



Eucharistic Liturgies in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church

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Difficulties in Studying Ethiopian Liturgies

- Almost no extant manuscripts from before 13th c.
- Very few critically edited liturgical texts
- Many scholars use church publications rather than manuscripts/editions
- Older publications contain many errors; more recent publications often based on poor informants
- Traditions surrounding ecclesiastical history often legendary and apocryphal

* በስመ : አብ : ወወልድ : ወመንፈስ : ቅዱስ : አሐዱ : አምላክ ። ወርታ : ሐም ።
 ሌ : ቡሩክ ። መዓልቱ : ፲ወ፬ሰዓት : ወአምዝ : የሐጽጽ ።

* A 98, a.
 * P 143, a.
 * O 25, a.
 * A 278, b

አመ : ፩ለሐምሌ : ምንባብ ።

በዛቲ : ዕለት : ኮነት : ቅድስት : ድንግል : ቀፍሮንያ : ሰማዕት : ዛቲ : መስተጋ
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2. ወ፩] ወ፩ O, ወ፩ P. — 5. እናታ om. O. — 5. ለእማ om. O, P. — 6. ዘውስቴታ] — ቱ O, P.
 — 8-9. ወጀመላተ (p. በበጀመላት) add. A.

A = d'Abbadie 66; A = d'Abbadie 98; O = Bodleian. xxv; P = Paris. (Fonds éthiop.) 128.

LE LIVRE DU SYNAXAIRE

Au nom du Père, du Fils et du Saint-Esprit, un seul Dieu.

Mois béni de hamlé dont le 1^{er} jour a 14 heures; ensuite, les jours décroissent.

LE PREMIER DE HAMLÉ (8 juillet).

En ce jour est honorée sainte Qafronyā (*Fébronie*), vierge et martyre; cette ascète se donna à Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ; sa tante maternelle était la supérieure d'un couvent, situé sur une montagne entre les deux fleuves (*en Mésopotamie*), où se trouvaient 50 vierges; celle-ci, nommée Aryānā, l'éleva dans la crainte de Dieu et lui apprit à lire les divines Écritures. — Elle se livrait avec succès aux combats de l'ascétisme; elle faisait pénitence et jeûnait tous les deux jours; elle faisait de nombreuses prières; cette sainte avait un aspect fort beau. — Lorsque l'impie Dioclétien donna l'ordre d'adorer les idoles, de nombreux chrétiens furent pris et devinrent mar-

