and his precious blood as a banquet, so that they may eat thereof, and so that he who believes in him may live forever.[1100]

The sacrifice of Christ's body and blood is related to a wedding banquet. This wedding is none other than the one, which will take place in heaven between the Lamb (Christ) and his Bride (the Church), accompanied by the voice of a great multitude: "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready" (Rev. 19:6-7). In the Kingdom, where God reigns, humans are invited to the "marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:9), which is the Eucharist. The Eucharist, indeed, is both the sacrifice of the paschal lamb and the eschatological meal of the Kingdom.

B. Eschatological Orientation in the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy

In the Divine Liturgy the church proleptically enters into the eternal time of the *eschaton*. This unique experience is announced at the very beginning of the Ethiopian *Qəddase* (Divine Liturgy). Having completed the preliminary prayers, the celebrant begins the Divine Liturgy with a solemn declaration: "How [awesome][1101] is this day and how marvelous this hour [when] the Holy Spirit [descends] from heaven and

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[1098] Ibid.
[1099] The Gəʿəz text reads: "*bägize käbkabu* – በጊዜ ክብካቡ," which means "at his wedding." See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 3, no. 8.
[1100] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 8, nos. 8-9.
[1101] In his translation, Daoud's choice of word here: "awful" is not appropriate.

overshadows this sacrifice."[1102] The uniqueness of the time in the liturgy is based on the eucharistic presence of Christ which results from the transformation of the elements by the Holy Spirit. As God became flesh in Christ, and "God's nature knows no boundary – even time,"[1103] the time in the eucharistic liturgy passes beyond any form of measured time. Thus the celebrant's declaration at the beginning of *Qəddase* is an affirmation that the new time of the Kingdom enters into the fallen time of this world.[1104]

The Ethiopian Divine Liturgy's connectedness to eternity can also be seen in the phrase "now and ever and unto the ages of ages" with which most of the prayers end.[1105] The frequent usage of this phrase signifies that in the liturgy the eternal time breaks into the temporal, and we enter to the age which never ends. It also underlines that the Eucharist, which is offered in the Divine Liturgy, "is not confined within our fragmented time but extends unto the age which has no end."[1106] When the church offers its eucharistic thanksgiving to the triune God, saying "through thy only-begotten Son,…to thee [God, the Father], with him and with the Holy Spirit, be glory and dominion now and ever and world without end,"[1107] the praise embraces both protological and eschatological dimensions. According to the Ethiopian doctors, this thanksgiving is interpreted as: "let glory be to the triune God since the creation of the world till now; from now till the Second Coming of the Lord; and after that for eternity."[1108] As we thank God during our life time, we also look forward to worshipping God eternally in the

[1102] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 18, no. 1.
[1103] Olsen, "Time and Expression in the Eucharist," 312.
[1104] Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 48.
[1105] See for example *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 23, no. 39.
[1106] Zizioulas, "The Eucharist and the Kingdom of God," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 60 (1995) 43.
[1107] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 33, no. 117.
[1108] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 20, no. 47.

Heavenly Kingdom[1109] after the consummation of the natural time in the *eschaton.* Meanwhile, in the eucharistic celebration we move within the space of the age to come.

The Ethiopian liturgy explicitly demonstrates that it is oriented to the Kingdom of God. In the offertory, the celebrant asks God to remember in the "heavenly kingdom" those who brought the offering.[1110] Similarly, shortly before the partaking of the Eucharist by the faithful, the celebrant prays for those who have been called out of the world to "join in [God's] everlasting kingdom."[1111] Moreover, the whole liturgical service is performed with the vision of God's Kingdom: "While we praise thee [God] without rest we know in our hearts thy kingdom."[1112] Here knowing the Kingdom means that "picturing the image of [the] kingdom" in the minds of the worshippers.[1113] As the church worships God, envisioning the Kingdom, its worship serves as "*a symbol of the kingdom*, of the Church's ascent to it and, in this ascent, of her fulfillment as the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit."[1114] The unceasing nature of the praise that is offered "without rest"[1115] also reflects our foretaste of the heavenly worship, which will be enjoyed by the communion of saints in the Messianic Kingdom.

God's Kingdom, in the Ethiopian *Qəddase,* is declared as a "blessed kingdom."[1116] The *trisagion* in the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy is followed by a short prayer from the *Testament of the Lord* which ends with "for thine is the blessed kingdom, O Lord our God."[1117] Declaring the blessedness of the Kingdom, the church journeys

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[1109] Ibid, 58, no. 11.
[1110] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 19, no. 7.
[1111] Ibid, 70, no. 127.
[1112] Ibid, 252. See also *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 73.
[1113] See *The Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 96.
[1114] Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 43.
[1115] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 252. See also *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 73.
[1116] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 251.
[1117] Ibid, 251. See also *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 53.

towards its final destination. To bless God's Kingdom is not simply to acclaim it, but rather "to declare it to be the goal, the end of all our desires and interests, of our whole life, the supreme and ultimate value of all that exists."[1118] By blessing the Kingdom, thus, we acknowledge it to be our final and ultimate value as we now experience it through the sacraments of the church.[1119]

The proleptic experience of the Kingdom in the Divine Liturgy imparts the joy of the Kingdom to the participants. In the Scripture we read that the first Christians were celebrating the Eucharist with glad hearts (Acts 2:46). Due to its eschatological character the Eucharist was celebrated in the early church "in an atmosphere of joy."[1120] Claude Sumner states that "a note of joy," is one of the features of the Ethiopian liturgy, which also include "a sense of community, concern for unity, a sacrificial aspect and a contemplative character."[1121] The whole gathering, not only the clergy, are supposed to experience the joy of the Kingdom in the eucharistic liturgy. As the Eucharist by itself represents a gathering (*synaxis*)[1122] in one place, the sharing of the joy by the whole eucharistic community is significant. In the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy, by chanting Ps. 81:1-2 that precedes the Gospel reading, the people express their joy: "Sing aloud unto God our strength; make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel [tambourine], the pleasant harp with the psaltery."[1123] This, indeed, is

