Geography legendary Ethiopian “royal camp” of the XV\textsuperscript{th} century. Story of a memorial building

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Abstract:

Describing space in Mesḥāla Maryam (Manz, Ethiopia) Entails Relating Remains on the ground and features of the landscape to an old royal camp, All which WAS Said to-have-been set up there in the mid-15\textsuperscript{th} century. This legendary geography HAS-settled out of several layers of historical memory. An analysis of genealogies Collected in the field helps us understand how space and memory were brought together to create this legendary royal camp. These genealogies present two major Periods in local history: first of all, the settlement of a Christian king in the area, the Who founded de Mesḥāla Maryam church in the mid-15\textsuperscript{th} century, and SECONDLY the Reconquest of the area in the late 17\textsuperscript{th} After a century by Gera Neighboring sultanate's imam HAD waged a \textit{jihad} with, as a consequence, human migrations That Reshaped the religious landscape and politics for more than a century.

Index terms

\textbf{Keywords:}
\begin{itemize}
  \item space, memory, royal camp
\end{itemize}

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\begin{itemize}
  \item Ethiopia, space, Manz, Sawa, memory, royal camp
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\begin{itemize}
  \item Ethiopia, Manz, Sawa
\end{itemize}

Plan

\textbf{The territory of Mesḥāla Maryam and orality}

A remnant, a function
A name, a story

**Statutes land toponymy**

**Genealogies and space: the XVII th century as the hub of the local memory**

1 In xv th century, Ethiopian rulers had an itinerant court, which, after the king scoured the Christian kingdom at the mercy of military campaigns and visits required to symbolic places of power, such as the royal church housing the tombs of rulers deceased. The king and his court lived in tents, but the installation of the royal camp seemed to obey strict rules as to the disposition of the different areas in relation to the single reference that was the royal tent 1. However, the Ethiopian royal camp, its organization, its materiality largely outside the investigation.

• (1 Mr. Kropp, 1988; Deresse Ayenachew 2009.)

2 Campaigns excavations in one of the central parts of the power of Christian xv th century, Sawa, in the vicinity of a church - Meshāla Maryam 2 - founded by King Ba'eda Maryam (1468-1478) have attempted to provide some answers as to the organization of the royal camp 3. These campaigns were based on the identification of some remains of a royal church 4, whose foundation is attested in the sources of the xv th century, and the place names surrounding this church and traditions explaining such names, which designated the installation of a royal camp in these places. Studies on the site and have brought forth a legendary geography royal camp Ba'eda Maryam, which was based on an interpretation of the remains and place names related to the royal camp spaces. Genealogies collected orally but also kept family manuscripts were added to the table, many place names are names of people included in a prestigious pedigree, that of King Ba'eda Maryam, founder of the royal church of Maryam and occupying Meshāla the royal camp whose memory has so greatly affected local memories. These genealogies related informants questioned the lineage of King Ba'eda Maryam, but also some Gera, strongman of the region that the XVII th century allowed a Christian reconquest of northern Sawa.

• (2 The meaning of Maryam Meshāla is not very clear, especially as the spelling adopted da(...) 3 The work to Meshāla Maryam have been
Excavations at Mesḥāla Maryam between 1998 and 2001 did not resolve definitively the question of the organization of the Ethiopian royal camp. Stone structures, presented as the remains of a royal installation, are certainly the remains of an ancient settlement, but surely more common people as a sovereign. The furniture found on the site does indeed give no evidence for a royal presence here. That leaves this place names surrounding Mesḥāla Maryam which is necessary to understand the formation to measure its actual scope.

The region where Manz is Mesḥāla Maryam knew as much of the Christian kingdom, profound changes in xvi\(^{th}\) century, caused by the conquests of the imam of a neighboring sultanate of the kingdom, whose raids were particularly aim of annihilating the Christian kingdom that were symbols of royal churches. Mesḥāla Maryam was probably destroyed in 1531 or shortly after 5. Following these wars and the weakening of the Christian kingdom, population migration occurred and northern Sawa was occupied by new groups, non-Christians, the Oromo, the installation of which was the consequence of introducing such a break in the memories. The Manz is considered to have been relatively unaffected by the installation of these new migrants, so that the region is seen as a Christian stronghold retaining a link with the kingdom now installed in areas much further north 6. It's that Manz was gone, the xvii\(^{th}\) century, a movement of Christian reconquest, creating a new dynasty in Sawa, whose ancestral figure is Krestos Nagase (ca. 1682-1705) 7, dynasty managed to climb to the head of the whole kingdom in the late xix\(^{th}\) century in the person of Menelik. In this march to conquer the kingdom and his re-Christianization, the traces of a Christian past were exhumed. Mesḥāla Maryam, the royal church founded by King Ba'eda Maryam at xv\(^{th}\) century, and the installation of a royal camp in its vicinity were then used as the anchor of a summed memory to remember this spent there.

