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Ecclesiastic dress in Medieval Ethiopia:

Preliminary remarks on the visual evidence

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Introduction

Travellers to Ethiopia are invariably struck by the variety of religious, practical, and aesthetic purposes for which textiles are used by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church – the largest of the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Carpets spread out to cover the floors remind those who enter that they are treading on sacred ground and must remove their footwear. The sanctuary is veiled by two large curtains which shield it from the gaze of curious visitors and congregation members alike. Textiles line the inside of manuscript covers and are used as a surface for painting and for wrapping sacred objects. Fabrics are draped around the shafts of processional crosses to enhance their symbolic value or wrapped around the *tabot* – the altar tablet kept in the sanctuary of Ethiopian churches which ought not to be seen by laymen – when this is taken out of the church in procession. Textiles are also used to make the tents that house the *tabot* during *Ṭəmḳät*, the Ethiopian celebration of the Epiphany, as well as the liturgical umbrellas that are placed above it, to symbolize the dome of heaven, during processions. But, above all, visitors will probably be struck by the colourfulness and rich variety of vestments worn by the Ethiopian clergy during processions, religious celebrations, and everyday life.

A considerable amount of literature is available on the production of textiles in modern-day Ethiopia, and there exists a more limited amount of material on the

history of weaving and imported textiles; there are also a couple of case studies that present some early modern curtains discovered in a small group of Ethiopian churches.¹ Readers will however struggle to find information about the history of the textiles and vestments used by the Ethiopian Church. Moreover, the few studies dealing with the topic focus on terminology rather than on morphology, and on the contemporary or near contemporary rather than on the historical.² As a result, there exists almost no information on textiles of the Ethiopian Church with regard to their technological, cultural, theological or aesthetic developments over the centuries.

The limited number of historical studies focusing on the use, function, and appearance of vestments in the Ethiopian Church is hardly a surprise, for writing such a history is a most daunting task for any historian. The problem is twofold. On the one hand, the vestments of the Eastern Churches have received extremely limited attention in scholarly literature, so one has to start virtually from scratch, as has been emphasized elsewhere.³ On the other hand, textiles, when not preserved under the right conditions, are a very perishable material. When visiting ecclesiastical institutions in Ethiopia, one will soon notice that the priests are far more concerned about preserving manuscripts and paraphernalia than textiles. To my knowledge, the earliest examples of ecclesiastical vestments preserved in Ethiopian churches cannot be much older than the 18th century. But given the vast amount of work that needs to be carried out to document the rich artistic heritage of Ethiopia, it is more than possible that this assumption will be proven wrong in the future.

Although it goes without saying that the further back we try to look, the harder it becomes to find solid evidence on which to base a history of Ethiopian ecclesiastical vestments, it is likely that the use of garments to distinguish the clergy from the laity must date back to the spread of Christianity in this region during the Aksumite period (c. 4th-8th centuries AD). However, to make any credible statement about Ethiopian church textiles, it is essential to first turn our attention to the unexplored realm of the textual and visual sources in order to get an initial grip and perspective on the subject.

The aim of this paper is to take a modest step in this direction. By means of several case studies, it sets out to shed some light on the function and morphology of ecclesiastical dress in Ethiopia during the early Solomonic period (1270-1527) by a survey of relevant documents and images – miniatures in particular – produced in this period.⁴

Textual sources

It needs no explanation that textual documents, unexplored as they are, form an essential source of information for reconstructing the history of Ethiopian ecclesiastical vestments. In fact, at closer inspection the rich corpus of documents produced by the Ethiopian Church over the centuries offers a treasure trove of information about its use of textiles. Among these documents, which have yet to be systematically investigated, Church inventories are especially helpful. They usually appear in the form of a note added to a manuscript enumerating the possessions of a church. Their value as a historical source is that they provide lists of terms and give an idea of the number and types of textiles owned by a church at a given period, though they tell us little about their function and symbolism.⁵ Much more useful to understand these latter aspects are hagiographies (*gädl*), especially when they were originally written in, rather than translated into, Gə‘əz – a member of the Ethio-Semitic language family now used only for the liturgy of the Ethiopian and Eritrean Orthodox Churches.⁶

This is not to say that it is an easy matter to decode the liturgical function and the symbolic meaning of church textiles from these sources. To illustrate the complexities involved in this line of research, we may examine several hagiographies where the initiation into monkhood coincides with the bestowal of a vestment, known as the *askäma*.⁷ This term, as Lanfranco Ricci has shown, can easily cause confusion because it is used to indicate both a generic monastic garment (or tunic) given to a novice who enters the monastic life, as well as the scapular which is given to a monk who reaches the final stage of his ordination.⁸ For example, the term is used in the former sense in the Life of Libanos (*fl.* 5th-6th centuries AD), in which an angel instructs the holy man to become a monk by receiving the *askäma*, while Libanos himself bestows the *askäma* to many monks.⁹ On the other hand, the meaning of the term as scapular is, according to Ricci, implied in a passage from the Life of ‘Enbaqom (*c.* 1470-*c.* 1560), in which the holy man is seen as the spiritual father of Yoḥannəs because of his *askäma*.¹⁰

