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**Article**

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## Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.
- ÄthFor* Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995.
- AethFor* Aethiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011; 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG, *ibid.*, 2011f.; 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI, *ibid.*, 2012ff.
- AION* *Annali dell'Università degli studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"*, Napoli: Università di Napoli "L'Orientale" (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.
- BSOAS* *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, London 1917ff.
- CSCO* *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, 1903ff.
- EAE* S. UHLIG (ed.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003; II: D–Ha, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005; III: He–N, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007; (in cooperation with A. BAUSI), IV: O–X, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010; A. BAUSI (ed. in cooperation with S. UHLIG), V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014.
- EFAH* Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Orient-Abteilung, Epigraphische Forschungen auf der Arabischen Halbinsel, herausgegeben im Auftrag des Instituts von NORBERT NEBES.
- EMML* Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
- IJAHS* *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Boston, MA – New York 1968ff.
- JAH* *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge 1960ff.
- JES* *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
- JSS* *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Manchester 1956ff.
- NEASt* *Northeast African Studies*, East Lansing, MI 1979ff.
- OrChr* *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig – Roma – Wiesbaden 1901ff.
- OrChrP* *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, Roma 1935ff.
- PICES 15* S. UHLIG – M. BULAKH – D. NOSNITSIN – T. RAVE (eds.) 2005, *Proceedings of the XV<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Hamburg July 20–25, 2003* = *AethFor* 65, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- PICES 16* H. ASPEN – BIRHANU TEFERRA – SHIFERAW BEKELE – S. EGE (eds.) 2010, *Research in Ethiopian Studies: Selected papers of the 16<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Trondheim July 2007* = *AethFor* 72, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- PO* *Patrologia Orientalis*, 1903ff.
- RIÉ* É. BERNAND – A. J. DREWES – R. SCHNEIDER 1991, *Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite*, I: *Les documents*, II: *Les planches*, Paris: [Académie des inscriptions et belle-lettres] Diffusion de Boccard.
- RSE* *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma 1941–1981, Roma – Napoli 1983ff.
- SAe* *Scriptores Aethiopici*.
- ZDMG* *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig – Wiesbaden – Stuttgart 1847ff.

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# Colophonic Reflections on *Dārsanä Şayon* and *Kəbrä Nägäst*<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

*Dārsanä Şayon* (henceforth *DŞ*) is a homiletical text on the glory of the Ark of the Covenant which preserves prominent biblical accounts of the Ark. The text plainly states that the Ark was present in Jerusalem until the destruction of the first Temple. It goes on to describe the concealment of the Ark with the two Tablets when the Chaldeans overran Israel, and how the temple vessels were captured. According to the text itself, the original composer of the homily was an illiterate whose vocation was a shepherd.<sup>2</sup>

The central theme of *DŞ* is the glorification of the Ark of the Covenant. It equates St. Mary to the heavenly Zion, and the text metaphorically expresses Virgin Mary as Zion. Consequently, it can be considered one of the best sources of Mariology.<sup>3</sup>

To date, *DŞ* has been little studied. Recently, however, it has been introduced, edited, and translated into English with annotations by the author of this article.<sup>4</sup> The text itself is divided into 139 sections, with every section further subdivided into verses for easy reference. The edition is based on the Neo-Lachmannian<sup>5</sup> method after consulting ten manuscripts. These include: Aksum Zion Cathedral [one manuscript], Ṭana monasteries (Däbrä Maryam [one manuscript] and Ṭana Qirqos [two texts: one unpublished manuscript and one printed text<sup>6</sup>]), Baḥar Dar (Kota Maryam [one manuscript]), Fogära, Bäbbäks Däbrä Gännät Maryam [one manuscript], Däbrä Tabor (Dära) Şöme Maryam [one manuscript], Addis Abäba, Ĕntotto St. Mary Church [one manuscript], and Addis Abäba, National Archives and Library

<sup>1</sup> A draft version of this article was read at the 17<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, November 2–5, 2009, in Addis Ababa. I would like to thank Alessandro Bausi and Ted Erho for their helpful comments.

<sup>2</sup> The reading goes: አንሰ ፡ ኢተምህርኩ ፡ መጻሕፍተ ፡ በከመ ፡ ጳውሎስ ፡ እምነበ ፡ ገማልያል ። አንሰ ፡ ኖላዌ ፡ አባግዕ ፡ ወአባሌ ። ወንዑስ ፡ እምኩሉሙ ፡ አኃው ። ወምግባርዮኒ ፡ ዙጋጢአት ፡ ነዊኅ ፡ ከመ ፡ አርዘ ፡ ሊባኖስ ። “As for me, nevertheless, I did not learn the Scriptures like Paul from Gamaliel. I am a shepherd of sheep and goats and I am the least among all the brothers, and my sinful deeds are as large as a Lebanese cedar” [*DŞ* § 99 (AMSALU TEFERA 2011a)].

<sup>3</sup> Cf. AMSALU TEFERA 2012: 71–95.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. AMSALU TEFERA 2011a.

