



Common Hagiographical Patterns in the Ethiopic Manuscript: Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos

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Abstract

The main objective of this article is to demonstrate common Ethiopic hagiographical patterns in Gädlä Fəqərtä Krəstos. St. Fəqərtä Krəstos is one of the prominent saints of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahədo Church and she was one of the outstanding figures of the 17th female saints. In Ethiopic hagiographies we find common characters and expressions within the hagiography of Saints. Mainly the hagiographies have inter-textual relations with each other and usually they focus on the life of the Saint's parents and their childlessness, the annunciation by an Angel, the birth, struggle and miracles of the Saint, common expression of the beginning and end of the hagiographies. . . etc. As the Ethiopic hagiography, the writer of the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos follows the pattern of other and local hagiography of Saints. This article is a part of the PhD dissertation work of the main author of this article at Addis Ababa University with the title of "Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos: Critical Edition with Annotated Translation."

Keywords: *Hagiography; Ethiopic Manuscripts; Common Pattern; Gädl, Woman Saints*

1. Introduction

In Ethiopia, manuscripts that are written in the ancient GƏ'ƏZ language of the country are found in a broad variety of genre and purpose.¹ The vast collections of GƏ'ƏZ manuscripts are preserved in the monasteries, churches, and; national and foreign libraries. Among such records of the GƏ'ƏZ manuscripts, *the hagiography of Saints* is one of the vitally significant genre in the history of Ethiopian literature and it takes the main place. St. Fəqərtä Krəstos was one of the prominent Ethiopian woman religious figures of the 17thc.² She is mainly known for her fervent struggle with the Catholic Jesuit

¹ Adamu Amare and Belaynesh Mikael, 1970, The Church of Ethiopia, A Panorama of History and Spiritual life, *The Role of the Church in Literature and Art*, AA, a publication of the EOTC, p..74

² Denis Nosnitsin, 2005, *Fəqərtä Krəstos*, EAe, vol.2, p. 521.

missionaries during their attack on Orthodox Christianity in the reign of Aše Susənyos (1605-1632).³ She is also regarded as the defender of the Faith of Orthodox Christianity, *the founder of two monasteries* and is generally venerated as *a great martyr, a monastic and a prominent saint* of 17thc.

The manuscript 'Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos' tells about her life history emphasizing on her struggles and spiritual endeavours. It also narrates different issues in relation to her life and gives valuable information related to the events of the period, and it also gives an explanation to some Theological issues. So it begins about her life history with her parents and continues about her conception, birth, childhood, adulthood, marriage, martyrdom and nunhood. The narration character of the writer about her parent's life and her early childhood life has similar pattern to other Ethiopian saints' hagiographies. The Gädl also describes about her martyrdom in detail and resurrection from the dead, about the reaction of the king, bishops, priests, monks, nuns and orthodox layman Christians and all her later monastic life. In general, the Gädl shows the marvelous exemplary life and struggles of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos in different aspects. In the EOTC Tradition, besides to the life and struggle, most of the *Gädl*s also contain *tä'ammərat* (miracles) of the Saints, *qal kədan* (covenant) given from God⁴ and *mälkə'* (image or effigy) that are prepared to honor the saints,⁵ as a result, it contain common textual orders and contents

2. Objective of the Study

The study has the following general and specific objectives.

2.1. General Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to show the importance of the study of the manuscript Gädlä Fəqərtä Krəstos by investigating the available copy manuscripts of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos written in different times with different scribe. Then identify the variants in each manuscript and construct a critically edited archetype text with annotated translation of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos based on Neo – Lachmannian Method.

2.2. Specific Objectives of the Study

To achieve the general objective, the study will have the following specific objectives that are related to the main objective.

1. To gather and identify the accessible manuscripts of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos.
2. To disclose the codicological and paleographical description of the existing manuscripts.
3. To investigate and describe the philological reflections of the text.
4. To demonstrate the linguistic and literary analysis of the text
5. To collate the existing version of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos and to construct the archetype.
6. To explore and differentiate the available manuscripts in relation to their families.
7. To create a Stemma codicum based on the genealogical linkage of the available manuscripts.