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[1118] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 29.
[1119] Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 47.
[1120]Zizioulas, "The Eucharist and the Kingdom of God," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 58 (1994) 4.
[1121] Claude Sumner, "The Ethiopic Liturgy: An Analysis," *Journal of the Ethiopian Studies*, (1963) 41.
[1122] The gathering of the people is mandatory for the celebration of the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy. According to the EOTC's canon law, the clergy cannot celebrate the Divine Liturgy without the attendance of the people: "The mass shall not begin until all the people are gathered." See "On the Mass," *The Fetha Nagast: The Law of the Kings,* trans. Tzadua, 83.
[1123] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 43, no. 192.

the joyful exclamation of the people who see the coming of the Lord, the *parousia*, in the Gospel reading that symbolizes the end times.[1124]

The Gospel reading has an explicit eschatological character in the Ethiopian *Qəddase*. Before reading the Gospel, the celebrant solemnly declares: "Behold the Gospel of the kingdom of heaven"[1125] and hands the Gospel to the assistant priest who in turn passes it to the chief deacon saying: "His (God's) kingdom and his righteousness which he (the celebrant) delivered to me I deliver to thee."[1126] By this, the assistant priest means that he hands to the deacon the Gospel that proclaims "the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Mt. 6:33). While the Gospel reading represents the most pleasant words of the Lord to the righteous on the Day of Judgment: "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," the dismissal of the catechumens at the end of the Gospel reading symbolizes the terrible fate of the wicked: "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt.25: 34, 41).[1127] At the end of the Gospel reading the sanctuary will be closed, connoting the impossibility of any mercy for the wicked after the Last Judgment. This representation is based on the parable of the ten bridesmaids, which illustrates that the foolish bridesmaids, who arrived after the door was shut, were not allowed to the wedding banquet (Mt. 25: 1-13).[1128]

The rest of the liturgical symbols that come after the Gospel reading exemplify the eschatological setting of the Kingdom. Besides its doctrinal value, the confession of the Creed points to "the mystical thanksgiving which *will be rendered in the age to come*

[1124] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 98, no. 1.
[1125] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 44, no. 193.
[1126] Ibid.
[1127] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 98, no. 1.
[1128] Ibid.

for the most marvelous principles and ways of God's most wise Providence towards us, by which we have been saved."[1129] The kiss of peace represents the universal harmony that will prevail amongst people in the new ages of the Kingdom.[1130] This is clear from the injunction of the deacon which asks the people to pray for the achievement of a perfect concord while they greet each other with "a holy salutation."[1131] In the deacon's exclamation: "look to the east"[1132] while we remember our original home, the Paradise that was believed to be located in the east, we actually anticipate our heavenly abode: "we have not here a house built on sand against which the winds blow and the floods beat, but the free[1133] Jerusalem which is above and into which the patriarchs, bishops, priests and deacons have entered before us."[1134] The Heavenly Jerusalem, according to the Ethiopian tradition is the place where the righteous will enter after the second coming of Christ.[1135]

The celebrant's exhortation: "lift up your hearts" [1136] signifies our entrance to the Kingdom. Replying to the celebrant, the people say: "we have lifted them up unto the Lord our God."[1137] As the anaphora is the "lifting up" of both our offering and ourselves, the whole Eucharistic liturgy is "the ascension of the Church to heaven."[1138] The Lord has accepted us at his table in his Kingdom, so that we have followed him in his

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[1129] Zizioulas, "The Eucharist and the Kingdom of God," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 58 (1994) 11.
[1130] Ibid.
[1131] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 54, no. 58.
[1132] Ibid, 58, no. 26.
[1133] In the Gəʿəz text it says: "*Agəʿazit* – አግዓዚት" which means liberator. See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy], 112, no. 50.
[1134] See "The Anaphora of St. Athanasius," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 142, no. 50.
[1135] See for example the celebrant's blessing words for the laity in the anaphora of St. Mary: "O [you], Christian people, as [you] have gathered together on this day, so also may he [God] gather you on the holy Mount of Sion and in the free Jerusalem in heaven." *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 119, no. 157.
[1136] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 57, no. 3.
[1137] Ibid.
[1138] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 37.

ascension. By "lifting up our hearts" we mean that "we have entered the Eschaton, and are now standing beyond time and space."[1139] In the Ethiopian *Qəddase* the faithful are strongly encouraged to experience the presence of the Heavenly Kingdom. In addition to the celebrant's exclamation, the chief deacon as well urges them to lift up their hearts and thoughts to heaven: "Let your thoughts be above, and your heart in heaven, recognize where you stand."[1140] Indeed, the lifting up of the hearts and thoughts of the whole liturgical chorus in the Eucharist underlines the church's ascent to the "paschal table of the Kingdom."[1141]

The *Sanctus* as the hymn of victory represents the union between the corporeal beings (humans) and incorporeal powers (angels) that would be achieved in the life to come. The heavenly dimension of the earthly church is revealed as we sing the *Sanctus*: "Holy, [H]oly, [H]oly, Lord of hosts, heaven and earth are full of the holiness of thy glory" with the thousands and myriads of angels and archangels who hallow God unceasingly.[1142] The earthly Divine Liturgy, in addition to being the icon of the heavenly liturgy of the angels, it is also a worship where "the holy table in the earthly temple mystically becomes the exalted Throne; and the assembly in the church building becomes the court of heaven gathered with the angels before the Throne."[1143] The *Sanctus*, thus, indicates our future "union and equality in honour" with the angels that will be manifested in the Kingdom.[1144]

[1139] Ibid.
[1140] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud , 198, no. 3.
[1141] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 41.
[1142] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 59, no. 32.
[1143] David Melling, "The Heavenly Liturgy: Our Participation with the Angels," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 102 (2005) 17.
[1144] Zizioulas, "The Eucharist and the Kingdom of God," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, 58 (1994) 11.

The Ethiopian liturgy underlines our anticipated unity with the celestial powers. While God is praised for raising us from the dust and setting us with the angels,[1145] our future communion with the heavenly powers is earnestly sought: "May God, the most high, bless us all and sanctify us with every spiritual blessing, and bring us into the holy church to be joined with his holy angels who serve him always in fear and trembling, and glorify him at all times and all hours, both now and ever and world without end."[1146] At the end of each canonical hour the EOTC prays to be united with the holy angels: "O Lord let us join in the communion of the angels and be united with them in faith."[1147] By asking God to accept our praise like the praise of the angels, and help us adore the divine name unceasingly as the angels do,[1148] the church anticipates the union of the heavenly and earthly chorus which will be actualized after the *eschaton*.