<sup>5</sup> For this method, see especially TIMPANARO 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Published by Ṭana Qirqos Monastery in 1998 E.C.; a description will be given in the next section.

Agency (NALA) [two manuscripts]<sup>7</sup>. Three of these (viz. Aksum, Ǝnṭoṭṭo, and published text of Ṭana) will be discussed in more detail in this article. In total, *DŞ* has four textual arrangements:

- 1) As a *composite* text with *Kəbrä Nəgəst* (henceforth *KN*) – Aksum (*DŞ* 1r–15v and *KN* 15v–172v); Ǝnṭoṭṭo (*DŞ* 1r–24v and *KN* 25r–231v); and printed text of Ṭana Qirqos (*DŞ* pp. 1–28 and *KN* pp. 28–264);
- 2) As a *miscellany* text in *Dərsanä Maryam* – Şəme Maryam (EMML 8979 [ff. 137r–146r]); Ṭana Qirqos (EMML 8713 [ff. 1r–8v]); and *Däbrä Maryam* (Ṭānāsee 72 [ff. 25r–42v])<sup>8</sup>;
- 3) As a *miscellany* text together with *KN* = *Tarikä Nəgəst* – NL 630 (*KN* ff. 4r–43r; *DŞ* ff. 44r–59v);
- 4) As an *independent* text – NL 273 (ff. 1r–39v); Bābbäks *Däbrä Gännät* (EMML 8823 [ff. 1r–20r]); and Kota Maryam (EMML 8429 [ff. 1r–18r]).<sup>9</sup>

*KN* glorifies the monarchical line of Ethiopia and associates Ethiopia with the Judeo-Christian tradition. It strongly promotes the blood relation of the Ethiopian kings with Israel, established via the birth of Mənilək I from King Solomon and Queen of Sheba.

On the order of Yaʿəbikä Ǝgziʿə, *KN* was translated from Arabic into Ethiopic by Yəşhaq, *nəburä əd* of Aksum, about 1321 A.D.<sup>10</sup> Individuals who laboured in the work with *nəburä əd* Yəşhaq included Yəmhārännä Ab, Ǝzəzbä Krəstos, Ǝndryas, Filpos, and Mähari Ab, each of whom is listed and acknowledged by Yəşhaq<sup>11</sup>. The translation into Gəʿəz was done by

<sup>7</sup> For a description of all ten manuscripts, see AMSALU TEFERA 2011a: 107–124 = 111–128.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. HAMMERSCHMIDT 1977: 77–82.

<sup>9</sup> For a lengthier discussion on the textual arrangements of *DŞ*, cf. AMSALU TEFERA 2011a: 129–135 and AMSALU TEFERA 2011b: 141–166 = 143f.; for the universal trends of composite and miscellany texts, cf. GUMBERT 2004: 17–42.

<sup>10</sup> SHAHID (1976: 133–178) argues that *KN* must have been composed during the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. He claims: “If the *KN* were a legend composed to glorify the 14<sup>th</sup> century monarchy, silence on these subjects [Islam, Gudit and the Solomonic rulers] would be, to say the least strange”. MUNRO-HAY (2006: 43–58) counters Shahid’s position by arguing that the mention of Kaleb and his sons cannot be the sole reason to support a 6<sup>th</sup> century date for *KN* because there is no other historical record which corroborated this account. Currently, 1321 is considered as the latest possible date of composition for *KN* (cf. MARRASSINI 2008: 798–810, esp. 800f.). According to GETATCHEW HAILE (2009: 127–34, at 127) *KN* was not merely translated from Arabic, but instead adapted into Gəʿəz.

<sup>11</sup> *KN* states: ለገብርክሙ ፡ ይስሐቅ ፡ ጸልዩ ፡ ወለእለ ፡ ጸመወ ፡ ምስሌዩ ፡ በፀአተ ፡ ሣቲ ፡ መጽሐፍ ፡ እስመ ፡ ተመንደብነ ፡ ፈድፋድ ፡ አነ ፡ ወይምሀረነ ፡ አብ ፡ ወሕዝበ ፡ ክርስቶስ ፡ ወእንድርዖስ ፡ ወፊልእስ ፡ ወመሐሪ ፡ አብ ። “Pray for your servant Yəşhaq and for those who labored with me for the completion of this book: I [myself], Yəmhārännä Ab, Ǝzəzbä Krəstos, Ǝndryas, Filpos and Mähari Ab, because we suffered much” (text, BEZOLD 1905: 172b with author’s translation).

Abal<sup>c</sup>əz and Abälfarag, but the origin of this duo is unknown.<sup>12</sup> *KN* is divided into 117 chapters (parts).