5 The region of Manz was hit by the war in 1531 and was regularly traveled by the army(...), 6 See in particular V. Stitz, 1974, p. 79-82, 98-102., 7 About Nagase Krestos see S. Ege, 1996, p. 21-23; S. Dege, 2007.)
This memory game has used the landscape, lines of stone, some reliefs to invoke the past and revive. The area around the church Mesḥāla Maryam, rebuilt after its demolition, has accumulated a legendary load. Legendary geography royal camp took shape, it keeps saying space. This study aims to understand how this geography was formed and what it reveals both the past of this territory and the way they say the space on the Ethiopian highlands between XV e and XXI th century. This thread of interpretation has long eluded us, including and especially during the field surveys. Probably because the flow of information almost continuously scanning a wide spectrum did not allow to have the necessary perspective to interpret. We had to wait to take all the data so that the crossings are operating, interpretive key emerge. And when they are used to make assumptions about the past, that's when all the defects arise from the investigation, gaps, oversights. So by being fully aware of these imperfections that we are trying to study the legendary "royal camp" Mesḥāla Maryam.
Zoom Original (png, 218k)

The territory of Meshāla Maryam and orality

6 Let's start with an overview of the territory, with both space and oral information convened by notable points Landscape 8, as if moving in a museum equipped with an audio guide, we had to Once the vision of exhibits and explanation from contextualize these objects. The image of a museum space is rather fair and well aware of how memory works in these places.

8 Oral information related to landscape and place names were collected from several handle (...)

7 Located about 3000 meters above sea level, the plateau on which the royal church of Meshāla Maryam was implemented today is called Gērāmeder (land Gera), the name of the person who incarnates in this region Christian reconquest the XVII\textsuperscript{th} century. To the east, the plateau is abruptly interrupted by a canyon down which, at over 1000 meters against there flows the river Emezawa. These slopes colonized by acacias, géladas baboons and a few families settled on benches certainly belong to a domain in relation to the plate (to harvest dead wood or markets) but considered more dangerous. The floor is the prestigious plateau. And it is on this plateau in the middle of which runs the river Say, without this river has carved a canyon for the moment, that Meshāla Maryam and ground structures of interest are scattered.

8 Within 500 meters of the eastern shelf break, the Church of Meshāla Maryam, also named Rufā'ēl is hidden behind a grove of trees, juniper and olive trees, probably centuries old. A slight rise defines the sacred space of the place where only the herds of goats and sheep may wander, but where any human settlement is now excluded. The church itself is of recent invoice. Slightly raised relative to the ground level, on a step, it is round. Its walls are adobe and its roof is made of corrugated iron. It was recently rebuilt in December 1997 According to our informants, the church would have been destroyed at least twice, once by the armies of the one who is called Gran, the left, the imam of the Sultanate of Adal who launched a jihad against the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia in early XVI\textsuperscript{th} century, and a second time by the Italian occupiers between 1936 and 1942 9. Consequently, there are only a little of the
established church by King Ba'eda Maryam in the second half of the XVth century.

- These two moments of destruction in the traditions surrounding churches are very traditional.

The few traces of the royal church that are designated by the inhabitants consist of a pole of charred wood stuck in the ground near the church, and that would be the testimony of the fire at the former royal foundation by Gran troops; some carved stone blocks, taken for some in the masonry of the entrance door in the church compound, or kept at the neighboring peasants. Although few in number, these carved stones are one of the arguments to confirm that the current church Mesḥāla Maryam is the heir of the royal church of the XVth century. Indeed, the stones found in Mesḥāla Maryam resemble other carved stones found in the ruins of churches founded in the royal XVth and XVIth centuries - Makana Šellāsē, Martula Maryam Day Giyorgis - and other churches which royal status is to be determined - Enselālē, Rema Madhanē Alam Ginbi. Francis Anfray who in 1978 had begun to gather data on churches built stone concluded, based on this corpus, a "unity of ornamental repertoire" of all these churches. The few stones Mesḥāla Maryam explicitly link the church of Manz in this together and authenticate the site as the place where the king Ba'eda Maryam founded a church in the XVth century.
The plot of the plateau on which is installed Mesḥāla Maryam, covered with remnants of the oral tradition connects the royal camp Ba'eda Maryam, is called *beta mangeśt*, which literally means "house of the kingdom" in Ge'ez. By extension, this term may refer to the royal domain. Its extension is clearly identified by informants:
the mangešt beta runs from the church of the village of Maryam Meshāla Qulbit AMBA, located further south. From Qulbit AMBA and to the church of Wayn Maryam, the territory is called beta rest, that is to say, the house or the area of the rest, the rest being a land tenure, land passed by inheritance. The people of the region thus distinguish between a domain around the church, linked to the king, and an area to the south, where land is inherited within a family by those who can justify their rights vis-à-vis the first owner on the father and/or mother.