Toward the end of *Qəddase*, the people alternately chant with the officiating clergy a hymn known as *Śärawitä Mäla'əktihu* – ሠራዊተ መላእክቲሁ [The Hosts of the Angels][1149] which symbolizes our communion with the angels in praising God. The hymn indicates that the throngs of angels are always present in the church where the Lamb of God is sacrificed in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. The liturgical assembly is divided in chanting this hymn – the celebrant and the two deacons in the sanctuary alternately chant with the assistant priest, sub deacon, and the people who are outside of the sanctuary – and while those in the sanctuary constitute the heavenly choir, those outside of the sanctuary represent the earthly choir. In the anaphora of St. Mary the celebrant expresses the assembly's hope to "[be gathered] on the holy Mountain of [Z]ion

[1145] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 10, no. 25.
[1146] Ibid, 42, no. 185.
[1147] *Mäṣəḥafä Sä'atat* [Book of Hours] 55.
[1148] *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 88.
[1149] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 62, no. 63.

in the heavenly Jerusalem," and hear the angelic hymn "which softens even [dry] bones because of the multitude of its melodies."[1150] As a pilgrim to heaven, having the proleptic foretaste of the heavenly liturgy on earth, the church awaits its full participation in the heavenly liturgy.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the eschatological nature of the Ethiopian liturgy. In the first portion of the chapter I dealt with the eschatological teachings of the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition. The speculation on the fates of the souls and their abodes highlights the Ethiopian tradition's strong connectedness to eternal life. The intercessory prayers for the departed souls and their remembrance in the EOTC's liturgy also reflect its eschatological character. As for the destiny of the world, being influenced by the Jewish apocalyptic literary genre, the various Ethiopian biblico-liturgical texts underline the passing away of this world at the end times. In fact, the texts recall the renewal of creation that will take place after the *eschaton.*[1151] However, it is not explicitly stated whether or not the passing away of the world means its transformation into a new heaven and earth. As Ethiopian soteriology underlines the redemption achieved through Christ for the whole of creation, its eschatology needs to be in line with its soteriology, clearly signifying the fulfillment of the salvific work of Christ in the transfiguration of the world.

In the second part of this chapter, I discussed the factors that reflect the eschatological dimension of the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy. While the Eucharist is viewed as the central expression of the EOTC's eschatological hope, its *Qəddase* exhibits the

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[1150] Ibid, 119, no. 157.
[1151] See "Ra'əyä Yoḥannəs [Revelation of John]," *Mäṣaḥəfətä Ḥaddisat Śäläsətu* [Commentary on the Three New Testament Books] ed. Tirfe, 468. See also Cowley, *Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John,* 357.

proleptic experience of the anticipated Kingdom of God. The Ethiopian Divine Liturgy is celebrated, "picturing the Kingdom" in the minds of the gathering.[1152] The Gospel reading, moreover, symbolizes the end times, whereas the liturgical symbols and anaphoral constituents that come after the Gospel reading point to the eschatological setting of the Kingdom. Thus, the Ethiopian *Qəddase* serves as the realized anticipation of the future *parousia* and the Messianic Kingdom.

[1152] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 252. See also *The Testament of Our Lord,* trans. Cooper and Maclean, 96.

CONCLUSION

The Ethiopian liturgical rite is the result of the creative and original work undertaken by the local fathers of the EOTC who lived during the various stages of the development of the liturgy. Though Coptic, Syriac, and Byzantine influences are noted in the Ethiopian Liturgy, the foreign liturgical sources were creatively adapted to the Ethiopian cultural milieu. Moreover, it has to be reiterated that despite these foreign influences, the Ethiopian Liturgy has developed to be an independent liturgical rite. Having briefly explored the influences of Eastern and Western liturgical rites on the Ethiopian liturgical tradition, Peter Jeffery underscores its eclectic and original features:

> The Ethiopian liturgical tradition is much more than a mere patchwork of scraps imported elsewhere. On the contrary, it exhibits much creativity and originality, both in its absorption and assimilation of diverse foreign elements and in the considerable bulk of indigenous material that emerged in Ethiopia itself. Thus it is undoubtedly correct that there exists a true Ethiopian rite.[1153]

The formation of an indigenous liturgical rite in Ethiopia can be noted in many ways. Even though the EOTC initially received the *Ordo Communis* of the Alexandrian Church with the Coptic anaphora of St. Mark,[1154] the Ethiopian traditional fathers enriched the *Ordo* by adding various hymns and rubrics. While the anaphoras of the *Apostolic Tradition* and that of the *Testament of the Lord* were adapted to the Ethiopian liturgy, the Ethiopian doctors [*Mäməhran* – መምህራን] of the 14th-15th centuries composed a number of anaphoras that reflected their theological thought. Besides, the liturgy of hours (*Sä'atat)*, which incorporates biblical readings assigned for the day and night hours along with contemplative chants on God's Lordship over creation, was the work of a prolific Ethiopian writer, *Abba* Giyorgis (1365-1426). While the fathers of the Gondar

[1153] Peter Jeffery, "The Liturgical Year in the Ethiopian Degg^{w}ā," 204.
[1154] Tzadua, *Ethiopian Church Rite*, 11.

Era (16th –17th centuries) composed various hymnaries,[1155] which are part of the Ethiopian Divine Office, they were also able to prepare a lectionary based on the natural events of the four Ethiopian seasons.