*KN* is very significant in the political, religious and social life of Ethiopia. Irrespective of the original purpose of its composers, it provided the legal foundation for both the Solomonic monarchy's claim to political power and the institution of divine kingship at least from the 14<sup>th</sup> century until 1974. In this function, *KN* was the ultimate authority and largely uncontested. Carl Bezold published an *editio principis* and German translation of *KN* in 1905, and since then it has remained one of the most studied and translated texts in various European languages.<sup>13</sup>

As noted above, *DŞ* and *KN* are independent texts. However, both discuss the glory and story of the Ark of the Covenant, which is presented as a central theme.<sup>14</sup> Each preserves firsthand information on the Ark of the Covenant and the mighty deeds that it performed. Although four kinds of textual arrangements exist, three manuscripts merge the independent texts into a conflated one. We can assume that the reason for this was to produce one comprehensive work exalting the Ark of the Covenant. As a result, a unique text consisting of *DŞ* (as an introduction) and *KN* (as a main text) has been created, for even though the text combines *DŞ* and *KN* together, the title is given as *Dərsanä Şəyon*. Three manuscripts additionally supply a long colophon after the famous colophon of *KN* 117, which shall be presented in the last section of this article.

## 2. Description

Here is a brief description of the three manuscripts. For brevity we shall see the *incipit* and *desinit* of *DŞ*<sup>15</sup> in this section.

<sup>12</sup> Grierson and MUNRO-HAY, (1999: 272) remark on Abälfäräg (they transliterate his name *Abalfarog*) that "... Abalfarog is clearly the great Syrian polymath, Abu'l-Faraj, who was also known as Bar Hebraeus ..."; cf. also MUNRO-HAY 2006: 83.

<sup>13</sup> For the translations of *KN* into different languages, cf. GETATCHEW HAILE 2009: 127–134 and AMSALU TEFERA 2009. HUBBARD (1956) discusses the literary sources of *KN*. Recent studies on *KN* include KROPP 1996: 108–115; Beylot 2004: 74–83; BOWERSOCK 2008: 383–393; TEDROS ABRAHA 2009: 451–457; BAUSI 2010: 241–254; DEBIÉ 2010: 255–278. BAUSI (2012: 17–19) lists 47 works related to editions, translations and contributions of *KN*.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. AMSALU TEFERA 2011b: 144.

<sup>15</sup> The description of the second section on *KN* is not included here.

2.1 Aksum manuscript<sup>16</sup> = [A]

- Place: Treasury [*ṗəqa bet*] of Aksum Zion Cathedral, under *Şəllat bet*; material: vellum; size: 28 x 36.5 cm; foliation: viii+172+viiff.; columns: three; no. of lines: 22; language: Gəʿəz; date: 25<sup>th</sup> of Ṥəqəmt 1925 *‘Amätä Məḥrät* ‘Year of Mercy’ (= November 4, 1932); there are no sectional divisions in the first 21 folia (up to the text corresponding to chapter 14 of *KN*), but from folia 22 onwards (sections 15–117), the manuscript contains the regular sections and titles of *KN*. For brevity *incipit* and *desinit* of *DŞ* is given below.
- Incipit: በስመ ፡ አብ ፡ ወወልድ ፡ ወመንፈስ ፡ ቅዱስ ፡ ፩ ፡ አምላክ ፡ በስመ ፡ ክስብኤል ፡ ወቤቃ ፡ ወአካዕ ፡ ። ዝ ፡ ውእቱ ፡ ምስጢር ፡ ኅቡዕ ፡ በታዕካ ፡ ሰማይ ፡ ልኩዕ ፡ ። ዘኢይትአመር ፡ ክዋኔሁ ፡ በኅሊና ፡ መላእክት ፡ ወሰብእ ፡ ዘኢይትወቀር ፡ በጉድብ ፡ ዕልዋን ፡ ወዘኢይትመዋዕ ፡ ለጸብእ ፡ ጌርጌላሁ ፡ ለንጳስ ፡ ወደብተራሁ ፡ ሥሩዕ ፡ ... “In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. In the name of *Kəsbʿel*, *Beqa* and *Akaʿ*. This is a concealed secret of the throne of heaven which is fastened. The essence of whom is not known by either the minds of angels or men. He is not hewn by the axe of the wicked, and is not defeated in war. His wheel is a [guiding] lamp and His tabernacle is [well] ordered ...”
- Desinit ... ለዘአስተሐመዎ ፡ ወተርጎሞ ፡ ለዘኒ ፡ ጸሐፎ ፡ ወአጽሐፎ ፡ ለዝንቱ ፡ ድርሳን ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ይምሐሮ ፡ በዕለተ ፡ ደይን ፡ ምስለ ፡ ኩሎሙ ፡ ውሉደ ፡ አክሱም ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ ዘኮነ ፡ ትውክልቶሙ ፡ በጽዮን ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ ። “... For the one who has devoted much effort, translated it and also for he who wrote this homily and caused it to be written, let the Lord give him mercy in the day of the judgment, together with all the children of Aksum, the Christians, whose pride is upon Zion, forever and ever”.