³ J.M. Harden. 1926 'An introduction to Ethiopic Christian Literature' NY: McMillan, p.27.; Kənfä Rəgb Zälakä, 1975, "Bibliography of the Ethiopic Hagiographical Tradition", JES, vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 68, No. 40, Kefyalew Merahi: 1998, "The spiritual and Social Life of Christian Women", AA, p.39. Amsalu Tefera, 2011 E.C., 'Näqe'a Mätsahəft' AA, Jajaw PP p.211, No.472, Märqorəwos Aräga, 1998 E.C.: "The history of Ethiopian Saints 5th book, P. 92-95, Sirgew Hable Selassie, 1982 E.C. Amharic Church dictionary: AA: unpublished book AAU. vol. 11, p. 134-35; Denis Nonsitsin, 2005, Fəqərtä Krəstos, EAe, vol.2, p. 521.

⁴ Steven Kaplan, 2005, Gädl, EAe, vol. 2, p. 642.

⁵ Tadesse Tamrat, (1968), Church and State in Ethiopia 1270 - 1527, A Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of London, p.12.; Steven Kaplan, 2005, Gädl, EAe, vol. 2, p. 642.,

8. To reveal the contribution of the saint and the text itself.
9. To show the significance of the Gädl to different fields of studies.

3. Review of Related Literature

During the preparation of the study, the researcher has reviewed previous accessible researches, catalogues, microfilms, books, journals and articles that had been done in this area of study in order to find out the research gap. Several Ethiopian hagiographies, especially those written long time ago, have been given special attention by different scholars and many researches had already been done on them. However, the researcher found out that no previous work in all philological methods research done been on this subject at all levels of academic dissertation.⁶ However, the researcher had observed that the works of some scholars had discussed in their articles and books about St. Fəqərtä Krəstos in an introductory form and in their bibliographical lists of saints in a short description.

4. Source and Data Collection Techniques

The main source data of this study is based on the collected vellum Gädl of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos written on parchment. In the process of *collecting the source data*, the researcher had looked at different libraries and churches and unfortunately the manuscripts were not available. Hence the researcher made three trips and collected the source data from the three monasteries:

The list of the manuscripts which collected by the researcher are as follows:

1. EM₁– The Manuscript found from Gädamä Səhat Əmmä mu'ez Kədanä Məhrät St. Fəqərtä Krəstos Communal Monastery, (uncatalogued and unstudied)
2. EM₂ – The Manuscript found from Gädamä Səhat Əmmä mu'ez Kədanä Məhrät St. Fəqərtä Krəstos Communal Monastery, (uncatalogued and unstudied).
3. EM₃ – The Manuscript found from Gädamä Səhat Əmmä Mu'ez Kədanä Məhrät St. Fəqərtä Krəstos Communal Monastery, (uncatalogued and unstudied).
4. EM₄ – The Manuscript found from Gädamä Səhat Əmmä Mu'ez Kədanä Məhrät St. Fəqərtä Krəstos Communal Monastery, (uncatalogued and unstudied).
5. RM₁ –The Manuscript found from Rama Debre Sina Kədanä Məhrät Communal Monastery, (uncatalogued and unstudied).
6. DL₁ – The Manuscript found from Däbrä Ləbanos Abune T/Haymanot Communal Monastery, (uncatalogued and unstudied).

Therefore, the researcher had made a thorough search of any accessible copies of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos in local churches, monasteries and foreign online libraries, to expand the source for the critical edition. However, was not possible to locate additional MSS. than the ones already found in the three monasteries.

5. General Description of the Source Data

In this chapter, all the physical and content description of the six unstudied and uncatalogued Gə'əz manuscripts of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos are described. In preparing the critical edition of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos, the Neo-Lachmannian method is applied based on the source data of the six

⁶ Kənäfä Rəgb Zäläkä, 1975, JES vol. 13, AAU, p. 57-102; Amsalu Tefera, (Dr). 2011, 'Neqe'a Metsaheft' AA, p.211 No.472

manuscripts which the researcher had collected from the three monasteries, five in North Wällo and one in North Säwa. Out of six manuscripts, the researcher had *collected one* parchment manuscript of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos from her first monastery, *Rama Däbrä Səna Kədanä Məhrät St. Fəqərtä Krəstos* communal monastery. And the other *four* manuscripts of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos made of vellum are collected from her second monastery, namely, *Gädämä Səhat Əmmä mu'ez Kədanä Məhrät St. Fəqərtä Krəstos* communal Monastery. In addition to this, the manuscript of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos found at Däbrä Ləbanos Abunä Täkləhaymanot Communal Monastery, is a one composite parchment manuscript which is bound with another hagiography, Gädlä St. Krəstos Sämra.