There are also texts in which the *askäma* is related to other pieces of outfit. In a passage of the Life of Samu’el of Däbrä Halleluya (*d.* 1347 or 1375) when the novice-saint becomes a monk he acquires not only an *askäma*, but also a *qob*, which is a skull-cap.¹¹ Different vestments are mentioned in the Life of Gäbrä Mänfäs Qəddus

(c. 1300-c. 1382): at the end of his novitiate, the saint receives the *askäma* together with a cilice made of horsehair which, we are told, was similar to a *qənat*.¹² The *qənat* was a girdle that could be (but did not have to be) tied around the waist as part of the monastic habit.¹³ This girdle can also be referred to in the sources as *zennar*, or *fiqar* / *fəqar*.¹⁴ It was used to keep the *qämis* (or *qämiş*) in place.¹⁵ The *qämis* was the Ethiopian equivalent of the Greek *sticharion* (deacon's tunic) or the western alb, a tunic with long sleeves which reached down to the feet, used also in the Coptic and Syrian Churches.¹⁶ It was the principal under-vestment used by the Ethiopian clergy.¹⁷ Setting aside some of the complex questions related to the order in which vestments were bestowed to clergyman in Ethiopia, two relevant points emerge from these textual sources.¹⁸ The first is that the four items named above – the tunic, the scapular, the skull-cap, and the girdle – were the four basic garments used by Ethiopian monks. The second is that these textiles were apparently not worn according to any rigorous liturgical regulations or dress codes.¹⁹

The visual sources

While textual documents offer some insight into the terms used for ecclesiastical vestments and their function, they seldom provide much, if any, information about their form and appearance. It is, for instance, impossible to determine from the texts what the *askäma* looked like, whether its appearance changed over time, or whether different types were in use in different monastic communities.²⁰ As the written sources are silent on these matters, we have to turn to the visual sources, including miniatures in manuscripts, for information about the forms of Ethiopian ecclesiastical vestments.

Again, this is not a straightforward matter, as it is not certain to what degree the visual sources are a reflection of the 'reality' of their time. Still, they can offer a wealth of information. Let us take as an example the late 13th-century portrait of the Ethiopian Saint Iyäsus Mo'a (c.1214-c.1293), depicted at the beginning of a Gospel manuscript he commissioned (Fig. 1). This portrait appears to give us a sense of the appearance of some of the monastic vestments discussed above.²¹ The saint is shown standing under an arch, wearing a long red tunic that reaches down to his ankles and a black pointed skull-cap which we can identify as a *qob*. His right arm, which he uses to hold up a staff-cross, is bare, which suggests that the tunic has short sleeves, or that

these are not tightly bound around the wrists.²² A girdle outlined with a black pattern of circles (perhaps representing links of a chain), runs around his waist and keeps the tunic in place.²³ In short, it seems that the *askäma*, the *qob*, and the *qanat*, and perhaps the *qämis*, known from the textual sources like the ones discussed above, are all depicted here.

Ethiopian miniatures of the early Solomonic period often have captions to help the viewer identify the subject and strengthen the link between text and image. Occasionally, these captions provide information about some of the objects depicted in the miniature, which offers the opportunity to associate a term with a visualisation of a particular item.²⁴ This is the case, for instance, in a miniature of David from the Psalter of Bəlen Sägädä.²⁵ In this illustration an attendant holds an item identified in the caption as a *dəbab* (umbrella) over the king's head.²⁶ A more relevant example is offered by a late-14th/early-15th century miniature of Gäbrä Krəstos (Saint Alexius) from a manuscript in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.²⁷ In this picture of the Saint a girdle, unusually shown dangling from his side, is identified in the caption as 'his *fiqar*' (Fig. 2).²⁸

However, because captions such as the one in the miniature of Gäbrä Krəstos are rare, and because the style of Ethiopian painting of the early Solomonic Period is flat and abstract, the identification of the vestments depicted in miniatures from this period is often quite challenging. Even in the portrait of Iyäsus Mo'a, mentioned above, it is difficult to determine exactly what type of vestment is wrapped around his shoulders (Fig. 1). The garment in question is light red and seems to be made from a large rectangular piece of fabric that totally covers his shoulders and falls to his ankles like his tunic. The two ends of the fabric seem to be fastened together over the breast of the saint, leaving an opening for the neck which also made the *qämis* (tunic) visible to the viewer.