Varia:

- (*f. 2v*) at the top: ጸሎታ ፡ ወበረከታ ፡ ለጽዮን ፡ ገበዘ ፡ አክሱም ፡ የሃሉ ፡ ምስለ ፡ ገብራ ፡ ወልደ ፡ ጊዮርጊስ ፡ ወምስለ ፡ ዓመታ ፡ (sic) ወለተ ፡ ጸድቅ ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ አሜን ፡ ። ። ። “Let the prayer and blessings of Zion, the cathedral of Aksum, be with her servant *Wäldä Giyorgis* and maid *Wälättä Şadəq*, forever and ever, Amen”.
- (*f. 172r*) ዝንቱ ፡ መጽሐፍ ፡ ተፈጸመ ፡ ጽፋቱ (sic) አመ ፡ ጅወጅ ፡ ለጥቅምት ፡ ወተወዋነ ፡ አመ ፡ ፫ ፡ ለየካቲት ፡ ወተፈጸመ ፡ በዘመነ ፡ ማቴዎስ ፡ ወንጌላዊ ፡ በ፲ ወ፱፻፳ ወጅ ፡ ዓመተ ፡ ምሕረት ፡ ወይቤ ፡ ጸሐፊሁ ፡ ገብረ ፡ ሥላሴ ፡ ኃጥእ ፡ በምግባሩ ፡ ወርቱእ ፡ በሃይማኖቱ ፡ ስብሐት ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር ፡ ለዘአፈጸመኒ ፡ ሳተ ፡

<sup>16</sup> This manuscript is not the only version of *DŞ* at Aksum, but it is the only copy of the text that it has been possible to access thus far.

መጽሐፈ ፡ በብዝሃ ፡ ምሕረቱ ፡ ወበኃይለ ፡ ረድኤቱ ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ አሜን ።  
“The writing of this book was completed on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Ṭəqəmt and begun on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Yäkkatit. It was completed in the year of Matthew the evangelist, 1925 E.C. The scribe of this [book], Gäbrä Šəllase, who was sinful in his deeds and orthodox in his faith, says ‘Glory be to the Lord who caused me to complete this book via His excessive Mercy and the power of His help, forever and ever, Amen’”.

- (f. 172v) ዝንቱ ፡ መጽሐፍ ፡ ዘክቡር ፡ ንቡረ ፡ እድ ፡ አረጋይ ፡ ዘስመ ፡ ጥምቀቱ ፡ ወልደ ፡ ጊዮርጊስ ፡ ወስመ ፡ ብእሲቱ ፡ ወለተ ፡ ጻድቅ ። ወአጽሐፎ ፡ በ፲ወ፵ ፡ ብሩር ፡ ወወሀባ ፡ ለጽዮን ፡ ሰማያዊት ፡ ታቦተ ፡ ሕጉ ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር ፡ ከመ ፡ ትኩሩ ፡ ለመድኃኒተ ፡ ሥጋ ፡ ወነፍስ ። ዘሠረቆ ፡ (sic) ወዘፈረቆ ፡ ይኩን ፡ ውጉዘ ፡ በሥልጣነ ፡ ጴጥሮስ ፡ ወጳውሎስ ። “This book belongs to the honorable nəburä əd Arägay, whose baptismal name is Wäldä Giyorgis and wife’s name is Wälättä Šadəq. He caused it to be written with 140 *bərr* and donated it to the heavenly Zion the Ark Law of the Lord in order for her to become medicine of flesh and soul. The one who steals and erases, let him be condemned by the authority [power] of Peter and Paul”.

2.2 *Enṭotto* manuscript = [B]

- Place: *Enṭotto* St. Mary Church, Addis Ababa; material: paper; size: 20 x 30 cm; foliation: 231ff.; columns: two, with parallel Gəʿəz and Amharic; number of lines: 27–30; not dated, but likely 20<sup>th</sup> century A.D.; sections: 117.
- *Incipit*: በስመ ፡ አብ ፡ ወወልድ ፡ ወመንፈስ ፡ ቅዱስ ፡ ፩ ፡ አምላክ ፡ በስመ ፡ ክስብኤል ፡ ወቤቃ ፡ አካዕ ። ዝ ፡ ውእቱ ፡ ምስጢር ፡ ኅቡዕ ፡ በታዕካ ፡ ሰማይ ፡ ልኩዕ ። ዘኢይተአመር ፡ (sic) ክዋኔሁ ፡ ኅሊና ፡ መላእክት ፡ ወሰብእ ፡ ዘኢይትወቀር ፡ በጉድበ ፡ ዕልዋን ፡ ወዘኢይትመዋዕ ፡ ለጸብእ ። ... “In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. In the name of *Kəsbʾel*, *Beqa* and *Akaʿ*. This is a concealed secret of the throne of heaven which is fastened. The essence of whom is not known by either the minds of angels or men. He is not hewn by the axe of the wicked, and is not defeated in war ...”
- *Desinit*: ... ለዘአስተሐመሞ ፡ ወለዘተርጎሞ ፡ ለዘኒ ፡ ጸሐፎ ፡ ወለዘአጽሐፎ ፡ ለዝንቱ ፡ ድርሳን ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ይምሐሮ ፡ በዕለተ ፡ ደይን ፡ ምስለ ፡ ኩሎሙ ፡ ውሉደ ፡ አክሱም ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ ዘኮነ ፡ ትውክልቶሙ ፡ በጽዮን ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ። “... For the one who has devoted much effort, translated it, and also for he who wrote this homily, and who caused it to be written, let the Lord give him mercy in the day of the judgment, together with all the children of Aksum, the Christians, whose pride is upon Zion, forever and ever”.