Accordingly, the MSS. found from Əmmä mu'ez Kədanä Məhrät are designated as: 'EM₁, EM₂, EM₃ and EM₄', that from Rama Kədanä Məhrät: 'RM₁', and from Däbrä Ləbanos Abunä Täklə Haymanot Communal Monastery: DL₁. Based on the available information up to the time, this research is undertaken, all these manuscripts, have not yet been catalogued, foliated, microfilmed and critically edited and this is done for the first time in this dissertation. All the obtained manuscripts of Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos have not yet been foliated, photographed, catalogued and critically studied. For that reason, in the process of this study, the researcher has foliated, photographed, and gave systematically 'code' or sigla in capital letters and numbers to each manuscript for the first time. The sigla is given as: 'RM₁' (the manuscript found from Ramä Däbrä Səna Kədanä Məhrät St. *Fəqərtä Krəstos* Communal Monastery), 'EM₁, EM₂, EM₃ and EM₄' (the MSS. found from *Gädämä Səhat Əmmä mu'ez Kədanä Məhrät St. Fəqərtä Krəstos* communal Monastery which were written in different periods of time) and DL₁ (the manuscript found from Däbrä Ləbanos Abunä Täklə haymanot Communal Monastery) as a sign to represent each of the manuscripts.

The manuscripts are combinations of dated and undated ones and the time and authors of the two dated manuscripts, RM₁ (1974 E.C.) and DL₁ (1998 E.C.) are known. However, the time and authors of the four undated MSS, EM₁ (17thc), EM₂ (20th c), EM₃ (19th/20th c) and EM₄ (18th/19th c), could not be written. Nonetheless, the researcher has made her own assumption based on its paleography of the mss's.

All the manuscripts used in the study are as usual written in black and red color; black for the main text and red for the name of God, Holy Virgin Mary and Saints, incipit passages, headings, and focusing words, elements of punctuation signs, etc. The scribe first produces the main text in black, leaving space for words to be later written in red. All the accessible manuscripts are written in two columns and the horizontal lines of the text and vertical lines of the columns are underlined with small connected holes of faint lines pierced with awl by using a ruler. In most folios the number of lines is 17 but a few pages have 16, 18, 23 and 31 lines. Words are consistently separated by word dividers, which is the system of punctuation signs.

The binding style of the Ethiopian codex covers are commonly wood and are usually prepared in the same size as the text. Therefore, many Ethiopian codices are bound on wooden boards and covered with leather or linen fabric and sometimes very few codex could be found decorated with metal plate like copper, silver or gold-like metal. The collected manuscripts of the text Gädä Fəqərtä Krəstos is preserved in different binding styles of codex.

6. Data Analysis and Text Edition Techniques

In the first round of surveying and categorizing of the six manuscripts, based on the content and the paleographical circumstances of the manuscript, the researcher had initially temporarily decided that the oldest manuscript would be used as the base manuscript (Codex Optimus) among the collected manuscripts. This manuscript served as a representative base for family MSS. in the study. This approach was adopted by the researcher considering that the manuscript would not be a "basic ms" but only a

temporary practical device that would be dissolved at the end of the collation. However this oldest base manuscript also will not be free from errors such as those in the rest of the surviving manuscripts. This demonstrates more often than not that the oldest manuscripts do not preserve the most authoritative text, for a much later manuscript might in fact preserve a copy of the very early manuscript.