This must be a representation of a priestly mantle, such as the ones also known to have been worn by Coptic monks, which could be used to cover the shoulders.²⁹ However, because of the limited research carried out on this topic, there is uncertainty about the term that should be used to identify it: could this be the *gəlbab* / *gelbabe*, or the *mändil*?³⁰ In any case, the visual evidence indicates that this type of vestment varied in length and width and could be worn in different ways, such as wrapped over one shoulder, passed across the back under the armpit, and passed over the opposite arm; or wrapped around both shoulders with one end left longer and passed over both

arms.³¹ In the 16th-century Francisco Álvares (*c.*1465-*after* 1536) observed that Ethiopian monks ‘wear silk cloaks, not well made, because they are not wider than the width of a piece of damask or other silk, from top to bottom’.³²

Another intriguing detail in the portrait of Iyäsus Mo’a is the short black strip of fabric placed around his neck and crossed over his chest. One could assume this detail to be a coloured hem, were it not for the fact that in another illustration from the same manuscript the same detail is clearly distinguished from the cope or mantle (Fig. 3).³³ This second miniature features a portrait of Ǝstifanos (Saint Stephen the Protomartyr), who is portrayed in front of an altar holding a Eucharistic chalice in his left hand and a piece of textile in his right hand, to which we shall return below. The saint wears a tunic, a girdle, but no skull-cap. He has a sleeveless over-vestment, like the one worn by Iyäsus Mo’a, but in this instance the vestment is not clasped at the front and there is a thin strip of white cloth decorated with a cross wrapped around his neck and crossed over his chest.

This latter item resembles the short black strip of fabric which appears in the depiction of Iyäsus Mo’a, though in the portrait of Ǝstifanos it is clearly detached from the over-garment. It is difficult to identify this vestment. It may be an *orariion*-type garment (stole), though it is not long as it is in other depictions of it discussed below,³⁴ or the Ethiopian equivalent of a rationale (*table*), a humeral collar with appendages at the front and back which symbolises the breast ornament worn by the Jewish high-priest and which is known as *logyon / logiyon / logyo* in Ethiopic.³⁵

The above-mentioned item in the right hand of Ǝstifanos can be more confidently identified as a liturgical handkerchief, which can be tentatively referred to as a *säbän*, although I have not found this specific term used in inventories or in the sources I consulted.³⁶ In any case, this type of handkerchief appears in numerous miniatures from the early Solomonic period.³⁷ One example appears in a miniature from the 16th-century Gospels of Säwnä Maryam (Fig. 4).³⁸ In the right folio of this two-page spread, three Major Prophets – Ezekiel and Daniel in the lower left corner and Jeremiah in the upper right corner – are shown holding a short strip of cloth decorated with fringes and horizontal stripes. Their handkerchiefs have the same width of the stole (*moṭaḥt* or *ḥablä kəsad*) placed around the neck of Elijah (in the upper left corner).³⁹

The Ethiopian handkerchiefs depicted in the Säwnä Maryam Gospel are reminiscent of the early form of the Latin maniple rather than of the Greek *epigonation*.⁴⁰ In

late-antique Rome, handkerchiefs were carried by consuls as a mark of distinction, as shown by consular diptychs such as that of Anicius Faustus Albinus Basilius (*fl.* 6th century).⁴¹ This consular ornament seems to have been adopted as a mark of distinction by the Latin Church.⁴² Although later worn on the wrist, as its name reveals, the maniple was originally held in the hand, as shown by the portrait of the Deacon Peter on the early 10th-century Maniple of Saint Cuthbert (*d.* 687), the portrait of the Archbishop Stigand (*d.* 1072) on the famous 11th-century Bayeux Tapestry, or the portraits of ecclesiastical figures in the presentation miniature in the 9th-century Vivian Bible.⁴³ To mention a context closer to Ethiopia, one can also see a maniple in an 11th-century representation of bishop Joannes **iii** (*fl.* 9th century) from Faras (Lower Nubia).⁴⁴

Handkerchiefs were also used as a mark of episcopal distinction in the Coptic Church.⁴⁵ Since close ties existed between Ethiopia and Alexandria, by exploring this connection in further depth we may learn more about the origin of this ecclesiastical attribute in the Ethiopian tradition. However, in modern Ethiopia the handkerchiefs seem to have fallen into disuse, as they are not mentioned in any of the lists of ecclesiastical vestments mentioned above. Yet, the visual evidence clearly suggests that handkerchiefs in Ethiopia were used as a mark of distinction and as a liturgical attribute.⁴⁶ The latter use is confirmed by the account of Francisco Alvares, from which it can be concluded that handkerchiefs were still being used in a liturgical context in 16th-century Ethiopia.⁴⁷

Liturgical cuffs (*akmam / kəmam*) were also used in Ethiopia.⁴⁸ These were, in the words of Hammerschmidt, ‘nothing else than the Arabic *akmām* [...] the “sleeves”, τὰ ἐπιμανίκια (*epimanikia*), [...], some sort of embroidered cuffs or armllets which are meant to hold the sleeves of the *qāmīs* together’.⁴⁹ Similar cuffs or sleeves also became part of the Coptic and Syrian liturgical costumes after the 15th century, but little is known about their early origin and morphology.⁵⁰ Their appearance in the Ethiopian tradition also requires further investigation, but, according to Hammerschmidt, their use, just like that of the handkerchief, has declined during the 20th century.⁵¹