**Varia:**

- **ወሠርዓ ፡ ቀኑርባነ ፡ አቡነ ፡ ሰላማ ፡ ከላቱ ፡ ብርሃን ፡ ወመጠዎሙ ፡ ለነገሥት ፡ ወለሕዝብ ፡ በሰላም ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ አሜን ።** (*f.* 231*v*) “... And our father Sälama, revealer of light, made the Communion and gave it to the kings [Abrəha and Aṣbəha] and to the people with the peace of the Lord, Amen”.

**2.3 Printed Ṭana Text = [P]**

- Publisher: *Ṭana Qirqos* Communal Monastery (the source manuscript is not mentioned); pages: 286; parallel Gəʿəz and Amharic; date: *Hədar* 1998 E.C. [November 2005 A.D.]; there are three major sections (described below): i) *DŞ* = pp. 1–28, and *KN* = pp. 28–264, ii) *Täʾammərə Şəyon* = pp. 265–280, iii) *Mälkäʾa Şəyon* = pp. 281–286.

**2.3.1 Dərsanä Şəyon and Kəbrä Nägäšt (pp. 1–264)**

- *DŞ* (pp. 1–28) and *KN* (pp. 28–264); Division: the text is divided into seven days (from Monday to Sunday) and seventy-five chapters; 36–37 lines per page.
- *Incipit*: በስመ ፡ አብ ፡ ወወልድ ፡ ወመንፈስ ፡ ቅዱስ ፡ ፩ ፡ አምላክ ፡ በስመ ፡ ክስብኤል ፡ ወቤቃ ፡ ወአካዕ ። ዝ ፡ ወእቱ ፡ ምስጢር ፡ ኅቡዕ ፡ በታዕካ ፡ ሰማይ ፡ ልኩዕ ። ዘኢይተአምር ፡ (sic) ክዋኔሁ ፡ በሕሊና ፡ መላእክት ፡ ወሰብእ ፡ ዘኢይትወቀር ፡ በጉድበ ፡ ዕልዋን ። ወዘኢይትመዋዕ ፡ ለጸብእ ። ጌርጌላሁ ፡ ለንጳስ ። ... “In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. In the name of *Kəsbʾel*, *Beqa* and *Akaʿə*. This is a concealed secret of the throne of heaven which is fastened. The essence of whom is not known by either the minds of angels or men. He is not hewn by the axe of the wicked, and is not defeated in war. His wheel is a [guiding] lamp ...”
- *Desinit*: ... ለዘአስተሐተሞ ፡ ወለዘተርጎሞ ፡ ለዘኒ ፡ ጸሐፎ ፡ ወለዘአጽሐፎ ፡ ወለዘሰምእ ፡ ለዝንቱ ፡ ድርሳን ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ይምሐሮ ፡ በዕለተ ፡ ደይን ፡ ምስለ ፡ ኩሎሙ ፡ ውሉደ ፡ ጥምቀት ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ ዘኮነ ፡ ትውክልቶሙ ፡ በጽዮን ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ። “... For the one who has caused it to be printed and translated; also for he who has written, caused it to be written and who he hears this homily, let the Lord give him mercy in the day of the judgment, together with all the children of baptism, the Christians, whose pride is upon Zion, forever and ever”.

**2.3.2 Täʾammərə Şəyon Maryam (pp. 265–280)**

- There are 8 miracles; parallel Gəʿəz and Amharic in two columns.
- *Incipit*: ተአምሪሃ ፡ ለጽዮን ፡ እምነ ፡ ሰማያዊት ። ጸሎታ ፡ ወበረከታ ፡ የሃሉ ፡ ምስለ ፡ ሕዝበ ፡ ክርስቲያን ። ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ አሜን ። በእንተ ፡ አምልኮ ፡ ጣዖት ፡ ስምዑ ፡ ንንግርክሙ ፡ ኩልክሙ ፡ ሕዝበ ፡ ክርስቲያን ። “... Miracle of our



Mother the Celestial Mary. Let her prayer and blessings be with Christian people, forever and ever, Amen. About idol worshipping: All Christian people listen so that we may tell you ...”

- *Desinit:* ... ወውእቱ ፡ ዲያቅን (sic) ፡ ሐዲጎ ፡ ንብረተ ፡ ዝንቱ ፡ ዓለም ፡ መነነ ፡ ወሐረየ ፡ ተቀንዮ ፡ ለቤተ ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ ዘእግዝእትነ ። ጸሎታ ፡ ወበረከታ ፡ የሃሉ ፡ ምስለ ፡ ዘሰማዕነ ፡ ዘንተ ፡ ተአምረ ፡ ጽዮን ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ አሜን ። “... And this deacon left by abandoning staying in this world and chose serving the church of Our Lady. Let her prayer and blessings be with those of us who heard this miracle of Zion forever and ever, Amen”.

### 2.3.3 *Mälkäʿa Şəyon* (pp. 281–286)

Gəʿəz alone in two columns.