7. Common Ethiopic Hagiographical Patterns Found in the Text

In Ethiopian hagiographies, we find common expressions in the hagiography and the writer of the hagiography St. Fəqərtä Krəstos follows the character of other local hagiographies of saints. Some of the common characters of Ethiopic hagiographies in Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos are as follows:

7.1. Common Textual Contents

In the EOTC Tradition, besides to the life and struggle, most of the *Gädl*s also contain *tä'ammərat* (miracles) of the Saints, *qal kədan* (covenant) given from God⁷ and *mälk'ə* (image or effigy) that are prepared to honor the saints.⁸ Therefore the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos is a 17th c. manuscript and as a local Saint hagiography, it was written in the Ethiopian manuscript tradition by an Ethiopian scribe. It consists of four parts: the main life of the Saint, the Miracles (*Ta'ammərat*) performed by the Saint, the Covenant (*qal kədan*) received from the Lord before her death and the *Mälk'ə* (*Efigi*) which is prepared to honor her. Textual order of the manuscripts EM₂ and EM₄ (Main life, Main *Mälk'ə*, *Täräfä Mälk'ə*, Seven Miracles) are different from the rest four manuscripts which put the Miracles next to the main life of the saint.

Then, to differentiate and understand the manuscripts clearly, the researcher summarized the orders and contents of the collected manuscripts as follows:

The Main Life of the Saint

The hagiography of narrates her life from the beginning to the end of her earthly life. Among the available six manuscripts, the hagiography obtained from Däbrä Ləbanos Abunä Täklähaimanot monastery is separated by chapters and it consists of twelve chapters. The first ten chapters cover the whole life of the saint. It starts by recalling the names of her parents Laba and Wängəlawit. Then it focuses on her birth by the annunciation of the Angel of God, her education, matrimony, martyrdom, pilgrimage inside and outside of the country, and chapter eleven narrates about her construction of a church and the founding a monastery by herself. She has become the abbess of the convent of Əmma mu'ez monastery until her last life on this earth. Chapter twelve states about her honorable repose in the Lord and that her precious body was buried at this monastery.⁹

Miracles (Ta'ammərat)

The second part of the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos contains *Ta'ammərat*, the miracles performed by St. Fəqərtä Krəstos. The miracles of saints are performed by the grace of God through during their life time and after their departure from this life.¹⁰ It is well known that in Christian Tradition, the lives of saints are full of miracles and their hagiographies record many such miracles that God

⁷ Steven Kaplan, 2005, *Gädl*, Encyclopaedia Aethiopia, vol. 2, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, p. 642.

⁸ Tadesse Tamrat, (1968), *Church and State in Ethiopia 1270 - 1527*, A Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of London, p.12. ; Steven Kaplan, 2005, *Gädl*, Encyclopaedia Aethiopia, vol. 2, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, p. 642.,

⁹ Among the available six manuscripts, the hagiography obtained from Däbrä Ləbanos Abunä Täklä haymanot communal monastery is separated by chapters and it consists of twelve chapters.

¹⁰ Tadesse Tamrat, 1970, p 75; Denis Nosnitsin, 2010. *Ta'ammər* in EAe, vol. 4, p. 757.

manifested through them. The miracles are chronicled with the purpose of demonstrating to Christians on the immanence of Divine help during the adversities and prosecutions in their life. The miracles of the saints found in their hagiographies are different according to their lives; however, the themes are all similar. In Christian hagiographies, many of the miracles of the saints start from their conception and childhood, and continue to ascetic struggle or their martyrdom and their holy repose.

In the Ethiopian Tradition, there are different types of recorded Miracles (Ta'ammər): such as, The Miracles of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Ta'ammərä Iyesus), The Miracles of the Holy Virgin Mary (Ta'ammərä Maryam), the Miracles of Angels of God (For example: Ta'ammərä Micha'el), The Miracles of Martyrs and Righteous saints (For example Ta'ammərä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos). Most of the miracles of the saints that are revealed after their death are in relation to the holy waters consecrated in their name, their holy relics, and by the hearing and touching of their hagiographies. In addition Christians go to the churches and monasteries that are consecrated in their names to salute, pray for their supplication and make vows to the saints so as to get their wishes fulfilled. The saints execute the vows of the faithful through their prayers and covenant they had received from God and sometimes by a miraculous appearance in a vision or a dream.

The hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos has seven miracles, described specifically at the end of her life story. The text Ta'ammərä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos is preserved in all six manuscripts. These six manuscripts contain seven Ta'ammər, but in manuscript EM₁, there is one additional Ta'ammər which cannot be found in any of the other manuscripts. However, as we go through the entire hagiography, we see that it is full of recorded miracles right from her conception continuing throughout her early life.