It is difficult to find indisputable evidence that the *akmam* were part of the ecclesiastical costume in Ethiopia during the early Solomonic period, although there are some miniatures in which the figures appear to have some sort of armllets which could be the *akmam*. This is the case, for instance, in the representation of the

Washing of the Feet in the 14th/15th-century Gospels of Boru Śállase, in which Christ's red tunic seems to have white cuffs (Fig. 5).⁵² Another possible example is the portrait of St. John found in a lavishly illustrated 15th-century manuscript from Gəšän Maryam, in which the evangelist's red tunic has yellow embroidered cuffs (Fig. 6).⁵³

Most of the figures depicted in the 16th-century Säwnä Maryam folios, with the exception of those in the lower left register, wear a similar type of over-vestment, which is left open in front and has openings for the head and arms (Fig. 4). This garment, which resembles a Greek *phelonion* rather than a western chasuble, is probably a *kappa*.⁵⁴ Hammerschmidt describes the *kappa* as 'the over-vestment of priests, which may go back to a vestment worn by the nobles', and he adds that 'in former times it was similar to the western cope with a hood, descending from the neck to just somewhat under the knee and fastened at the collar'.⁵⁵ In the Säwnä Maryam miniature the ends of the copes appear to be sewn together, but in other miniatures the two ends of the *kappa* appear to be fastened at the front by a cross-shaped clasp, as illustrated by a miniature of Ǝstīfanos in a 15th/16th-century manuscript containing his *gädl* (Fig. 7).⁵⁶

The visual evidence suggests that in most cases the *kappa* had an opening for the arms and head, whereas in some cases it only had a hole for the head, like a chasuble.⁵⁷ It is likely that both shapes existed at the same time, though the former shape is attested more often than the latter. Other representations show that the *kappa* may also have had a hood, as shown by the portrait of Saint Mark in the Gospels of Iyäsus Mo'a (Fig. 8).⁵⁸ In Ethiopian miniatures of the early Solomonic period, the Evangelist Mark is often depicted with a hooded *kappa*, as already noted by Marilyn Heldman, who interprets this iconographic detail as a 'reference to the fact that successors of Mark at the patriarchal See of Alexandria were chosen from the Egyptian monastic community'.⁵⁹ Indeed, in Ethiopian illumination hoods are often, but not always,⁶⁰ depicted as part of the vestment of figures related to Egyptian monasticism.⁶¹ Hoods also appear in miniatures as attributes of bishops, which suggests that Ethiopian artists were aware of the dress tradition of the Coptic Church.⁶²

Together with the *mändil* and the *kappa*, Hammerschmidt mentions a third type of over-vestment, the *lanqa* / *länqa*,⁶³ He describes this garment as 'typical of the Ethiopian church', adding that 'it could be compared to a *mozzetta*, with five long strips hanging down from the shoulders'.⁶⁴ A portrait of Saint Luke in a late 13th-

century copy of the apocryphal *Lives of the Apostles* kept at the Monastery of Hayq Ḥṣṭifanos may offer an early depiction of this type of over-vestment (Fig. 9).⁶⁵ The saint wears an elbow-length garment that covers his shoulders and breast, but it is unclear whether the sections of the same fabric which fall to the back of his calf represent two strips of a *länqa* or are part of a cope-type mantle, like the ‘capas of the fashion of the Dominican friars’ described by Alvares.⁶⁶

The three prophets in the upper register of the right folio of the aforementioned Säwnä Maryam Gospel (Elijah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah) appear to have another vestment below their *kappa* (Fig. 4). The two-dimensional style of Ethiopian painting complicates the identification of this detail. It is possible that this is a representation of a scapular-type garment such as the *askäma*, but it is equally possible that it is a type of stole.⁶⁷ The presence of a stole type of garment on the neck of Elijah (the figure to the left on the right page) adds weight to former argument, whereas the fact that the band of cloth around the neck of Isaiah (the central of the three figures on the right page) is divided by a line across the middle, like a Greek *epitrachelion*, supports the latter hypothesis.⁶⁸ Perhaps the garment depicted in the Säwnä Maryam miniature corresponds to the one described by Alvares as a ‘long stole with an opening in the middle to allow the head to pass through [which] before and behind [...] reaches to the ground’.⁶⁹

Conclusion

This preliminary survey suggests that our knowledge of Ethiopian ecclesiastical vestments can be greatly improved by examining the visual evidence in the light of textual sources, and vice versa. Evidently this is only a first step and several questions remain to be solved. It is now clear though, that they may be fruitfully addressed by a more systematic integrated survey of both the visual and the textual sources. In doing so, it will be important to bear in mind that images can only be taken as a *terminus ante quem* for the use of a particular vestment, and that they cannot always be taken as a reliable source of information, let alone as solid evidence: the miniatures may be affected by foreign models, or may be distorted by stylistic preferences or artistic freedom. It is precisely for that reason that they should not be studied in isolation from the written sources.