*Incipit:* መልክአ ፡ ጽዮን ፡ ቅድስተ ፡ ቅዱሳን ፡ ወላዲተ ፡ አምላክ ።  
 ሰላም ፡ ለዝክረ ፡ ስምኪ ፡ እንተ ፡ ይጸዋዕ ፡ በወትር ፤  
 በአፈ ፡ መላእክት ፡ ወሰብእ ፡ በጊዜ ፡ ስብሐት ፡ ወክብር ፤  
 ጽዮን ፡ እምነ ፡ ንግሥተ ፡ ሰማይ ፡ ወምድር ፤  
 እለ ፡ ይክህዱ ፡ ድንግልናኪ ፡ ውሉደ ፡ ኩነኔ ፡ ወዓዕር ፤  
 ይጥፍኡ ፡ ወይማሰኑ ፡ እምኩሉ ፡ ሀገር ። ...

“Effigy of Zion, Holy of Holies, the Theotokos.  
 Salutation to the memory of your name, which is being called each day,  
 By the mouth of Angels and men in the time of praise and glory,  
 Our Mother Zion, the Queen of heaven and earth,  
 Those who deny your Virginity, sons of punishment and torment,  
 Let them perish and be destroyed from every country ...”

*Desinit:* ... ንዑ ፡ ንስግድ ፡ ለጽዮን ፡ ማርያም ፤  
 ንዑ ፡ ንስግድ ፡ ለመድኃኔ ፡ ዓለም ፡ እም ፤  
 ንዑ ፡ ንስግድ ፡ ለተስፋ ፡ ቀዳማዊ ፡ አዳም ፤  
 ንዑ ፡ ንስግድ ፡ በፍርሃት ፡ ለንግሥተ ፡ ሰማይ ፡ ወአርያም ፤  
 በይነ ፡ ዘይደልዋ ፡ ሰጊድ ፡ ለዓለም ፡ ወለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ አሜን ።  
 “... Behold let us bow to Zion Mary!  
 Behold let us bow to the Mother of the Savior of the World!  
 Behold let us bow to the hope of the first Adam!  
 Behold let us bow in fear of the Queen of Heaven and the Highest!  
 Because she deserves bowing forever and ever, Amen”.

### 3. Additional Colophon

All three manuscripts add the following lengthy colophon at the end of their text, i.e. after chapter 117 of the known *KN* text. It strongly states how Aksum is the safe haven for the Ark of the Covenant. The colophon also narrates the way in which the Christian faith was introduced into the land.

Text

[1] ስምዑ : እንግርክሙ : አ : ሕዝበ : ክርስቲያን : እግዚአብሔር : ይባርክሙ : ወያብርሀ : አዕይንተ : አልባቢክሙ : ለሰሚዓ : ተአምሪሃ : ለመቅደስ : እምነ : ጽዮን : ገበዘ : አክሱም ። እለ : ትናፍቁ<sup>1</sup> : ወትብሉ : ኢሀለወት : ጽላት : ዘሙሴ : በምድረ : አክሱም : ዓባይ : ሀገር : ማኅደረ : እግዚአብሔር : ዳግሚት : ኢየሩሳሌም : ፀወነ : ኩሉ : ዓለም : ሰሚአክሙ : እምዓላውያነ : ሃይማኖት ። አእምሩ : ወለብወ : ዘገብረ : እግዚአብሔር : ተአምረ : ወመንክረ : በመንግሥተ : ፀሐብርሐ : ወአጽብሐ<sup>2</sup> : ነገሥታተ : አክሱም : እንዘ : ጳጳስነ : አቡነ : ሰላማ : ከሣቴ : ብርሃን ።

[2] ወዜና : ምጽአታ : ለእምነ : ጽዮን : እምኢየሩሳሌም : ሀሎ : ጽሑፍ<sup>1</sup> : ውስተ : ታሪክ : ነገሥት ። ወአመ : ፲ሩ : ወ፫ : ዓመተ : መንግሥቶሙ : ፀሐብርሐ : ወአጽብሐ<sup>2</sup> : መጽአ : ጥምቀተ : ክርስትና : ውስተ : ኢትዮጵያ : በምድረ : አክሱም ። ወአጥመቁ : በስመ : ሥላሴ : ቅድስት ። ወሰበኩ : ለነ : ወንጌለ : መንግሥት ። ወእስከ : አሜሃ : ኢተዓውቀት : ቤተ : ክርስቲያን : በምድርነ ።

[3] ወዓርጉ : ደብረ : ፀሐብርሐ : ወአጽብሐ<sup>1</sup> : ወጸለዩ : መጠነ : ፩ዱ : ሱባዔ : በዘየሐንፁ : ቦቱ : መቅደሳ : ለእምነ : ጽዮን : ገበዘ : አክሱም ።

[4] ወወረደ : ሎሙ : እግዚእነ : ኢየሱስ : ክርስቶስ : ሎቱ : ስብሐት : ውስተ : ይእቲ : ደብር : ዘትሰመይ : መከዩደ<sup>1</sup> : እግዚእነ ። ወነጸርዎ : በክበበ : ትሱብእት ። ወተፈሥሐ : ጥቀ : ከመ : ተፈሥሁ<sup>2</sup> : ሙሴ : ወኤልያስ : ሶበ : ነጸርዎ : ቀዳሚ : መልዕልተ : ደብረ : ታቦር : ምስለ : ፫ቱ : ሐዋርያት : ለእግዚእነ ።

