



Aethiopica 28 (2025)

International Journal of Ethiopian and
Eritrean Studies

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Dissertation Abstracts

Malkəʾa Gubāʾe *Manuscripts and the Development of Malkəʾ Anthologies*

Aethiopica 28 (2025), 313–315

ISSN: 1430-1938; eISSN: 2194-4024

Edited in the Asien-Afrika-Institut
Hiob-Ludolf-Zentrum für Äthiopistik
der Universität Hamburg
Abteilung für Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik

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placed on a spectrum of literality regarding their consistency of rendering, semantic equivalence and quantitative additions. This analysis allows us to state that the First Recension A is more literal than the First Recension B in the area of consistency of rendering, while the First Recension B is more literal than the First Recension A in the areas of semantic equivalence and quantitative additions. This analysis also unearthed textual evidence for a common origin of the text of the First Recensions A and B. I propose that the First Recension A was used, in addition to Copto-Arabic manuscripts, by the translator(s) of the First Recension B.

The dissertation's appendices, which are also digitally accessible, make the index of commemorations, collation tables and all XML records created in its course available for further research.

This dissertation illustrates the great potential that studying translated literature on its own terms has to offer. In addition, it highlights how we must take translators seriously as creative intellectuals if we hope to understand better the development of Ethiopic literature.

AUGUSTINE DICKINSON, *Malkə'a Gubā'e Manuscripts and the Development of Malkə' Anthologies*, PhD Dissertation in Ethiopian Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Hamburg, defended on 4 July 2025.

Long overdue, this dissertation marks the first systematic survey of available manuscript and print anthologies and collections of *malkə'* and related Gə'əz poetry. While nearly all studies of the genre to date have focused on selected case studies with little concern for chronology or manuscript evidence, the primary goal of this dissertation was to assemble the largest possible corpus of manuscripts with due consideration given to issues of dating, circulation, and para- and metatexts.

The introduction (Chapter 1), after laying out the framework of the dissertation, presents critical reviews of the relevant secondary literature starting from Ludolf (1691) to the present. This is followed by a section on terminology which includes some terms that have not previously been defined in scholarship (such as *tarafa malkə'* and *māsgabbiyā*), some of which have not been sufficiently defined (like *nagś* and *ārke*), and others which were prudent to define within the context of the dissertation (particularly *malkə'*, *quasi-malkə'*, and *malkə'*-adjacent poetry). Here also are treated the various attested titles given to anthologies (*malkə'a gubā'e*, *gubā'e malkə'*, *mazgaba malkə'*, *maṣḥafa malkə'*, and *maṣḥafa gubā'e*).

Chapter 2 describes the corpora used in the study and the selection criteria. With respect to manuscripts, the dissertation focused on anthologies, defined as

manuscripts containing four or more *malkəʾ*/quasi-*malkəʾ* representing two or more categories of subjects, and collections, defined as manuscripts containing predominantly *malkəʾ*/quasi-*malkəʾ* with three or more sharing a common theme. In total the manuscript corpus comprised 96 manuscripts: 79 anthologies, 12 collections, and 5 exceptional manuscripts included due to their early date (fifteenth/sixteenth century). More than half of the manuscript corpus is further subdivided into nine groups based on patterns of circulation and use. A secondary corpus of 11 printed books (10 anthologies and 1 collection) was also used to show how these books interact with the manuscript tradition, maintaining some aspects while innovating on or disregarding others.

Deviating slightly from the manuscriptological focus, Chapter 3 focuses on the genre of *malkəʾ* itself, highlighting valuable new insights gleaned from the manuscript corpus outlined in the previous chapter. The chapter begins with an historical overview of the genre divided into four periods: (1) the early period (fifteenth–early sixteenth century); (2) the intermediate period (early sixteenth–mid-seventeenth century); (3) the Gondarine period (mid-seventeenth–mid-eighteenth century); and (4) the late period (mid-eighteenth century–present). For each period, the extant manuscript evidence is discussed as well as textual developments and changes. The section on the early period also features a discussion on the origins of *malkəʾ*, situating it as a development from *nagsʾ* poetry by presenting strong evidence linking the two genres. Additionally, it suggests that a mnemonic function underlies its characteristic arrangement (i.e., the body as a ‘memory palace’). The historical overview of the genre is followed by extended discussions on authorship and known authors of poems, the use of titles and (often more precisely) labels, and briefly on the liturgical use of *malkəʾ*.

The selection and arrangement of texts within anthologies and collections is dealt with in Chapter 4. General remarks concerning the selection of contents are made with extra attention given to the inclusion of local saints. Additionally, the two primary methods of arrangement, (1) by the category of the subject and (2) by the day of the month, are explained in detail alongside other methods (by day of the year and alphabetically) which are only rarely attested.

Chapter 5 is devoted to the presence and use of *mise-en-texte* and other features in anthologies and collections. In full these are: (1) layout; (2) rubrication; (3) punctuation; (4) musical notation; (5) borders; (6) numbering and counting; (7) titles, names, and dates; (8) pagination; (9) annotations; (10) illuminations; (11) lists; and (12) corrections and insertions. Especially interesting are the use of rubrication and punctuation to mark structures in the verse (i.e., line and stanza breaks), the numbering and counting of stanzas as a means of verifying completeness, and the inclusion of titles, names, and dates in the margins as finding and reference aids. A thorough discussion concerning a list of titles found in six manuscripts is especially notable, being the only sufficient treatment of these valuable

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metatexts so far. Aspects of the lists' transmission (that they derive from a common original and are not necessarily connected to their manuscripts' production) and purpose (that they are not tables of contents or indices) are discussed and careful identifications of the contents listed are given in a convenient table.

The conclusion (Chapter 6) summarizes briefly the key findings of the dissertation and describes future avenues of research. Data collected in the course of the study are presented in two appendices. The first is an exhaustive list of extant *malkə*', quasi-*malkə*', and adjacent poetry, all of which were simultaneously encoded in TEI XML and linked to the *Clavis aethiopica* (also with a specialized online interface: <https://MalkeaGubae.com>). The second consists of more detailed descriptions of selected anthology manuscripts showing more clearly aspects of selection and (re-)arrangement.

MARTA CAMILLA WRIGHT, *Saved and Healed: Illness, Illness Causation and Healing among Ethiopian Orthodox Christians at Holy Water Sites in Addis Ababa*, PhD Dissertation in Religious Studies, Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion, Faculty of Humanities at University of Bergen, defended on 12 May 2023.

The overarching theme of this dissertation is the intertwined roles of religion and health. The dissertation is a qualitative investigation into illness, illness causation, and healing in the context of religion. The investigation is carried out by studying holy water healing practices among Ethiopian Orthodox Christians at holy water sites in contemporary Addis Abäba. Holy water sites are particularly suited for investigating this theme, as they are both spaces for religious veneration and spaces for handling *bäššata* ('illness').

The dissertation is comprised of ten chapters: three introductory chapters, six ethnographic chapters, and a concluding discussion. The field research was carried out for one year and employed several methods in combination: free listing method, participant observation, and interviews. Thirty different holy water sites in Addis Abäba were visited, out of a total of approximately 100–150. More specifically, twelve holy water sites were visited once, fourteen were visited two to five times, three were visited more than five times, and one site was visited twenty times. The empirical material consists of a number of interviews carried out with 44 informants, and in addition informal conversations, a free-list survey, and 58 miracle stories published locally by private persons or associations of people who support one particular holy water site. This broad ethnography forms the basis for a wide exploration of the main research question: how is religion embedded in the understanding of illness, illness causation, and in practices of healing? And