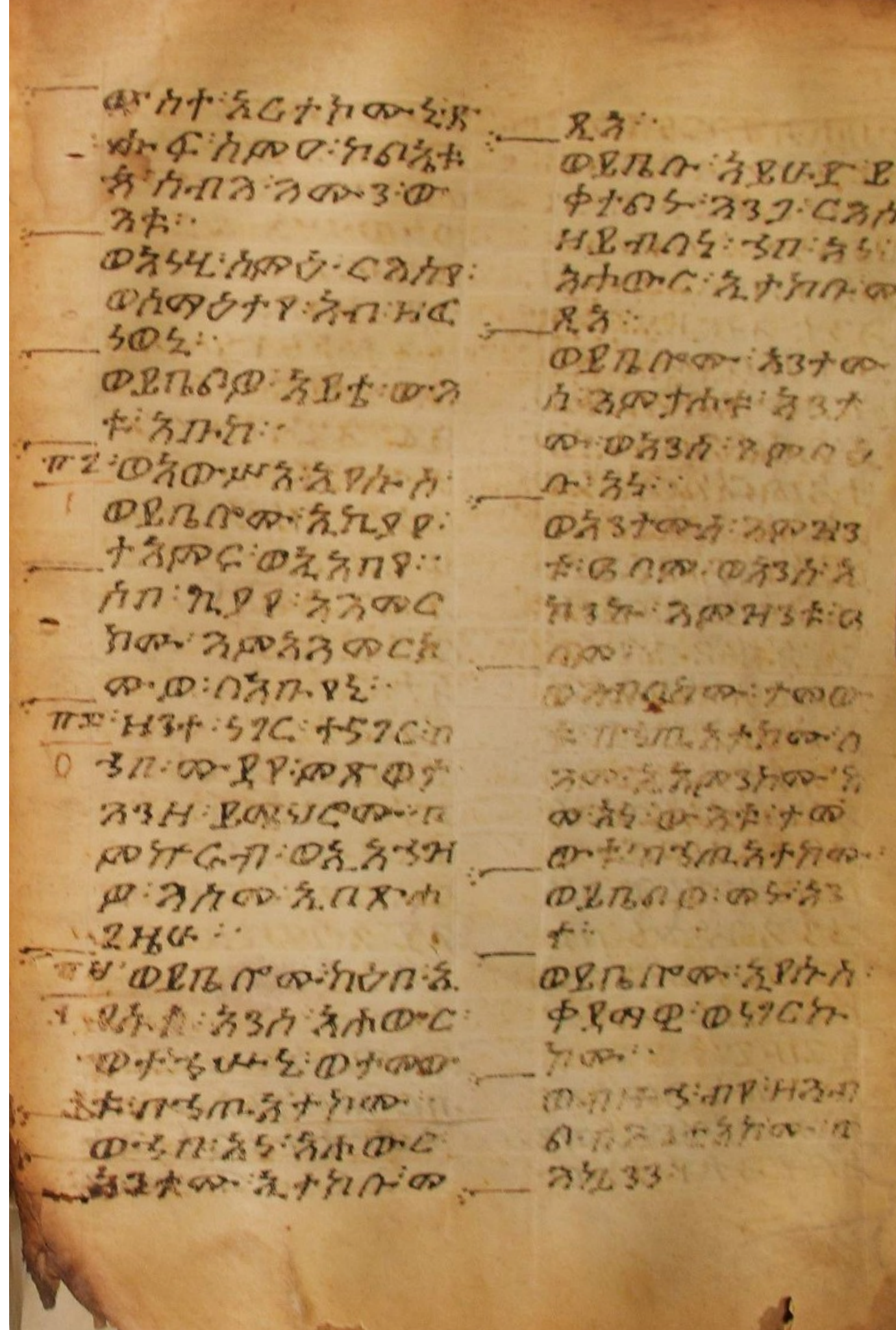
Early Stages

- Ethiopia christianized in the early 4th c.; Frumentius appointed as bishop by Athanasius
- Legendary Jewish foundations
- Few sources regarding liturgy in first millennium
- Most scholars safely assume that early liturgical practice largely followed Coptic norms



Early Stages

- First biblical and liturgical translations completed over the following century, esp. under influence of Nine Saints
- Anaphoras of Mark and James follow Greek counterparts; likely of some antiquity, though not in current use
- Anaphora of the Lord taken from the Book of the Covenant (*Testamentum Domini*), known from Antiquity



Early Stages

- Supposed period of composition of Yaredian antiphonaries (*Dəgg^wā*, *Ṣoma Dəgg^wā*, *Zəmmāre*, *Mawāśə'ət*, and *Mə'ərāf*), and three tone system (*gə'əz*, *'əzl*, *arārāy*)