The following major miracles are found in her hagiography: She had praised God at the day of her birth and at the time of her baptism. The Holy Spirit descended upon her and hovered over her head during her baptism, and she praised God saying, "Blessed be the Lord my God who had delivered me till this hour so that I receive the rite of Baptism of Christ." After that she partook of the holy mystery (The Eucharist) saying "Amen and amen and may it be for the salvation of my soul and body, O Christ my Lord, by this flesh and blood of yours, I beg you forever Amen." Thus she had praised God miraculously in her childhood at the day of her birth, her baptism, and when she partook of the Holy Eucharist.

The Holy Spirit opened her mind miraculously when she started her spiritual education, their virginity was kept intact with the help of the Angel of God after she was married, her son was visited by an Angel and taken up to heaven to abide there, God saving her from many tortures by hiding her body with a rock when they ripped her cloth apart body and healing her from suffering by sending His Angel at the time of her martyrdom. During her local pilgrimages she had miraculously visited by being taken up to the top of the monastery by an Angel and meeting there even the saint of the monastery (Abunä Arəgawi Zädäbrä Damo) and receiving the Holy Communion by the hand of the Angels without men seeing her, and opening of the eyes of bandits by anointing their faces and eyelids by making clay of her spittle and cleansing the lepers and healing many patients.

[86] . . . [And] they lived there and our mother Fəqərtä Krəstos righteous was doing miracles and wonders with her hand, casting out devils and healing the sick and lepers were cleansed and those possessed with the devil were saved healed from their sicknesses when they believed in her prayer.

The hagiography tells us that her miracles were one of the reasons for the returning back of King Susənyos to his Orthodox faith. After she was raised from the dead, she was doing many miracles including the rising of the dead with the remains of her body. King Susənyos had witnessed all the miracles he had seen by saying:

[59] . . . And he said to them, “pardon me and have mercy on me for all that I have sinned on you, I saw miracles and wonders by your hands, you have cooled fire and prostrated lions under your feet.”

She had also brought down food from heaven and fed many people, had made water come out from a rock, had made the poison of the serpent to vanish immediately, had sent a letter by a raven to a distance of about four months, had raised the dead by her remains, had grown a harvest in one single day, had restored men that were cannibalizing back to feeding normal human food, had returned back the teeth of the bandits that were plucked off to their proper place, and had crossed a sea miraculously with her garments.

Covenant (Kədan)

In Ethiopian hagiographic tradition, ‘covenant’ is one component part of the hagiography of saints.¹¹ It narrates how God has given a covenant for the remembrance of the saint, usually endowed at the end of his/her earthly life or following the accomplishment of a major spiritual virtue by the saint. In a similar manner, our Lord has given a covenant to St. Fəqərtä Krəstos for all her sufferings and spiritual struggles in a married life, in martyrdom, and in ascetic life, all for the sake of the love of God. The Lord accordingly has promised her that He will keep her church till the Day of Judgment and that any sinner who partakes of the Holy Communion in her church will get remission of his sins.

He has also given her a covenant that anyone who calls on her name in prayer and does a commemoration of her, and anyone who writes, translates and reads or hears her hagiography, or participates in this process to the extent of his capacity will be rewarded with a price that the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard and the heart has not imagined. Anyone who also comes to her monastery on a pilgrimage and salutes the church built by her own hands will be blessed by the Lord Jesus Christ and will be forgiven until twelve generations and His blessings will be upon him and his offsprings. Finally, He has promised to give her the crown for her fastings, prayers, struggles, and steadfastness in her persecution.

In her hagiography, we read the following words of covenant that she had received from God at the end of her life:

[127] And our Lord said to her, let all be as per your word. All men who do your remembrance and call on your name, let them be blessed, as My Name has been added into your name, and anyone who gives an offering to your church, [and] ministers and is buried and has kissed [saluted] your church, from far and near, from right and left, and I give you a covenant up to twelve generations, and let blessing reside on his children and property; and those who travel by sea and land, when they call on your name, [and] let them be saved from temptation; where the book of your hagiography is, devils and satans shall not approach.