On the other hand, the study of textual sources alone remains a barren undertaking

without visual context. Both types of information come of course directly together in manuscripts with inscriptions that refer to one or more of the vestments depicted in a miniature. The cataloguing of these manuscripts will undoubtedly be a great help in associating the various terms used to refer to ecclesiastical over-vestments to specific types of garment.

Hopefully, this survey has also shown that it will be important for future research to compare Ethiopian ecclesiastical vestments with those of neighbouring regions and of other churches across the Mediterranean. In particular, given the close ties between the Coptic Church and the Ethiopian Church, it will be necessary to explore this relation in greater depth. A more systematic study of the visual evidence will also be of importance in attempting to determine whether it is possible to distinguish different ecclesiastic ranks or monastic branches by variations in their dress.⁷⁰

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Notes

¹ The most thorough works on the history of weaving in Ethiopia are Gervers 1988 and *idem.* 1990. For the history of imported textiles see for instance Pankhurst 1980 and Henze 2007. For case studies on church textiles see for instance, see Balicka-Witakowska and Gervers 1996.

² The two principal studies on the subject of Ethiopian ecclesiastical vestments are those of Teclé Mariam Semharay Selam 1930; and Hammerschmidt 1970. To these one may add a list of non-scholarly works, such as that of Hyatt 1928, 131-46; and Chaillot 2002, 96, 103-4.

³ Innemée 1992.

⁴ Scholars have long recognized the value of studying images to improve our understanding of the history of textiles, see Macalister 1896 for an early example, and now Innemée 1992. See Woodfin 2012 for two excellent examples of this approach. Some work has already been carried out on Ethiopian lay costumes, see Chojnacki 1983.

⁵ See Bausi 1994, for several examples of such inventories.

⁶ On hagiographies in Ethiopic, see Kaplan 2005 with further references.

⁷ On the term *askäma* (አስከማ), see Dillmann 1865, 752; Guidi 1901, 445 describes the *askäma* as a ‘specie di scapolare formato di due parti che cadono una sul petto e l’altra sul dorso, e terminate ciascuna da una grossa croce di cuoio, con altre 10 croci, in tutto 12 croci (corrispondenti alle 12 pietre del *rationale* del sommo sacerdote). È portato da i monaci dopo che fanno la 3a professione [...]’ – [‘A sort of scapular made of two parts which fall respectively over the chest and back, and which end with a large leather cross, with 10 other crosses, for a total of 12 crosses (which correspond to the 12 stones of the rationale of the High Priest). It is worn by monks who make their third declaration’]. Cf. also Leslau 1987, 43.

⁸ Ricci 1966, 93-4; Ricci 1969-70, 148-50; on the inconsistent use of the term *askäma*, see also Bausi 2003, ii, n. 35; and Nosnitsin 2005, esp. 205, n. 22. On the existence of a system of grades within Ethiopian monasticism, see Tamrat 1972, 165; Ricci 1966, 94; Guidi 1901, 90. For a list of other terms used to refer to an unspecified monastic garb, see Nosnitsin 2005, 205.

⁹ For the receiving of the *askäma*, see Bausi 2003 (vol. 1), 13 [text], and *Idem* (vol. 2), 9 [translation]; for the bestowing of the *askäma*, see Bausi 2003 (vol.1), 57 [text], and *Idem* (vol.2), 36 [translation]; for some additional examples, see Brita 2010, 86-8, n. 116

¹⁰ Ricci 1969-70, 191.

¹¹ For the passage, see Colin 1990 (vol.1), 8 [text], and *Idem* (vol.2), 7 [translation]; see also Brita 2010, 89-91. On the term *qob* (ቆብ), see Guidi 1901, 274; and Leslau 1987, 418.

¹² Marrassini 2003, 12-3 in vol.1 [text], and 4 in vol.2 [translation].

¹³ On the term *qanät* (ቅናት), see Guidi 1901, 283, who also describes it as a rope placed around the neck; and Leslau 1987, 435; see also Marrassini 2003, xli in vol.1.

¹⁴ On the girdle in general, see Hyatt 1928, 146; and Hammerschmidt 1970, 153. On the term *zennar* (ዝናር), see Dillmann 1865, 1360; and Leslau 1987, 641. On the term *fiqar / faqar* (ፊቃር / ፍቃር), see Dillmann 1865, 1360; and Leslau 1987, 165.

¹⁵ On the term *qämis / qämiš* (ቀሚስ / ቀሚሶ), see Dillmann 1865, 420; Guidi 1901, 248; and Leslau 1987, 432-3. On the vestment, see Hyatt 1928, 139-40.

¹⁶ Innemée 1992, 44-5 and 77.

¹⁷ Hammerschmidt 1970, 152-3.

¹⁸ See Nosnitsin 2005 for a detailed study of the sources; though it is evident that further research on the matter is required.