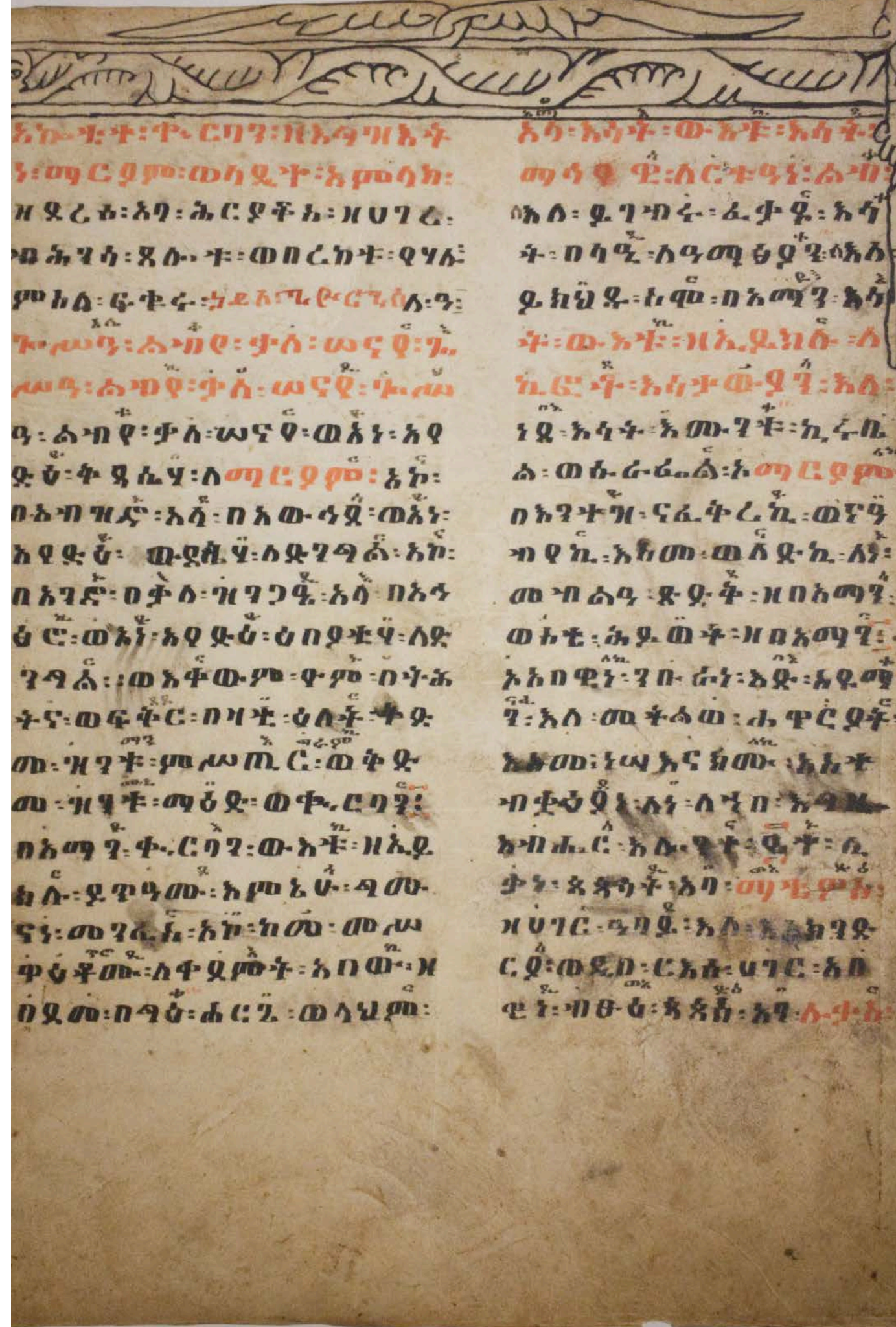
Middle Ages

- Growing religious nationalism, culminating in reign of Emperor Zar'a Yā'eqob
- Composition of numerous hymns and prayers, esp. by Giyorgis of Gaśəčča (15th c.), including new Liturgy of Hours
- Arrival of *Sinodos* in 14th c., containing the Anaphora of the Apostles; becomes anaphora *par excellence*