[5] ወይቤሎሙ : እግዚእነ : ፀሐብርሐ : ወአጽብሐ<sup>1</sup> : ናሁ : ሰማዕኩ : ጸሎተክሙ : ወስእለተክሙ : ሕንጹ : ቤተ : መቅደስ : በሰማ : ለእምየ : ማርያም : ገበዘ : አክሱም : ውስተ : ማዕከላ : ለሣቲ : ባሕር : በአምሳለ : ኢየሩሳሌም : ሰማያዊት ።

[6] ወዘንተ : ብሂሎ : አምጽአ : መሬተ : እምገነት : አመ : ፲ወ፫ : ለነሐሴ : ወነዝኃ : ውስቲታ<sup>1</sup> : ወኮነት : ምድረ : ዘሠናይ : አርአያሃ ። ወዘንተ : ብሂሎ : ተሠወረ : እምኔሆሙ : ወእሙንቲሰ : አምጽአ : ጠባብተ : ጽርዕ : በትእዛዘ : እግዚአብሔር : ወሐነጽዎ : ለመቅደስ : እምነ : ገበዘ : አክሱም ። ወአሠርገውዎ : በወርቅ : ንጹሕ : ወበዕንቀጥ : ክቡር : እስመ : ዘንመ : ሎሙ : ወርቅ : አሜሃ : መጠነ : ፯ : ዕለት : በፈቃደ : እግዚአብሔር : እስከ : ዮም : ሀሎ : ይትረከብ : በፍኖት : አሠረ : ወርቅ : ጎዳጥ ።

[1] <sup>1</sup> በልብክሙ : add. B | <sup>2</sup> አርባሐ : አጽባሐ : B.  
[2] <sup>1</sup> ጽሑፍ : BP | <sup>2</sup> ለአርብሐ : ወአብጽሐ : B.  
[3] <sup>1</sup> አርብሐ : ወአብጽሐ : B.  
[4] <sup>1</sup> መከደ : B | <sup>2</sup> om. P.  
[5] <sup>1</sup> ለአርብሐ : ወአብጽሐ : B.  
[6] <sup>1</sup> ውስቲታ : BP.

[7] ወሶበ ፡ ፈጸሙ ፡ ሐኒጾታ ፡ እሙንቱ ፡ ነገሥት ፡ ባረካ ፡ ወቀደሳ ፡ እግዚእን ። ወወ  
ሀቦሙ ፡ ኪዳነ ፡ ለዘገብረ ፡ ተዝካራ ፡ ወዘጌሠ ፡ ኀቤሃ ፡ ለእምነ ፡ ጽዮን ፡ ይርከብ ፡  
ክብረ ፡ ዐቢየ ፡ በመንግሥተ ፡ ሠማያት ። ወሠርዓ ፡ ቍርባነ ፡ አቡነ ፡ ሰላማ ፡ ከሳቴ ፡  
ብርሃን ፡ ወመጠዎሙ ፡ ለነገሥት ፡ ወለሕዝብ ፡ በሰላም ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ አሜን<sup>1</sup> ።

[8] ወበአክሱም ፡ በበዕለት ፡ ፫ ፡ ጊዜ ፡ ይወርድ ፡ መንፈስ ፡ ቅዱስ ፡ ፩ ፡ በጸሎተ ፡  
ዕግን ፡ ወ፪ ፡ ሶበ ፡ ይትነቡብ ፡ ተአምሪሃ ፡ ወ፫ ፡ በጊዜ ፡ ፡ ቍርባን ።

[9] ወበደብረ ፡ ዘይት ፡ ሐዋርያት ፡ ይቤልዎ ፡ ለእግዚእን ፡ አይቴ ፡ ትትረከብ ፡ በሰማ  
ኒት ፡ ዘመን ። ወይቤሎሙ ፡ በትንሣኤ ፡ በኢየሩሳሌም ፡ ወበሆሣዕና ፡ በአክሱም ፡  
ወበልደት ፡ በላሊበላ ፡ ኩለሂ ፡ በቤተ ፡ አርድእት ፡ እትረከብ ።

[10] ዘሐረሂ ፡ ወዘተሳለማ ፡ ለጽዮን ፡ ይረክብ ፡ ምሕረተ ፡ እስከ ፡ ፫፻ ፡ ትውልድ ፡  
በከመ ፡ ይቤ ፡ መጽሐፍ ፡ ወዘሰ ፡ ያፈቅረኒ ፡ ይረክብ ፡ ምሕረተ ፡ እስከ ፡ ፲፻ ፡ ትው  
ልድ ። ጸሎታ ፡ ወበረከታ ፡ ለጽዮን ፡ እምነ ፡ ቅድስት ፡ ሰማያዊት ፡ የሀሉ ፡ ምስለ ፡  
ኩልነ ፡ ውሉደ ፡ ጥምቀት ፡ ለዓለም ፡ ዓለም ፡ አሜን ።

Translation

[1] “Listen to what I tell you O Christian people. May the Lord bless you and shine [into] the eyes of your hearts for hearing the miracles of the Temple of our Mother Zion, the cathedral of Aksum. Those of you who doubt [its existence] by hearing from the rebels against faith and say ‘The Ark of Moses is not found in the Land of Aksum, the great city’, which is the dwelling of the Lord, the second Jerusalem and refuge of all the world, let you know and understand the miracle and wonder what the Lord did during the reign of Abrəḥa and Aṣbəḥa, the kings of Aksum while Sälama, the revealer of light, was our bishop.