¹⁹ Tamrat 1972, 164-6.

²⁰ In Egypt, Coptic monks wore the ‘*skhēma*, a garment like a scapular marked with a cross, which recalled the cross of Christ’ (Morfin-Gourdiér 1991, ii, 650-2). In the Syrian Church the term ‘*eskēmā*’ is used to refer to a hood or to a scapular with a hood, see Innemée 1992, 81.

²¹ Hayq ʿĪṣṭifanos, Gospels of Iyāsus Mo’a, 1280/1281, f. 5v. On this manuscript, see Balicka-Witakowska 1997, 123-4; and Gnisci 2015a with further bibliography; on the portrait, see Bosc-Tiessé 2011.

²² In which case, the vestment might be better described as a *colobium*, a short-sleeved tunic used by Egyptian monks: On the term *läbiṭon / läbiṭos / läbiṭonar*. (ለቢጥን / ለቢጥስ / ለቢጥናር), see Dillmann 1865, 45; and Leslau 1987, 306. For a miniature in which the tunic clearly has short sleeves, see the figure of John the Baptist in a manuscript reproduced in Heldman 1989, fig. 8.

²³ In the first half of the 16th century, Francisco Alvares witnessed that one of the ascetic practices of Ethiopian monks involved wearing an iron girdle, see Beckingham and Huntingford 1961, 392 in vol.2. On the use of chains for ascetic purposes, see also Merdassa Kassaye 2003, 763.

²⁴ However, as I discuss in a forthcoming article on Psalter illustration, Gnisci forthcoming, objects in Ethiopian miniatures are not always associated to the correct caption.

²⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. Éthiopien d’Abbadie 105, c. 1476/1477, f. 13v. For a reproduction, discussion, and further bibliography, see Balicka-Witakowska 1983.

²⁶ On the term *däbab* (ድባብ), see Leslau 1987, 119-20. On depictions of the *däbab* in Ethiopian art, see Balicka-Witakowska 2005; Gnisci and Zarzeczny 2017; for further examples of items identified by captions, see Bausi 1994, 59-61.