As I discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, the Ethiopian liturgical tradition has developed through different phases.[1156] Throughout these phases, various materials of creation themes were introduced into the tradition. During the first phase, from the 4th – 7th centuries, translations into Gəʿəz were made from Greek sources.[1157] In the 5th century, while the Old Testament books were translated into Gəʿəz from the Septuagint version, other apocryphal and deuterocanonical sources as well made their ways into the Ethiopic biblical corpus. Examples of these are: the canticle of the three Jews (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah), which reflects the cosmic liturgy offered to God by the entire creation; the Book of Jubilees [*Mäṣəḥafä Kufale* – መጽሐፈ ኩፋሌ]; and the Book of Enoch [*Mäṣəḥafä Henok* – መጽሐፈ ሄኖክ],[1158] which played an important role in the development of the Ethiopian traditional teaching on creation.[1159] The *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos* – መጽሐፈ ቀሌምንጦስ, which is part of the Pseudo-Clementine literature and the EOTC's New Testament Canon, has enriched the Ethiopian traditional teaching on creation as well.[1160]

The foreign liturgical sources that were introduced in the early times of Ethiopian Christianity laid the foundation for both the creation theology and sacramental praxis of the EOTC's liturgical rite. For instance, the *Apostolic Tradition*'s creation motif, which states that at midnight all created beings offer a thanksgiving to God,[1161] and various

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[1155] Haile, "Ethiopic Literature," 51.
[1156] For the origin and development of the Ethiopian liturgy see chapter one of this thesis, pp. 15- 49.
[1157] Ricci, "Ethiopian Christian Literature," 976.
[1158] Ibid.
[1159] Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 113.
[1160] Ibid, 136.
[1161] See *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, 56; Giyorgis, *Mäṣəḥafä Säʿatat* [Horologium] 2.

litanies of the *Synodicon* for divine blessings over the rains, waters, and fruits have been made the invariable parts of the Ethiopian Liturgy of Hours (*Säʿatat* – ሰዓታት).[1162] The Syriac *Testament of the Lord*, whose translation into Gəʿəz is credited to the Nine Saints who fled from Roman Syria to Ethiopia in the 5th century, has served as a prominent source of creation themes in the Ethiopian liturgy. The intercessory prayer for God's blessing over the whole created order, known in Ethiopia as *Bäʿəntä Qəddəsat* – በእንተ ቅድሳት [Concerning Holy Things] by its incipit; and the midnight, morning, and evening litanies [*Kidan Zä-mänəfäqä Lelit, Zä-nägəh, Wå-zäśärək* – ኪዳን ዘመንፈቀ ሌሊት፤ ዘነግህ፤ ወዘሠርክ], which mainly highlight the sovereignty of God over creation were derived from the *Testament of the Lord*.[1163]

The sources that were translated from Arabic during the 13th –14th centuries have been made an integral part of the Ethiopian interpretation of creation. Among the hexaemeral literature, the Ethiopic version of the Arabic hexaemeron of pseudo-Epiphanius (*Mäṣəḥafä Aksimaros* – መጽሐፈ አክሲማሮስ)[1164] is a significant work on which the EOTC's teaching on creation depends. While the Book of Creation [*Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* – መጽሐፈ ሥነ ፍጥረት] refers to the *Aksimaros* and other apocryphal sources,[1165] the various Gəʿəz and Amharic versions that are simply entitled *Śənä Fəṭərät* – ሥነ ፍጥረት [Beauty of Creation] mainly depend on another hexaemeral work, known as *Ṭəntä Haymanot* – ጥንተ ሃይማኖት [Root of Faith].[1166] As S. C. Malan notes, *The Book of Adam*

[1162] Horner, *The Statutes of the Apostles*, 225. See also *Mäṣəḥafä Säʿatat Wa-Bahra Hassab* [Horologium and Computus] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 11 and 41.
[1163] See *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 45-48, 50-53, 71-74, and 79-85; *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase* [The Book of Liturgy] 20-22, 195-199.
[1164] Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 123.
[1165] See *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 20, 36, 40.
[1166] See Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 124. See also *Beauty of Creation*, trans. Haile and Amare, 4, 10, 12, 14; *Ṭəntä Haymanot* – ጥንተ ሃይማኖት [Root of Faith] entitled: "Eine äthiopische

and Eve, another source of the Ethiopian traditional teaching on creation, was originally written in Arabic in Egypt, and then "taken further south, and translated into Ethiopic."[1167] The Ethiopic commentary on Genesis as well was originally a translation of Ibn At-Taiyib's Arabic commentary, which was later expanded with some elaborations by Məhrka Dəngəl in the first quarter of the 17th century.[1168]

The EOTC's biblico-liturgical literature is characterized by both pseudonymity and anonymity. As the first chapter of this thesis elucidated, in the 15th century the dissident groups, who composed most of the indigenous Ethiopian anaphoras, attributed their works to the ecumenical fathers of the early church for the purpose of gaining credibility.[1169] Though the anaphoras still appear under pseudonyms, their contents signify that they are of local origin. Customarily, the Ethiopian traditional authors often do not mention their names to identify their own works out of humility. Thus, the fathers of the EOTC, who succeeded the doctors of the 15th century and wrote the commentary on the official anaphoras of the church and on other liturgical texts [*Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* – መጽሐፈ ቅዳሴ አንድምታ], remain anonymous. Also it is not known who wrote the Ethiopian Book of Creation [*Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* – መጽሐፈ ሥነ ፍጥረት], which is authored based on the Arabic Pseudo-Epiphanius hexaemeron and other apocryphal sources. Moreover, though the lectionary's reference to the anaphoras of the Golden Period of Ethiopian literature (15th century) and to the hymnaries of the Gondar Era (16th -17th centuries) indicates that the lectionary [*Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* – መጽሐፈ ግጻዌ] was composed in modern times, its composer is unknown. Throughout this thesis, therefore,

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Handschrift der k. k. Hofbibliothek in Wien zu den pseudo-ephiphanischen Werken," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes,* Vol. XXVI, trans. August Haffner (Wien: Alfred Hölder, 1912) 365-368.

[1167] Malan, *The Book of Adam and Eve*, (preface) vi.

[1168] Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation,* 114.

[1169] See the brief discussion on the authorship of the local Ethiopian anaphoras in chapter one above, pages 29-45.

while engaging these sources I have referred to their anonymous authors as the fathers or doctors of the EOTC who lived during the renaissance and development of Ethiopian literature, especially in the 14th –17th centuries. The current traditional scholars of the EOTC, usually called *Mäməhran* (መምህራን), are the inheritors of this tradition.