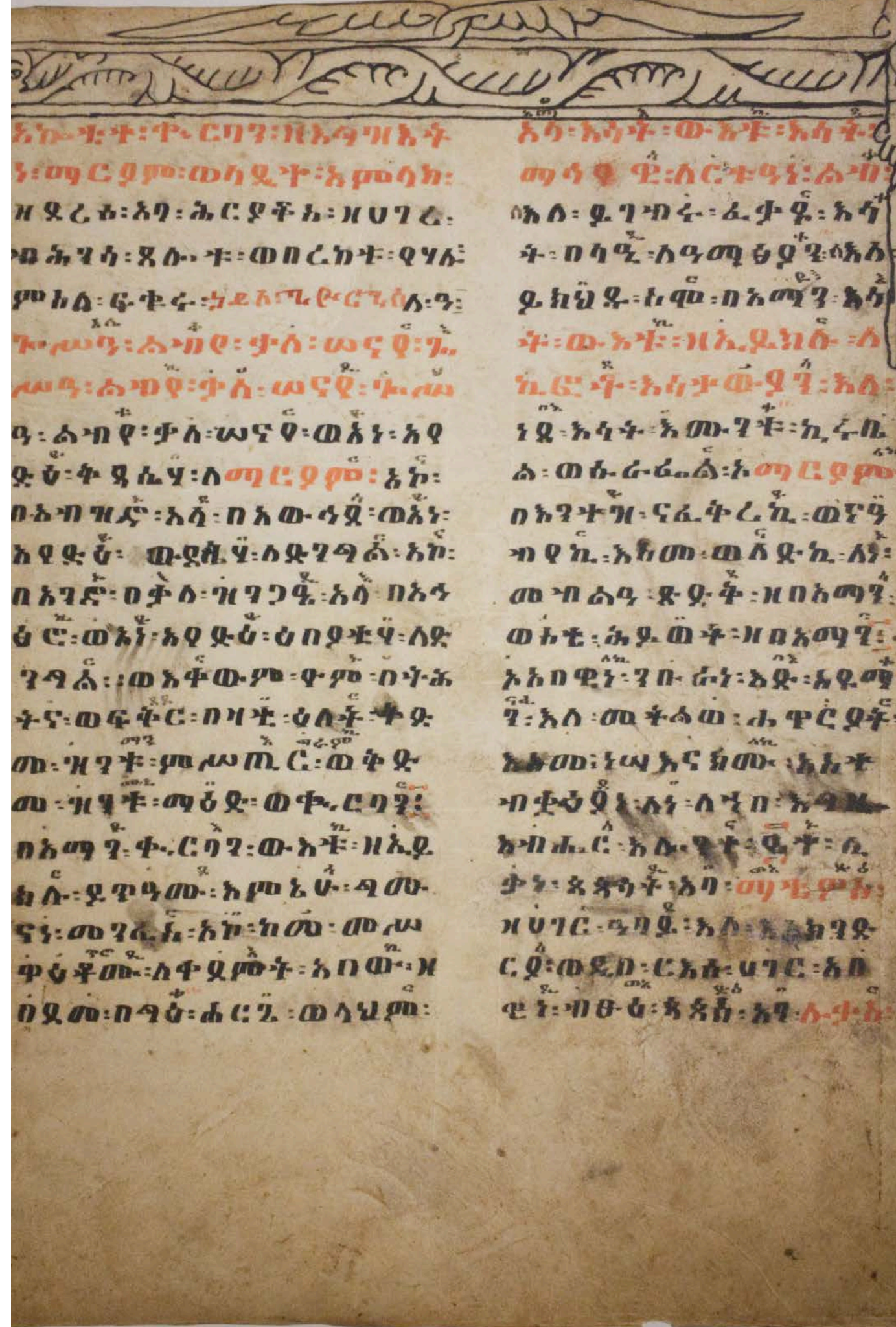
Middle Ages

- Up to this time, likely only Anaphora of the Apostles and Anaphora of the Lord in use
- Composition of numerous anaphoras pseudepigraphically attributed to prominent Fathers (e.g. Athanasius, Epiphanius)
- Strong links between themes in Ethiopian anaphoras and contemporary theological controversies



Middle Ages

- Anaphora of Mary, likely composed by Giyorgis of Gaśəčča, deals with Marian veneration and Trinitarian doctrine
- Anaphora of Athanasius and the Sabbath controversy
- Anaphoras of Cyril and Jacob of Sarug: *Melos Sayfa ʿĒsāt* (“*Melos Sword of Fire*”) as *nomen sacrum* for the Holy Spirit



3: My heart overflows with a good word. (x3)

4: And I say the Anaphora of Mary, not at length but briefly. And I say the praise of the Virgin, not drawn out with confusing words but in short. And I say the greatness of the Virgin.

Anaphora of Mary

68: It is not that we say Three like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but One in Three Persons.

69: It is not that we say One like Adam, the first of all creatures, but Three in One Essence.

70: Behold, we hear the wicked Jews and the erring Ishmaelites, who say in their ignorance that God is of one person and one substance, they are blind of heart.

Anaphora of Mary

71: Behold, we see the idolatrous pagans, for whom (there are) many gods and many demons.