- ²⁷ For a translation of the Ethiopic version of his Life in English, see Budge 1898, 98-144. See also Cerulli 1969; and Bausi 2005, for further discussion with further bibliography.
- ²⁸ The caption identifying the *fiqar* reads: ምስለ፡ ፈቃሩ; Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms.or.oct.1270, 15th (?), f. 1v. For a more detailed discussion, see Hammerschmidt and Jäger 1968, 45-8, fig. 1. This could also be an orarion-type of garment, worn on the shoulder, such a use is attested also in the Coptic Church, see Innemée 1992, 66 and pl. 55, 1.
- ²⁹ Morfin-Gourdiér 1991, ii, 651-3; and Innemée 1992, 75 and 78.
- ³⁰ On the term *gəlbab* / *gelbabe* (ግልባብ / ግልባቤ), see Dillman 1865, 1139; and Leslau 1987, 189. On the vestment, see Teclé Mariam Semharay Selam. 1930, 5; and Hammerschmidt 1970, 155, who notes that the identification of this vestment remains problematic and open to question. On the term *mändil* (ሙንዲል), see Dillman 1865, 194-5; Guidi 1991, 91; Leslau 1987, 348-9. On the vestment, see Hammerschmidt 1970, 155, with further references.
- ³¹ For some examples, see Hammerschmidt and Jäger 1968, figs. 19-20; Balicka-Witakowska 1984-1986, figs. 15, 22, 31; Heldman 1993, cat. nos. 68, 70; and Mercier 2004, 82-3.
- ³² Beckingham and Huntingford 1961, 77 in vol.1.
- ³³ Gospels of Iyäsus Mo'a, f. 15v.
- ³⁴ See Innemée 1992, 45-8 for the Coptic equivalent.
- ³⁵ On the term *təble* (ትብሌ / ትብላይ / ትብሊያ) see Dillman 1865, 560-1, who describes it as '*vestis scapularis, super humerale, vestimentum summi sacerdotis Israelitarum*'; and Leslau 1987, 570, who instead translates the term as 'mantle, mantle of priests, shoulder piece'. On the term *logyon* / *logiyon* / *logyo* (ሎግዮን / ሎጊዮን/ሎግዮ), see Dillman 1865, 62; Leslau 1987, 308. See also *The Prester John of the Indies*, I, 77, for a possible description of this item.
- ³⁶ On the term *sābän* (ሰበን), see Dillman 1865, 359, who translates it as *sabanum* or *sudarium*; and Leslau 1987, 484.
- ³⁷ For other examples, see Balicka-Witakowska 1984-1986, fig. 28; and Heldman 1989, figs. 5, 15, 21, and 23; id. 1993, cat. no. 71. The handkerchiefs are generally kept in the hand, but in some cases, they appear to be attached to the wrist, see for instance the portraits of Bartholomew in Heldman 1989, fig. 27; of Nathaniel in the Gospels of Asir Mätira, 15th or early 16th century (?), f. 3v; see Mercier 2004, 108, for some remarks on this latter manuscript; see also fig. 5 in this article.
- ³⁸ SDSM-004 (digitized by the Ethio-SPaRe project, EU 7th Framework Programme, ERC Starting Grant 240720, PI Denis Nonsitsin, 2009-2015), *Four Gospels*, first half of the 16th century (?), ff. 7v-8r. Catalogued by Magdalena Krzyzanowska, description accessed 27 February 2017; see Nonsitsin 2013, 311, for further references.
- ³⁹ On the stole *stole* – *moṭaḥt* (ሞጥሕት) or *hablä kəsad* (ሐብላ፡ክሳድ) –, see Hyatt 1928, 142; and Hammerschmidt 1970, 154. In Ethiopian depictions of the Arrest of Jesus, his captors often bind him with a stole rather than with a rope, see Gnisci 2015c, 480.
- ⁴⁰ For a description of this item with further bibliography, see Woodfin 2012, 17-8. It is worth noting that in a portrait of Shenouda in the Psalter Bālen Säḡādä, Ms. Éthiopiend'Abbadie 105, f. 101v, there is a lozenge-shaped cloth at the end of his cross that recalls, also because of its position over the holy man's right thigh, an *epigonation*; for a reproduction, see Conti Rossini 1927, fig. 10.
- ⁴¹ On this diptych, see Cameron 2012, with further references.
- ⁴² Legg 1917, 63-6; and Strittmatter 1923, 202.
- ⁴³ For the holding of the maniple, see Macalister 1896, 75-7. For the 10th-century Maniple of Saint Cuthbert, see Plenderleith *et al.* 1956. On the Bayeux Tapestry, see Dodwell 1966; and English 2004. The Vivian Bible : Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. Latin 1, c. 1476/1477, f. 13v. For a discussion and reproduction, see Dutton and Kessler 1997, 71-88 and fig. 17.
- ⁴⁴ For a reproduction and discussion, see Innemée 1992, 190 and pl. 4.
- ⁴⁵ Innemée 1992, 76
- ⁴⁶ Gnisci 2015b, 581.
- ⁴⁷ See Beckingham and Huntingford 196, 328 in vol.2. Lepage and Mercier 2012, 111, interpret the depiction of handkerchiefs as an indication of the antiquity of the models which influenced early Solomonic Ethiopian manuscript illumination. This may be the case, however, as noted elsewhere, the frequent appearance of handkerchiefs in Ethiopian manuscript illumination of this period should be first of all taken as an indication that such items were still being used at the time, see Gnisci 2015b, 581.
- ⁴⁸ On the term *akmam* / *kəmam* (አክማም / ክማም), see Hammerschmidt 1970, 153; and Leslau 1987, 285. On the garment, see Hyatt 1928, 131.
- ⁴⁹ Hammerschmidt 1970, 153. On the appearance and use of the *epimanikia* in the Byzantine Church, see Woodfin 2012, 6, 8-9, 13 and 15.