God had given her a covenant in relation to anyone who calls on her name in prayer and does her remembrance, and also anyone who writes, translates and reads or hears her hagiography:

[128] And on the crops, when your name is called, let them be full of fruit and grow big. All men who supplicate with your prayer, let them be saved; and blessed is the man who remembers your name in righteousness. He who writes and made it to be written, who reads and interprets and hears the book of your hagiography without doubt in upright faith, and if he gives bread even just a cup of

¹¹ Steven Kaplan, 2005, *Gädl*, EAe, vol.2, p. 642

cold water, his sins will be pardoned, and let him pass with you visibly and cross over the sea of fire in front of you. And the sick will be healed with the prayer of your spiritual struggle.

Finally, God has given seven crowns of martyrdom to St. Fəqərtä Krəstos for all the struggles of her whole life: in a married life, in her martyrdom and in her ascetic life for His sake.

[129] In lieu of the fatigue and exile, and in lieu of the hunger and afflictions that have befallen you in this world during the time of foreigners, the blood you have spilled, and for your wanderings to all places, and for your renouncing of the world, and in lieu of your struggles and fastings and prayers and prostrations, all these as tithe, and I give you seven crowns, o my beloved forever. And After He gave all these covenants to our mother Fəqərtä Krəstos, our Lord ascended unto His Throne of glory, Angels praising in their rank, saying holy, holy, holy.

Mälk'Ə (Effigi)

In Ethiopian hagiographic tradition, Mälk'Ə is also one part of the hagiography of saints and is written in the form of poems. It describes the physical body parts of the saint, the Holy Virgin Mary Mother of God, the Holy Trinity, or Jesus Christ¹² to salute, praise and venerate in prayer. Mälk'Ə is originally an Ethiopic genre in the history of hagiographic literature and more flourished during the time of the Gondarine period.¹³ The Mälk'Ə' of saints are used in personal devotion to the saint and in the church service during the feasts of each saint in prayer.

The Church celebrates the feast day of the saints in various decorated ceremonies that include the hymns of St. Yared by scholars of the Church starting from the eve throughout the whole night and concluded by the celebration of the Divine Liturgy the next day. In addition to personal and communal prayers, Mälk'Ə of saints are particularly relevant at the feast day of the saints in the praises and hymn with salutation to each of the members of the body of the saint. Most of the Mälk'Əs of saints have common patterns of writing in that each salutation has five lines and the salutation begins from the remembrance of the saint's name and it usually ends with a salutation to their tomb where their precious relics have rested till the day of the resurrection. St. Fəqərtä Krəstos has two types of Mälk'Əs; the main Mälk'Ə and Tərəfä (additional) Mälk'Ə.

7.2. Identical Incipt (Beginning) and Desinit (End)

Most of the hagiographies incipt (beginning) and desinit (end) have a common character that begins with the Name of the Holy Trinity and ends with a prayer of supplication to the saint. For example, the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos begins with [1] In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, One God, we begin with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Name of the Holy Trinity, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, of Three Hypostases and three Faces and three Names.

And with And now I will write the struggle of the loved ones and the elects of God that lives, and the struggle of this saint and His elect, and honored our lady, the blessed Fəqərtä Krəstos, righteous. (Section [4]) Then ends with May her prayer and blessing and supplication and the power of her help be a shield to all of us who are her communities and her people, may it keep us and be our helper at the time of judgment and preserve us till the last breath, forever and ever Amen. Let it be, let it be, may the Angels say Amen. (Section [134]) So we see that the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos has this common hagiographical character of beginning with the Name of the Holy Trinity and ending with such type of

¹² Getatchew Haile, *Malké'a Gabré'el*, Encyclopaedia Aethiopica, vol.3, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, p.702., Steven Kaplan, 2005, *Gädl*, Encyclopaedia Aethiopica, vol.2, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, p. 642

¹³ Habtemichael Kidane 2007, Mälk'Ə, Encyclopaedia Aethiopica, vol.3, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, p. 700-702).

prayer of supplication to the saint.

The hagiographies of saints not only have Incipit and Desinit of the main text but also at the text on their miracles. As a result the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos has miracles and each miracle has Incipit and Desinit.¹⁴ The incipit of, Ta'ammər six, three and five are almost similar, it says: The miracle of our blessed mother Fəqərtä Krəstos, may her prayers and blessings be with her servant Fəqərtä Maryam, forever and ever, Amen. And the desinit of Ta'ammər three, six, four, and one are similar and say: May her prayers and blessings be with the soul of the sinner and guilty and Gäbrä Mädhən and with her servant Tädbabä Maryam, forever and ever, Amen.