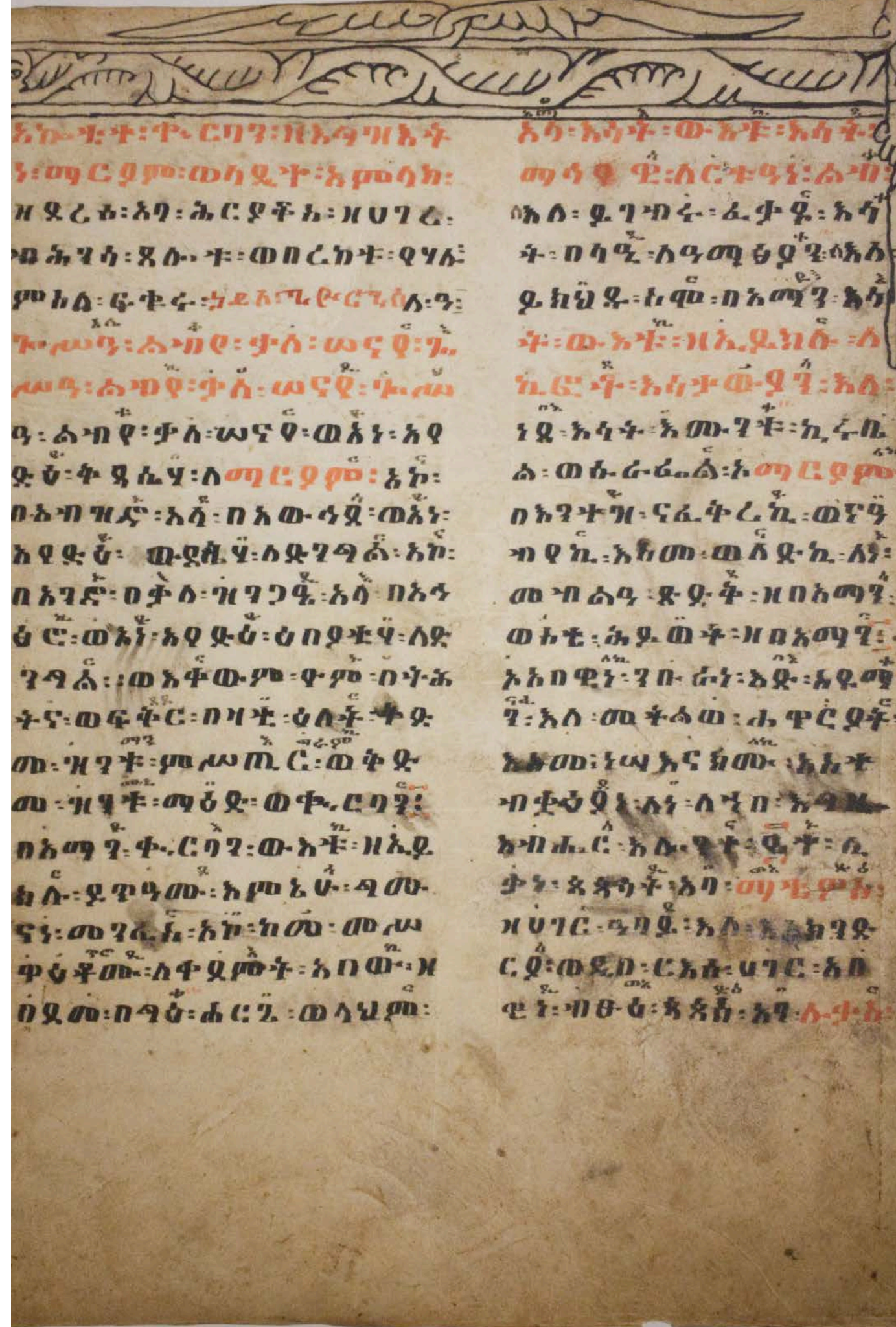
72: But we follow (those who) lead to the good path, as the Apostles have taught us saying, ...

80: Now let us return to (our) earlier speech and describe the Holy Virgin...