- ⁵⁰ Innemée 1992, 58 and 81.
- ⁵¹ Hammerschmidt 1970, 153.
- ⁵² Boru Šəllase, Gospels of Boru Šəllase, late 14th or early 15th century, f. 11r. On this manuscript, see also Balicka-Witakowska, 1997: esp. 14-15, with further bibliography. For a more detailed discussion and a reproduction of this miniature, see Gnisci 2015a, 257.
- ⁵³ Gəšān Maryam, *Octateuch and Gospels*, turn of the 15th century, unknown folio (manuscript has not been foliated). On this manuscript, see Heldman 1993, 177-8.
- ⁵⁴ On the term *kappa* (ካፓ), see Guidi 1901, 552; and Leslau 1987, 288. On the garment, see Teclé Mariam Semharay Selam 1930, 6; Hyatt 1928, 134; and Hammerschmidt 1970, 154. On the resemblance to a Greek *phelonion*, see Innemée 1992, 50.
- ⁵⁵ Hammerschmidt 1970, 154.
- ⁵⁶ AsirMätira, *Life of ʾEṣṭifanos*, late 15th or early 16th century, f. 5v. A related miniature is in New York, The New York Public Library, *Life of ʾEṣṭifanos and Abäkäräzun*, Spencer Coll. Ethiopian Ms.7, late 15th or early 16th century, f. 4v, for a reproduction, see Heldman 1989, fig. 18. For an additional example in which the two ends of the *kappa* are bound together, see Mercier 2004, 60.
- ⁵⁷ Compare, for instance, figs. 3-4 and 9-10 with fig. 5 in Heldman 1989. See also Balicka-Witakowska 1984-1986, figs. 8, 12, 21 and 29.
- ⁵⁸ Gospels of Iyäsus Moʾa, f. 132v.
- ⁵⁹ Quotation from Heldman 2005, 461; see also id. 1983. It is worth pointing out, as Immerzeel 2014-2016 notes, that from the Fatimid Period, the Patriarchs were also chosen from the metropolitan clergy.
- ⁶⁰ For example, see the portrait of Basil the Great reproduced in Balicka-Witakowska 1984-1986, fig. 3.
- ⁶¹ Conti Rossini 1927, 96, considered the headgear of two Egyptian monks, St. Anthony and St. Macarius, in the Psalter of Bölen Sägädä, Ms. Éthiopien d'Abbadie 105, f. 79v, as a possible sign of western influences, but these are, in fact, nothing else than depictions of hooded copes.
- ⁶² See for instance, the miniature of St. Simeon of Jerusalem in the manuscript at the monastery of Hayq ʾEṣṭifanos, *Life of the Apostles*, c. 1292-1297, f. 218r; on this manuscript, see Getatchew Haile and Macomber 1981, 237-9, **emml** pr. no. 1767; that of Peter Bishop of Alexandria reproduced in Balicka-Witakowska 1984-1986, fig. 2; see also Appleyard 1993, 17. On the dress tradition of the Coptic Church, see Innemée 1992, 49; and Immerzeel 2014-2016.
- ⁶³ On the term *lanqa* / *länqa* (ለንቃ / ለንቃ), see Guidi 1901, 33; and Leslau 1987, 316.
- ⁶⁴ Hammerschmidt 1970, 154.
- ⁶⁵ Hayq ʾEṣṭifanos, *Life of the Apostles*, f. 59v. The *lanqa* and *kappa* could also be sewn together, see Balicka-Witakowska 1984-1986, figs. 7, 10-11, 13-14, 16, 23, 25-28, for some possible examples.
- ⁶⁶ Beckingham and Huntingford 1961, 126 in vol.1.
- ⁶⁷ In a 15th-century Ethiopian icon from the monastery of Hayq ʾEṣṭifanos several saints, including Iyäsus Moʾa, appear to be wearing a different type of *askäma*, consisting of a system of thin straps of cord or leather with crosses worn around the body and crossed over the chest; for a reproduction and discussion, see Mercier 2009, 115-8. The item in this icon resembles the Coptic *schéma*, see Innemée 1992, 107-29. Later examples of this type of *askäma* are found in an 18th-century manuscript in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. Éthiopien d'Abbadie 102, f. 81v, and in a detached painting from the church of Saint Anthony, now in Paris, Musée du quai Branly, inv. no.71.1931.74.3590, as noted by Staude 1959, 205-6.
- ⁶⁸ Though in fact it is also possible that the image shows a stole-type garment worn over an *epitrachelion*. I am grateful to Nikolaos Vryzidis for drawing my attention to this possibility.
- ⁶⁹ Beckingham, and Huntingford 1961, 84 in vol.1. Alvares goes on to say that this is the only vestment which distinguishes the deacon from the sub-deacon.
- ⁷⁰ Let it suffice in this context to draw the attention to the numerous titles listed by Bairu Tafla 1986, 293-306.

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FIGURES

[naar eigen esthetisch inzicht, en zodat volgende stuk weer rechts begint...]

fig. 1 - Hayq Ḥṣṭifanos, *St. Iyäsus Moʿa*, Four Gospels, 1280/1281, f. 5v. (© Michael Gervers, courtesy of the **deeds** project).

(b/w: whole page)

fig. 2 - Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, *St. Gäbrä Krastos*, Life of Gäbrä Krastos, f. 1v. (© Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin).

fig. 3 - Hayq Ḥṣṭifanos, *St. Ḥṣṭifanos* (left) and *St. Qirqos and his Mother* (right), Four Gospels, 1280/1281, ff. 15v-16r. (© Michael Gervers, courtesy of the **deeds** project).

fig. 4 - Säwnä Maryam, *Prophets and Old Testament Kings*, first half of the 16th century (?), ff. 7v-8r. (© Denis Nosnitsin, courtesy of the Ethio-SPaRe project).

fig. 5 - Boru Šəllase, *The Washing of the Feet*, Four Gospels, late 14th or early 15th century, f. 11r. (© Michael Gervers, courtesy of the **deeds** project).

fig. 6 - Gäšän Maryam, *St. Luke and St. John*, Octateuch and Four Gospels, turn of the 15th century (?), f. (?). (© Diana Spencer, courtesy of the DEEDS project).

fig. 7 - Asir Mätira, *St. Ḥṣṭifanos*, Life of Ḥṣṭifanos, late 15th or early 16th century, f. 5v. (© Michael Gervers, courtesy of the **deeds** project).

fig. 8 - Hayq Ḥṣṭifanos, *St. Mark*, Four Gospels, 1280/1281, f. 132v. (© Michael Gervers, courtesy of the **deeds** project).

fig. 9 - Hayq Ḥṣṭifanos, *St. Luke*, Life of the Apostles, c. 1292-1297, ff. 59v-60r; (© Stanislaw Chojnacki, courtesy of the **deeds** project).