[2] As for the story of the coming of our Mother Zion from Jerusalem, it is written in the biography of kings [that] during the 13<sup>th</sup> year of reign of Abrəḥa and Aṣbəḥa, baptism of Christianity came to Ethiopia through the land of Aksum. They baptized us with the name of the Holy Trinity and they preached the Gospel of the kingdom, for until that time the Church was not known in our land.

[3] Then Abrəḥa and Aṣbəḥa ascended to the mount and they prayed for a week about where they would build the temple of the Aksumite cathedral of Zion, our mother.

[7] <sup>1</sup> B finishes here.

[4] Subsequently, Our Lord Jesus Christ, glory be to Him, descended to them on this mount, which is named *Mäkäyädä Īgziʿanä*<sup>17</sup>, and they saw Him in the sphere<sup>18</sup> of humanity. They rejoiced as much as Moses and Elijah rejoiced when they had seen Him previously at the bottom of Mount Tabor, with three of the apostles of Our Lord.

[5] And Our Lord said to Abrəḥa and Aşbəḥa, ‘Behold, I heard your prayer and supplications. Hence, you may build a temple in the name of My Mother Mary, the cathedral of Aksum, in the centre of this sea, in the image of the celestial Jerusalem.

[6] After saying this, He brought soil from Paradise on the 13<sup>th</sup> of *Nəḥase*<sup>19</sup>. He poured it out and it became a land which had a beautiful appearance. After saying this, He disappeared from them. As for them, they brought wise men from Greece by the order of the Lord and they built the temple of our Mother, the cathedral of Aksum. They adorned it with pure gold and precious pearl, for gold was showered upon them for seven days by the will of the Lord. Until this very day, some traces of gold can be found on the street.

[7] When these kings completed building, Our Lord blessed and sanctified it. Then He bestowed upon them the covenant that for the one who did her commemoration and went to our Mother Zion will receive great honor in the Kingdom of Heaven. And our father Sälama, the revealer of light, celebrated the Communion and gave it to the Kings and to the people by the peace of the Lord, Amen.<sup>20</sup>

[8] And at Aksum, the Holy Spirit descends three times a day: first at the prayer of the incense, second when her [our Lady St. Mary’s] miracles are read, and the third during the time of [Holy] Mass.

[9] At the Mount of Olives, the Apostles asked Our Lord: ‘In the time of the eighth<sup>21</sup> where shall You be found?’ And He replied to them: ‘At Easter in Jerusalem, at Hosanna in Aksum, and at Christmas in Lalibela, [and] always in the house of the disciples’.

[10] The one who went and kissed Zion will receive mercy until the three hundred generation, since the Scripture says ‘As for the one who loves Me, he will receive mercy until the thousandth generation’.<sup>22</sup> Let the prayer and blessings of our Mother, the Holy Celestial Zion, be with us, the children of baptism, forever and ever, Amen’.

<sup>17</sup> Lit. ‘the footstool of Our Lord’.

<sup>18</sup> Lit. ‘circle’.

<sup>19</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> August.

<sup>20</sup> *Īnṭoṭṭo* manuscript [B] ends here.

<sup>21</sup> This may show an allusion to the ‘eighth week’ in 1 Enoch 91:12–13, which is also in places interpreted as the time of the Second Coming and the Judgment of Sinners.

<sup>22</sup> Cp. Exod 20:6; Deut 5:10, 7:9.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

Both *DŞ* and *KN* praise the Ark of the Covenant. Manuscripts collected from *Təgray* (Aksum [A]) and Addis Ababa (*Ἐντόττο* [B]), along with a printed text [P] by *Tana Qirqos* Communal Monastery, preserve two known texts (*DŞ* and *KN*) as one under the title *Dərsanä Şəyon*. They further jointly contain a long colophon that claims the Ark of the Covenant is present at Aksum and that the cathedral there, dedicated to Zion Mary, was first built by the twin saintly kings *Abrəḥa* and *Aşbəḥa*. The colophon simultaneously exhorts those who deny this tradition to accept it as fact.

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### Summary

This article briefly describes and discusses three Ethiopic manuscripts jointly containing *Dərsanä Şayon* 'homily on [the glory of] Zion' followed by *Kəbrä Nəgäšt* 'Dignity of Kings' as a single literary unit. It also lists the *incipit* and *desinit* of each manuscript with their peculiar features. Finally, an edition and translation of their lengthy colophon is presented.