In addition to psuedonymity and anonymity, the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition shows lack of theologically critical reflections on the received sources. Even though various foreign sources have been adapted and shaped in accordance with the Ethiopian cultural context, divergence in theological thoughts is not tolerated. When the dissident groups of the Golden Period of Ethiopian literature composed anaphoras, reflecting their theological difference in triadology from that of Emperor Zär'a Yaʿəqob (1434-1468), the emperor opposed their attempts arguing that no anaphora was accepted in the church except those derived from the *Apostolic Tradition* and the *Testament of the Lord*.[1170] The groups, collectively known as Zämika'elites, were dubbed as heretics, and their anaphoras were rejected by the emperor and his associates. The church finally accepted their works only after it had lost a large number of books during the invasion and devastation of numerous churches by the Ethiopian Imam, Ahmed ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi, from 1527-1542.[1171]

The acceptance of the works of the dissident groups by the church has greatly enriched the theology of the Ethiopian liturgical rite. Nevertheless, in the EOTC, faithfulness to the sources received through tradition is more favourable than a critical approach to them, and thus one hardly notes differences in theological ideas among the current traditional scholars of the church. Though this outlook has helped to maintain the

[1170] See Zär'a Yaʿəqob, "Il Libro Della Luce [Maṣḥafa Berhān]," *CSCO,* Vol. 261, Tom. 51, 41.
[1171] Haile, "Religious Controversies," 133.

integrity of the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition, it has also hampered potential theological developments in the tradition. *Abba* Habte-Maryam Worqneh criticizes the norm of the Ethiopian traditional commentary, known as "አንድም ትርጉም – *Anədəm Tərg^{W}əm*," which does not encourage the disciples to comment on the ideas of their teachers.[1172] The current traditional scholars of the EOTC, who are masters in biblical and liturgical commentaries, usually study the commentaries by heart and they barely offer a critical reflection on the themes of the texts. Moreover, even though the traditional commentaries on some of the Scriptures and the commentary on the liturgical texts have been published by the EOTC, the church has never published a critical edition of any of these texts. This was one of the limitations I faced in this study of the Ethiopian liturgy's creation theology.

Due to the lack of critical revisions of the EOTC's sources of creation theology, some of the themes sound biblically untenable. For instance, the creation narrative of *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth* states that since the light, which emanated from the sun was so powerful, the angels asked God to minimize its power.[1173] This expression implies imperfection in the creation of the sun; but in the biblical narrative we read that as in the case of the other creatures, after the creation of the greater light (the sun) "God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:16-17). As I discussed in the second chapter of the thesis, both the book of *Aksimaros* and the Ethiopic traditional Book of Creation offer a detailed description of the "seven heavens."[1174] The description of the spiritual world in these sources is simply speculative and not found in the Scriptures.

[1172] Worqneh, *Ṭənətawi Yä-Ityoṗəya Təməhrət* [Ancient Education of Ethiopia] 217.
[1173] *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 15.
[1174] See *Aksimaros*, ed. Misikir, 18-20; *Mäṣəḥafä Śənä Fəṭərät* [The Book of the Beauty of Creation] ed. Equba-Giyorgis, 16-18.

This thesis has also dealt with the protological and eschatological dimensions of creation engaging the various liturgical corpuses of the Ethiopian tradition. As the composition of the Ethiopic liturgical texts is based on biblical, apocryphal, and pseudoapostolic sources, the texts demonstrate a diverse and eclectic character. The eclecticism and complexity of the liturgical texts has led to the consultation of numerous biblical and apocryphal sources in the thesis. My intention in following this method was mainly to identify the sources of the EOTC's theology of creation as reflected in the liturgical texts and biblical exegesis of the church. Based on the liturgical texts and the sacramental praxis of the EOTC, this thesis has shown elements of a liturgical cosmology of the Ethiopian tradition by drawing on various themes of creation theology in the texts, and by analyzing the theological and cosmological presuppositions of the use of created matter in the Ethiopian liturgical rite.

The creation themes of the Ethiopian liturgical texts are solidly based on Scripture. The presentation of the themes, especially in the indigenous anaphoras, is contemplative in character, displaying lyrical passages that marvel at the beauty of God's creation. The fathers, who composed the anaphoras during the Golden Period of Ethiopian literature (15th century), envisioned God as infinite mystery whose essence is incomprehensible to the human mind.[1175] Nevertheless, drawing materials from diverse sources to substantiate their *theologoumena*, they speculated on the abode of God and on the expanse of the universe.[1176] Their theologies do not exhibit complex terminology but simply deal with God, salvation, and creation in terms of mystery and beauty. For

[1175] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 89, nos. 3-6; 174, no. 11.
[1176]See for instance the portions in the anaphoras of Gregory of Nyssa and the anaphora of Cyril in *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 175, nos. 28-29; 209, nos. 3-5; and *Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, trans. Budge, 8-13.

instance, in the Ethiopian tradition the trinitarian theology is called *Məśṭirä Śəllase* – ምሥጢረ ሥላሴ [Mystery of the Trinity], and the theology of creation is treated under the epithet: *Śənä Fəṭərät* – ሥነ ፍጥረት [The Beauty of Creation]. As I discussed throughout the thesis, the EOTC shares the basic tenets of other Eastern Orthodox traditions.

As part of the thesis' construction of a liturgical cosmology, I have primarily dealt with the theology of creation according to the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition. In the second chapter, I have shown that in the Ethiopian liturgical texts creation is presented as the joint work of the Persons of the Trinity.[1177] The Ethiopian tradition upholds that God was under no necessity to create.[1178] Without having the need for creation, the three Persons lived in communion of love prior to the creation of the world, possessing "an infinite glory."[1179] Creation came into existence as the result of God's free choice, since God willed creation to enjoy divine blessings and goodness. While the relationship of the three divine Persons *ad intra* (immanent Trinity) is unknowable, the triune God is revealed through creation (economic Trinity). In other words, the one and united action of the immanent Trinity is expressed in different ways in the economic Trinity. Creation is one example of the act of the three Persons *ad extra,* and as an act *ad extra* creation came into existence as the common work of the Persons of the Trinity "who hold all the world with one counsel, with one authority, and with one unity."[1180]

As the work of the triune God, the entire creation had a beginning. The Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition teaches that God brought creation from non-being into being

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[1177] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 110, no. 58; *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 247.
[1178] See *Aksimaros,* ed. Misikir, 4. See also the Ethiopic text of the *Miracles of Jesus* in "Les Miracles de Jésus: Texte Éthiopien Publié et Traduit," *Patrologia Orientalis,* 12 (1919) 561.
[1179] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 125, no. 31.
[1180] Ibid, 175, no. 25.