7.3. Resemblance of the Saint's Parents with "Abraham - Sarah and Joachim -Hannah":

In the majority of Ethiopic hagiographies, there is a commonly observed character of associating the parents of the saint with that of former saints like: Abraham - Sarah and Joachim –Hannah, Elisabeth and Zachariah. The writers of the hagiographies usually use the names "Abraham - Sarah and Joachim - Hannah" to express the righteousness of the parents of the saints. Hence in most of Ethiopic hagiographies, we find common word of expression saying "her/his father was godly as Abraham the righteous and her/his mother was godly too as Sarah and as Joachim and Hannah, the parents of the Virgin Mary". So as an Ethiopic hagiography, in Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos too we find such similar narration with regards to her parents in the same manner.

7.4. Childlessness of their Parents

Childlessness or infertility of the saints' parents is also another common character of Ethiopic hagiography. Therefore, usually in the hagiographies of the saints, it is written that their parents were grieving due to their childlessness and they are shown to have been praying persistently unto God to get children. Then after God heard their prayer, He gave them a blessed child. In the same way, we find in the life of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos this expression of infertility of her parents.

7.5. The Birth with Annunciation of an Angel and Prophecy:

In Ethiopic hagiographic custom, saints are usually conceived with the annunciation of the Angel of God and a prophecy about their sainthood. As the birth of a saint is a blessing to the parents and the world, and as it is an event that should not go unnoticed, the birth of some saints is foretold and indicated to their parents in the form of prophesy.¹⁵ As a result, we read in many of the hagiographies of saints that the parents of the saints first lived in a deprived life whereby they would be crying with unceasing prayer unto God. God hear their prayer and send His Angel to them to announce the conception of a blessed child. In a similar pattern, the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos speaks about the annunciation of her birth and prophesizes on her future saintly life by the Angel of God. In this account, the Angel of God told her parents about her sainthood, resembling her with former ascetic women saints.

In addition to the annunciation by the Angel of God a prophecy about her future sainthood was foretold by a righteous monk who came to teach her after a revelation from God in a vision. He came to her parents and told them about her future life.

¹⁴ The miracles of the Manuscript Gädlä St. Fəqərtä Krəstos obtained from Däbrä Ləbanos Abunä Täklähaymanot Communal Monastery.

¹⁵ Mersha Alehegn, "Regularity and Uniformity in the Ethiopian Hagiographical Tradition: A Particular Focus on Narrating the Childhood of Saints." AAU, Aethiopica 18 (2015), (I.J.E.E.S). page.150

7.6. Divine Assistance Sent to Martyrs¹⁶ during Their Suffering

God sends His assistance to His martyrs while they are suffering for His holy love. God sends His Angels in order to comfort and strengthen the martyrs amidst their afflictions, and they would come out of the confines of affliction or prison with a renewed energy and courage, as if nothing had happened to them. This is a common miraculous narration that is found in the many of the hagiography of saints. For example, St. Fəqərtä Krəstos is assisted by St. Micha'el during her suffering by the king. After she was fiercely tormented and thrown unto prison, St. Micha'el came unto her and healed her, and she appeared again at the site of affliction as if she had come out of the bathroom. We also get a similar content, narration and way of expression in the hagiography of St. Demianna.¹⁷

7.7. Received Covenant for their Struggle from God

Most of the hagiography of saints, narrate the covenant of the saint received from God at the end of their life, when they are ill or at their last breath. Generally, most of their covenants are similar with a slight difference.