Anaphora of Mary

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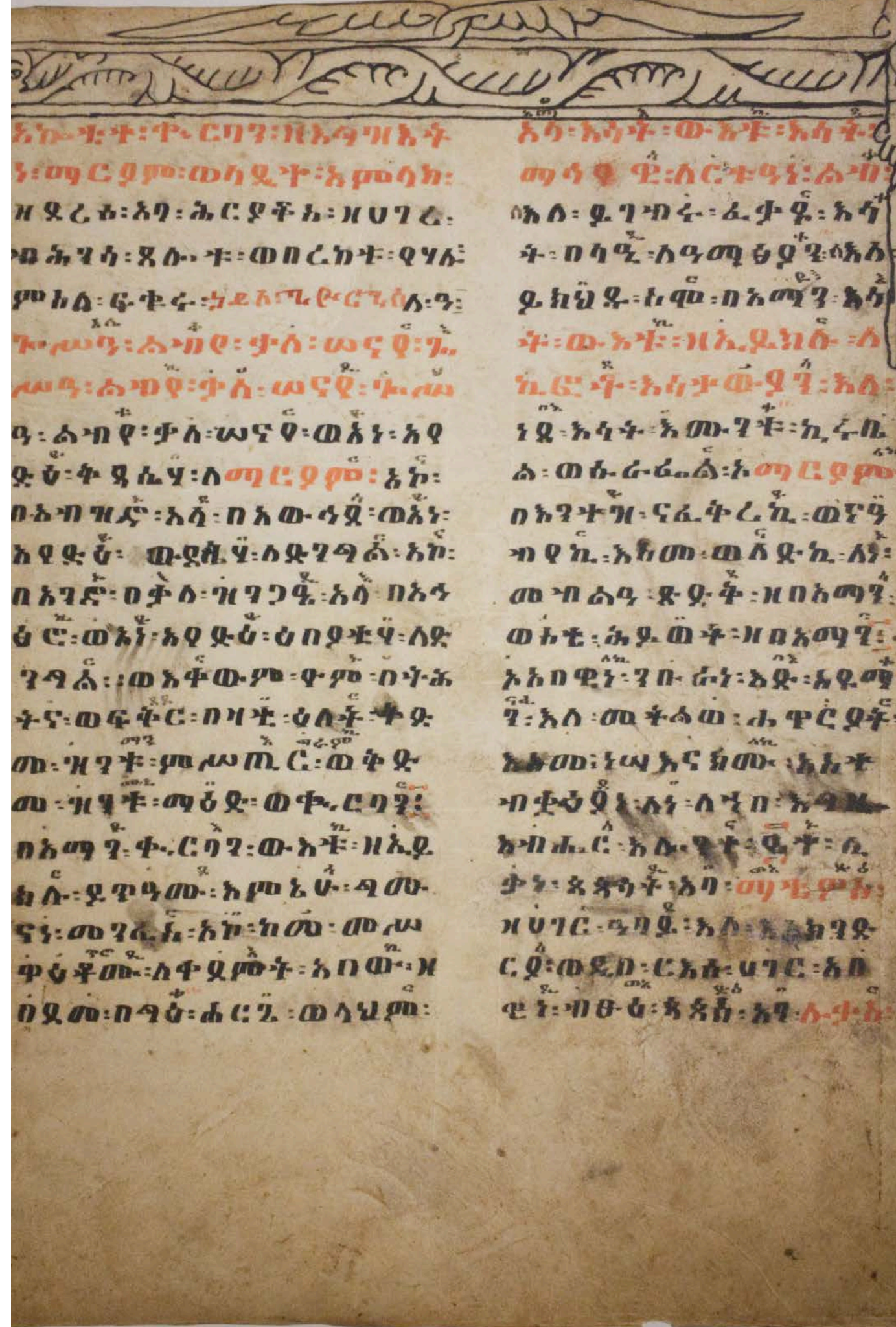


3: Today, this day, those of you who have gathered in this church, listen to the Anaphora of the Holy Sabbath of the Christians.

Anaphora of Athanasius

Middle Ages

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- Anaphora of Athanasius and the Sabbath controversy
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70: Let the burning *Melos*, Sword of Fire, be drawn and let the heaven of heavens be opened through Thy righteousness, and with Thy will let Thy living and Holy Spirit descend and come and rest upon this bread and cup...