(*əm-ḫäbä aləbo ḫäbä bo* – እምኀበ አልቦ ኀበ ቦ).[1181] This doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* entails an ontological distance that separates created beings from the Creator. God is the only "eternal, the first and the last, who has neither beginning nor end,"[1182] and thus no created being existed eternally with God. The Creator is ontologically different from the created reality. While remaining transcendent in essence (*baḥrəy* – ባሕርይ), God is immanent in creation through the divine energies (activities).[1183] Acknowledging the created status of the world, the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* rejects notions that consider the material world as coeternal with God.

The good creation, which originated from a loving and caring God, became liable to corruption due to a human sin. As the second chapter of this thesis states, the Ethiopian liturgical tradition upholds that Adam was not created mortal. God made Adam "without corruption," [1184] but mortality was introduced through sin. The first humans were created with the possibility of immortality, and thus in their pre-lapsarian stage, Adam and Eve were immortal by grace.[1185] For the continuation of the grace of immortality they were to grow to the likeness of God. Heeding the advice of the envious enemy (Satan),[1186] unfortunately, they brought death on themselves. As a result of their disobedience to God, they lost the incorruptibility granted to them by God. Misusing their freewill, the first

[1181] See the preface to *Gəbrä Ḫəmamat* [Lectionary of the Passion Week]; *Haymanotä Abäw* [The Faith of the Fathers] 34, no. 3.
[1182] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 32, no. 108.
[1183] See the preface to the anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers in *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 124, no. 21; 125, no. 29.
[1184] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 54, no. 54.
[1185] See *Ṭəntä Haymanot* [Root of Faith]: "Eine äthiopische Handschrift der k. k. Hofbibliothek in Wien zu den pseudo-ephiphanischen Werken," 367. See also *EOTC Faith and Worship*, eds. Archbishop Mekarios and et al, 26.
[1186] The pre-anaphoral service of the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy states that death entered the world as a result of "the envy of Satan" which was the cause for the Fall of Adam and Eve. See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 54, no. 54.

humans alienated themselves from God, and consequently through the Fall they brought corruption to the material creation. Death entered the world as a cosmic catastrophe.

The all-encompassing nature of the human person led to the transmission of corruption from the person to the rest of creation. The material and spiritual realities (body and soul) in the person relate the person to the material and spiritual dimensions of creation.[1187] Hence the human person stands at the midway point of creation, and "unites the spiritual and material worlds."[1188] Since the person recapitulates within him/herself the whole of creation, the human is a microcosm. As a microcosm and as the "king of creation,"[1189] the human person was given a task by God to unite created matter and bring it into full communion with God. The person failed to accomplish this task, and thus the death and corruption that entangled the person also affected the entire creation.

In the Ethiopian tradition, even though it is not explicitly stated that the *Logos* would have been incarnate despite the Fall of the first humans, some of the EOTC's literature implicitly reveal such a belief. For example, the expression in the Ethiopic *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos* – መጽሐፈ ቀሌምንጦስ [Book of Clement]: "O Peter if I did not plan to be incarnated from the Virgin, I would not have created Adam or the heavens"[1190] signifies that the incarnation of the *Logos* was not a response to the Fall but the original divine plan to bring creation to its fulfillment. Moreover *Täʿammərä Maryam* – ተአምረ ማርያም [Miracle of Mary], a book used in the EOTC for liturgical purposes, asserts that "St. Mary had been in the thought of God prior to the creation of the world."[1191] This reference as well clearly shows that the incarnation of the Logos from the Blessed Virgin

[1187] *Anədəmta Wånəgel* [Gospel Commentary] 14 and 16.
[1188] Melketsedek (Archbishop), *Ethiopian Church Teaching,* 21.
[1189] See "Anaphora of St. Athanasius," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 140.
[1190] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome] ed. Gabra-Maryam, 93.
[1191] See *Täʿammərä Maryam Bä-Gəʿəz Ənna Amarəñña* [Miracle of Mary in Gəʿəz and Amharic] 3, no. 6.

was originally foreseen by God before the Fall. The incarnation revealed the goal of creation, which is the consummation of the entire cosmic order in Christ, and made the transformation of creation possible. As the world was created through Christ, also the fallen creation was renewed through him.[1192] Elsewhere in the Ethiopian liturgical corpus, special emphasis is given to the mystery of the incarnation of the *Logos*.[1193] The incarnation is centrally significant because the concept of redemption and transfiguration of creation are rooted in it.

Even though God's good plan for creation had been affected by the fall of humanity, the Christ event offered the possibility of cosmic transfiguration. Orthodoxy views the whole life of Christ as the medium of salvation. Through his incarnation, the *Logos* became part of his creation and recapitulated the entire creation in his body.[1194] Christ sanctified the entire cosmos through his baptism,[1195] whereas his redemptive crucifixion on the Cross liberated creation form the pangs of sin.[1196] As death had held human beings and the entire cosmos under its control, Christ died to "renew the corrupted creation,"[1197] and his resurrection defeated death and corruption.[1198] Thus we were saved by the whole life of Christ, not by a particular event in his life.