7.8. Common Salutation Patterns of the Mälk'Ə

In the EOTC, there are different Mälk'Əs written in honoring God and His saints. These include: The Mälk'Ə of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Mälk'Əa Iyesus), The Mälk'Ə of Holy Virgin Mary, the Mother of God (Mälk'Əa Maryam) and the Mälk'Ə of saints (For Example Mälk'Əa St. Fəqərtä Krəstos) including Mälk'Ə of Holy Angels of God (For Example Mälk'Əa St. Micha'el). In the hagiographic tradition, most of the beginning salutations of Mälk'Əs are similar only with slight differences. The Mälk'Ə generally begins from the name of the saint and it describes the whole physical appearance including the inside and outer parts of the body from the beginning to the end, concluding his/her tomb. In EOTC, Most of the Mälk'Ə of each saint generally has five lines in each stanzas with a common patterns of salutation beginning from the remembrance of the saint's name and ending with a salutation to their tomb where their precious relics are at rests

7.9. Resembling of the Saint's Life with Early Saints

St. Fəqərtä Krəstos is recognized as a martyr through her sufferings and death, and as a nun through her monastic life. She was also an abbess, as she had served her monastery as a good spiritual mother and leader until her death. The researcher has examined the text and analyzed the relevant passages, and in doing so, illustrates how the martyrdom of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos imitates earlier martyrologies. The writer of the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos mentions the names of early Christian martyrs by comparing her life with theirs. Therefore, similarities between the account of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos and early martyrologies can be interpreted in such a way that the author modeled the narrative to be a martyrology, like Barbara, Aresema, etc. Likewise, the monastic life of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos imitates earlier monastic nuns like Illariya, Euphraxia, etc. Hence St. Fəqərtä Krəstos's life could be recognized as and in the manner of the early Christian witnesses and monastics.

In the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos, we find her life and struggles interrelated with that of the virtues of earlier saints as models. For example, when she was not able to cross the river of Jordan, she recited the hagiography of Abunä Əwostatəwos and crossed the river by following his deeds and examples in faith using her garment.

¹⁶ The Saint suffered in both types of martyrdom, i.e. in blood shading and in ascetical life.

¹⁷ Zewdie Gebreegziabher, 2008 (E.C), *The Martyr St. Demianna*, Jajaw Printing press, A.A.

The vita of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos contains *literary conventions* typical to martyrology and monastic accounts in order to associate her with early Christian martyrs and nuns. The Gädl personifies St. Fəqərtä Krəstos with female martyrs and nuns described in early Christian saints by likening her characteristics with the renowned martyrs. The narrative describes patterns of common passions of women and nuns like St. Barbara (the rock hiding her when the soldiers want to beat her during her martyrdom), St. Ilarya (through indicating masculine virtues during her nunhood), Enba Märina (she was accused as a man that has abused a woman and received the child that was not hers), etc.

The connection of the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos to early Christian women and local Christian women martyrs and nuns is following the approaches of local hagiographical tradition. The literary themes and patterns found in the text shows that common characteristics to ancient Christian martyrologies and monastic hagiographies. Therefore, the hagiography of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos is connected to the literary components and manifestations of the earlier genres of hagiography.

The theme of her early life, divine election, martyrdom, ascetic life, and the death of St. Fəqərtä Krəstos found in the hagiography resembles early Christian martyrologies and ascetics. In the beginning of the hagiography, the content of the expression about her parents, their life of sainthood, their infertility and childlessness, annunciation for getting a child by the Angel of God are similar to the hagiographies of other early Christian and Ethiopian saints. We find in the narration part of the annunciation of the Angel of God to her parents, as follows:

[8] . . . and from you will come out a daughter who is wonderful in all of her deeds and upright in her Faith as Oreni and Barbara and Ilareya as Eupraxia and Senaser. And her fame will go out to the end of the world, and she will struggle for the upright Faith and men will be saved by her prayer. She is blessed fruit of the womb [and] the beloved of God. And saying this, the Angel of annunciation departed and disappeared.

The researcher has investigated the literary components of the hagiography in terms of themes and frameworks to relate the content of her hagiography to earlier ascetic and martyrology hagiographies.

Conclusion

St. Fəqərtä Krəstos is a marvelous Ethiopian woman saint of the 17th and she had witnessed to the Faith and endured afflictions and ultimately became crowned with martyrdom. St. Fəqərtä Krəstos has made many and valuable contributions in returning King Susənyos back to his Orthodox faith through the establishment and reestablishment of monasteries and in the building of churches. Therefore her manuscripts are significant in literature and other studies. Ethiopic manuscripts are usually their own Character and pattern to describe about the life and struggle of the saint in a particular way; however they have also inter-related patterns shared each other.

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