Anaphora of Cyril

53: ... Behold, let the Lamb of God descend and sit upon this table of priesthood which is prepared before me, Thy sinful servant. Let the terrifying *Melos*, Sword of Fire, be sent and appear over this bread and cup...

Anaphora of Jacob of Sarug

Gondarine Period

- Invasion of Aḥmad Grāññ
- Jesuit mission
- Academic revisions of biblical and liturgical texts; additions of hymns to Liturgy
- Post-Gondar preeminence of Dabra Abbāy (Təgrāy, N. Ethiopia) for *Qəddāse Bet*



Post-Gondarine Period

- Patronage of Hāyla Śellāse; production of new texts and translations
- Dərg communist military junta; schism within Synod
- Eritrean political independence and subsequent autocephaly
- *Andəmtā* (commentary) on *Qəddāse*
- Reconciliation of schism between Synods



Distinctive Features

- *Tābot*: a tablet representing the tablets in the Ark and, by extension, the Ark itself; stands in for the antimins
- May be processed during prominent feasts following the Divine Liturgy
- *Dəbāb* (“canopy”): a canopy or parasol held over the Gospel, the Eucharist, and the *Tābot*; replaces ripidia (fans)



Distinctive Features

- Laypeople dress in white *nəṭəḷā*
- Deacons (and priests) vested in distinct vestments
- Preparation of wine and bread near church (*Bet Ləḥem*)
- Readings done in each direction
- Alternate Creed (*Amaknəyo*) used with certain anaphoras



Distinctive Features

- Service of *Māḥlet* (cantillation) before *Qəddāse* on feast days
- Three liturgical instruments: *kabaro* (drum), *ṣanāṣəl* (sistrum), *maqqa^wāmiyā* (staff) used during *Māḥlet*



Distinctive Features

- *Ṣalota Kidān* (Prayer of the Covenant)
- Begins with extended Trisagion
- Contains portions from the Book of the Covenant with responses
- Three forms (midnight, morning, evening)
- Morning prayer a part of Liturgy (in place of Trisagion), midnight and evening prayers precede Liturgy



Current Practice

- Preparation of bread and wine in *Bet Ləḥem* before Liturgy
- Most churches will have at least some prayers from *Sa'ātāt* or *Māḥlet* before the *Qəddāse*, including reading from Miracles of Mary and Miracles of Jesus
- Divine Liturgy served by at least 2 priests and 2-3 deacons, though in diaspora may be fewer



Current Practice

- *Śer'āta Qəddāse* begins with procession from *Bet Ləḥem* while people sing a Yaredian antiphon
- *Hālle Luyyā əma bo bə'əsi*
- *Buruk Əgzi'abəḥer Ab* and *Aḥādu Ab Qəddus*
- Great Litany
- “Solemn incensation”
- Epistle readings and reading from Acts



Current Practice

- Hymn of praise for Theotokos and incense hymn (*Zə wə'ətu gize bārəkot wazə wə'ətu gize 'əṭān ḥəruy*)
- *Şalota Kidān*
- *Məsbāk* (prokeimenon) of three lines from relevant Psalm; sung 5 times, alternating between deacon and people
- Gospel proclamation & response
- Dismissal of catechumens



Current Practice

- Washing of hands
- Creed (Nicene or *Amaknəyo*)
- Greeting (“holy salutation”)
- Pronouncement of anaphora
 - Selection based on feast day and the lectionary (*Maṣḥafa Gəṣṣāwe*)



Current Practice

- Our Father
- *Śarāwita malā'əktiḥu
laMadḥāne'Ālam*
- 41x “Lord have mercy on us,
O Christ”
- Communion prayers
- Reading from *Hāymānota
Abāw*
- *Malk'a Q^wərbān*
- Post-Communion prayers



Current Practice

- Homily
- Religious songs (*mazmur*)
- *Tābot* procession on feast days
- Blessing and dismissal





“Solemn Incensation”



Şalota Kidān



Gospel



Śarāwita malā'əktiḥu laMadḥāne'Ālam (Anaphora of Mary)



Śarāwita malā'əktiḥu laMadḥāne'Ālam (Anaphora of the Lord)