While the whole of creation has been redeemed, its ultimate transfiguration has yet to come. Creation is still in travail, waiting for the time when it "will be set free from

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[1192] See "Ǝgəzi'abḥer Zäbərhanat [God of the Lights]," *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 118; "Təməhrətä Ḫəbu'at [Mystagogia]," *Testamentum domini éthiopien,* trans. Beylot, 56.
[1193] See for example "Anaphora of Mary," *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 109, nos. 46-47; 112-113, nos. 80-87; "Wəddase Maryam [Praise of Mary/Theotokia]," *Mäzəmurä Dawit* [Psalm of David] 8-44; "Anəqäṣä Bərhan : Gate of Light," *Mäzəmurä Dawit* [Psalm of David] 51-52; *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wamazmur* [Festive Hymnary] 106 -107;
[1194] *Mäṣəḥafä Qälemənṭos Zä-Rome* [The Book of Clement of Rome], ed. Gabra-Maryam, 84.
[1195] "Ziq Zä-Ṭəmqät [Hymn of Epiphany]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wamazmur* [Festive Hymnary] 117.
[1196] Ibid, 115.
[1197] "Ziq Zä-bä'alä Mäsəqäl [Hymn of the Feast of the Cross]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wamazmur* [Festive Hymnary] 23.
[1198] The paschal chant of the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy says: "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death…and upon those in the tombs bestowing life." See *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 40, no. 173.

its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8: 21). Even though Christians experience the renewal of the cosmos in the sacramental reality of the body of Christ, who has recapitulated the entire creation in himself, the final glory of the cosmos is awaiting fulfillment. The Christ event has allowed for the possibility of the transfiguration of the cosmos which will be fully achieved after the *eschaton.*

The Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition contains the themes of creation theology that I have briefly summarized above. However, both the biblical commentaries and the liturgical texts lack clarity in their treatment of the final transformation of the cosmos into the Kingdom of God. In fact, as I showed in the fourth chapter of the thesis, the Ethiopian liturgical tradition envisions the Eucharist as the eschatological meal of the Kingdom, and it also exhibits the eucharistic service (*Qəddase*) as the proleptic realization of the Kingdom. The Ethiopic commentary on the Book of Revelation also states that the Second Coming of Christ will be "to renew all."[1199] In the Ethiopian tradition, however, this renewal is not understood as the transformation of the current created order into a new heaven and a new earth, but it refers to the revelation of the Heavenly Kingdom (*Mängəśtä Sämayat* – መንግሥተ ሰማያት) which will replace the existing world. The fate of the created world, according to the Ethiopian tradition, is to be consumed by fire.[1200]

This concept of the fiery consummation of the world is the result of apocalyptic literature that was embraced by the Ethiopian tradition. The Jewish pseudepigraphal apocalypses, such as I Enoch and II Ezra, are characterized by the imminent expectation

[1199] See "Ra'əyä Yoḥannəs [Revelation of John]," *Mäṣaḥəfətä Ḥaddisat Śäläsətu* [Commentary on the Three New Testament Books] ed. Tirfe, 468. See also Cowley, *Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St John,* 357.

[1200] See the second part of the Ethiopic *Testament of the Lord:* "Le Testament en Galilée de Notre-Seigneur Jésus Christ," trans. Guerrier and Grébaut, 87; "Mälə'ktä Ṗeṭros Dagmit [II Epistle of Peter]," *Mäṣaḥəfətä Ḥaddisat Śäläsətu* [Commentary on the Three New Testament Books] ed. Tirfe, 274.

of the end of the world and its annihilation,[1201] so that their catastrophic eschatology has influenced the Ethiopian tradition. According to the commentary of the Ethiopian Missal, as "the world was created from non-being into being, it will also return from being (existence) into non-being (non-existence)."[1202] This means that the creation of the world *ex nihilo* entails its return to non-existence.

The Ethiopian eschatological thought needs to be consistent with what the EOTC teaches regarding the salvation of the world. The entire material creation has been redeemed by the Christ event, and the redemption achieved through Christ will be complete in the final transfiguration of creation after the end times. The liberation of creation from its groaning should be envisioned as being fully realized by its transformation into the new heaven and earth, and not by its return into non-being. As our bodies will be risen in the resurrection, being transformed to the body of Christ's glory, the entire cosmos as well will be transfigured. In other words, the creation that was affected by the human sin, will also participate in the transfiguration of the person. The scriptural references to the passing away of the world need to be positively understood as the end of death and corruption that have put creation in travail, but not as the demise of the world that God loved so much and redeemed through Christ. "Heaven and earth will pass away" as Christ said (Mt. 24:35) – "but in the sense that they will pass into a more glorious state."[1203]

Besides the exposition of themes of creation theology, as part of the construction of a liturgical cosmology according to the Ethiopian liturgical tradition, the thesis has

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[1201] See for example *Enoch,* ed. Olson, 27.
[1202] See *Mäṣəḥafä Qəddase Anədəmta* [Commentary on the Book of Liturgy] 28.
[1203] Elizabeth Theokritoff, *Living in God's Creation: Orthodox Perspectives on Ecology* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2009) 37.

discussed the place given to creation in the sacramental praxis of this tradition. Particularly, the third chapter of the thesis has demonstrated that due to its scriptural and apostolic roots, creation motifs are prevalent in the Ethiopian liturgy. The liturgical hymnaries comprise various biblical songs of creation. The *Mäṣəḥafä Mə'əraf* – መጽሐፈ ምዕራፍ [Hymnary] indicates that the cosmic liturgy of Psalm 148 and the canticle of the three Jewish youth (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) are parts of the daily matins [*Səbəḥatä Nägəh Zä-zäwätər* – ስብሐተ ነግህ ዘዘወትር].[1204] The *Apostolic Tradition*, which consists of a blessing ritual over the fruits of creation,[1205] is given a prominent place in the Ethiopian liturgy. The anaphora of the *Apostolic Tradition* has been expanded and used as the principal anaphora of the EOTC, and maintaining the blessing ritual of this liturgical text the EOTC blesses the fruits of the earth (wheat and grapes/raisins) on the first day of its liturgical year. Furthermore, the eucharistic prayers of the early church, known for their creation themes, such as the anaphora of St. Mark, of St. James the brother of the Lord, and that of St. Basil have been in use in the EOTC for centuries.

One explicit example for the celebration of creation in the Ethiopian liturgy is the formation of a lectionary based on the natural cycle of the four Ethiopian seasons. The lectionary signifies the Ethiopian traditional fathers' creative and original work of making creation the subject of liturgical thanksgiving for God's providence. Showing immense gratefulness for God's unfailing sustenance, the fathers diligently selected the biblical references that suit the natural events of the seasons. For instance, during the Ethiopian Winter (Rainy Season), songs of the Psalter such as God "covers the heavens with clouds; prepares rain for the earth, and makes grass grow on the hills" (Ps. 147: 8)

[1204] See "*Səbəḥatä Nägəh Zä-zäwätər* [Daily Matins]," *Mə'əraf* [Hymnary] 47-48.
[1205] See *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, trans. Easton, 52.

and "You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water...You water its furrows abundantly settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth" (Ps. 65: 9-10) are chanted.[1206] Moreover, a few Sundays of the Rainy Season are named after the events that characterize the season: cloud, lightning, thunder, sea, rivers, and dew.[1207]

Consonant with the liturgy of the early church, the Ethiopian Divine Liturgy (*Qəddase*) serves as a celebration of creation. Without overlooking the paschal mystery, which is the crux of the eucharistic liturgy, the Ethiopian *Qəddase* exhibits dignity for creation as it repeatedly beseeches divine blessing over the cosmic order: heaven, earth, the air, rain, fruits, humans, and animals.[1208] The elaborate *anamnēsis* of creation is also elegantly expressed in various anaphoras of the EOTC. Articulating the ubiquitousness of God's majesty over creation, the anaphoras offer adoration to God as the maker of creation whose exquisite beauty evokes a great sense of wonder.[1209] Moreover, as the Ethiopian anaphoras illustrate that God is hallowed by "the fiery cherubim and the seraphim dressed in light"[1210] as well as by "[h]eaven and earth together with all their worlds, sea and rivers, and all things that are in them,"[1211] the cosmology they offer is an all-encompassing cosmology.

Creation is offered back to God through the sacramental praxis of the church. The eucharistic bread offered on the paten represents all of God's creation. The priest's

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[1206] *Mäṣəḥafä Gəṣawe* [Lectionary] 138.
[1207] Ibid, 138-142.
[1208] See for example the intercessory prayers in *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 27-30; 44-45.
[1209] See for example the prefaces of the anaphoras of John, Son of Thunder; the 318 Nicene Fathers; Epiphanius; and John Chrysostom in *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 89, 123-124, 185-189, and 198-200.
[1210] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 188, no. 27.
[1211] Ibid, 123, no. 15.

gesture of lifting up the eucharistic bread in the Divine Liturgy[1212] signifies the lifting up of the whole of creation to God. By offering back what originally belongs to God, the church regards creation as a sign of the love of God. This means that in the sacramental rites, the church gives the world back to God in thanksgiving – *eucharistia*. Furthermore, extending beyond the liturgical assembly of the faithful, the liturgy of the church is united to the heavenly liturgy, and gathers up all creation through the eucharistic elements that represent created matter. Thus, the liturgy of the church is the song of all of creation – it is a cosmic liturgy.

In addition to the eucharistic liturgy, the sacramental representation of creation is also evident in other rituals of the EOTC. In the Ethiopian feast of *Ṭəmqät* – ጥምቀት [Epiphany] the waters of the ponds are blessed, signifying the sanctification of the entire material creation through the baptism of Christ. The church's use of water for this feast denotes the sacredness of the created matter and its potential to be used sacramentally as a vessel of divine grace. Similarly we also find a sacramental appropriation of wood and plants in the EOTC's liturgical celebration of the feast of the Cross, known as *Dämära* – ደመራ. The *Dämära* is prepared from wood, plants and seasonal lilies, and when the priests bless the *Dämära* towards the four corners using a processional Cross, the blessing sanctifies the whole earth and the earthly creatures.

According to the Ethiopian tradition, the church building itself represents the entire cosmos. A typical Orthodox Church building with its beautiful iconography is an icon of the transfigured creation. Though the church is built on earth it is oriented to heaven. In the Ethiopian liturgical tradition, the *Qəddəstä Qəddusan* – ቅድስተ ቅዱሳን [Holy

[1212] Ibid, 59, no. 39.

of Holies or *Sancta Sanctorum*][1213] of the church building symbolizes heaven, whereas the nave (*Qəddəst* – ቅድስት) symbolizes the earth. The sacred liturgical space represents the whole of creation, making the church a microcosm that links the heavenly and earthly realities. This concept is reflected in the Ethiopian chant-book, which typifies the church by a grapevine [*Ḥärägä Wåyən* – ሐረገ ወይን] whose "roots are under the earth whereas its branches reach heaven."[1214]

The aforementioned themes of the cosmology of the Ethiopian liturgical tradition entail a liturgical ethos in our ecological consciousness. By recapitulating creation, Christ, the *Logos* incarnate, has revealed the sacredness of creation and the goal of creation, which is transfiguration. Through his redemptive act, Christ gathered the entire creation that had been disintegrated by human sin. While the first Adam whom God assigned as the "prince over all creatures" so as "to rule them in righteousness and truth"[1215] failed to bring creation into communion with its Creator, the second Adam (Christ) came to the world to transform creation and return it back to its original destiny.

In its liturgy, the church uses the products of nature to offer thanksgiving, which is a modest act of referring creation back to its Creator. By doing so, the church transforms matter into being a means of communion with God and a channel of divine grace. This praxis signifies the sacramentality of creation, and encourages us to refrain from exploiting creation for material progress.[1216] The liturgical ethos of the church underlines an ecological asceticism, which opposes the current ecological crisis and the exploitation of creation.

[1213] Di Salvo "The Typology of Ethiopian Churches,"67.
[1214] See "Ziq Zä-zämänä Ṣəge [Flower Season Hymn]," *Mäṣəḥafä Ziq Wamazmur* [Festive Hymnary] 39.
[1215] *Ethiopian Liturgy*, trans. Daoud, 10, no. 23.
[1216] Tamara Grdzelidze, "Creation and Ecology: How Does the Orthodox Church Respond to Ecological Problems?" *Ecumenical Review,* 54/3 (2002) 215.

The sacramental perspective to creation also reminds us that we have a priestly vocation which requires more than simply preserving creation.[1217] As priests of creation, we are called to elevate creation to its full communion with the Creator. Through our physical existence, we relate to the material world, but as we move to our final destiny through *theōsis* (deification), we carry the world with ourselves. Encouraging us to be the priests of creation, the church seeks the liberation of the cosmos whose ultimate transfiguration will be realized at the *parousia*. Meanwhile the church awaits, chanting *Maranatha*: O Lord, come.

[1217] Ibid.

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