_A remnant, a function_

11 In the immediate vicinity of the Church of Meshāla Maryam ground traces are visible, drawing, by a double line of stones half sunk into the ground, ovoid structures.
Not all have the same dimensions. Smaller give rise to different interpretations by informants. And the same structure may be designated as the location of the religious school by some, and as the dwelling place of the soldiers responsible for guarding the royal camp by others. The largest of these structures however unanimous informants: they felt it was the reception room for guests (māsabāsabyā adārāš). The link to the royal camp Ba'eda Maryam is clearly established by this identification.

Moving away from the church to the south, another two large ovoid structures are encountered. The first is widely referred to as the Royal Mews (qay faras BET), the second, further south, is presented as the royal kitchens (mā'ed BET).
Continuing our walk on the set and working up to say the river, northwest, we find other sites whose names, according to our informants, refers to a function in the royal camp. First two sites, which seem to indicate a potential symmetry in organizing the camp. These are referred to as spaces QAN dabtara (dabtara right) and gra dabtara (dabtara left) with reference to the singers or members of the ecclesiastical choir which are divided into two groups, singing one right and the other to left. The hierarchy of dignitaries Ethiopian, as it appears in the text, particularly in the highest degree, indeed works on a left-right symmetry. This is especially true for queens, but also for example for waddad Beht, the two greatest leaders of the army of the kingdom. This left-right symmetry necessarily had an impact on the organization of the royal camp. Therefore, the reference space by our informants recalling this symmetry has only strengthened the impression that a royal camp had marked the spot.

Still heading north, it means we Gendaball where soldiers stayed a RAS (military leader) Amole MedR, that is to say, instead of...
blocks of salt, used as payment -Amole indicating precisely the unit of measurement of salt 15; Baryamēdā and Šanqobado, evoking slaves (referred to herein as ethnonyms of Barya and Šanqellā / Šanqo 16) and would, again according to oral information, the first a slave market and the second where they live; and Yafarenŋ bota, the "place of the Franks" (foreigners).

(15 GUEBRE SELASSIE, 1930, p. 216, n. 9., 16 Regarding the names given to the Ethiopian slave, see R. PANKHURST, 1977.)

*Gendaball where soldiers stayed a RAS (military leader)*

Photo: Marie-Laure Derat
This way of describing and therefore to design the space around Mesḥāla Maryam is based on the memory of the institution in these parts of a royal camp, space camp eventually give rise to names. The remains on the ground, especially stone circles are all anchors of memory about the camp: see, designate activate the memory of places.

A name, a story

Other places, geographically noteworthy points come with a place name whose evocation called a story. These are named Gabri'ēl Ras, Ras Katama, Ras Araya and Ras Delay eminences around, remote church Mesḥāla Maryam. Ras Gabri'ēl, located south of Mesḥāla Maryam, near another church in the area - Wayn Maryam - Informants evoke a character styled Ras (military leader) and naming Gabri'ēl. A native of Tigray, northern Ethiopia today, this high dignitary would have married the king's daughter Maryam Ba'eda named Tasfa Seyon. As for Ras Delay, he was a dignitary from the region of Dabra Bizan in present Eritrea, and would have married one
of the granddaughters of King Ba'eda Maryam called Dinar Warq, daughter of A' erkanana. Things get complicated when we look at the case of Ras Katama. This is a relief to the west of Mesḥāla Maryam, on the western bank of the Say. Ras Katama dominates named Gendaball space mentioned above. The name of the dignitary is not included in the genealogies given orally. But we also had access to manuscripts notebooks in which pedigrees are kept. In one of these texts, Ras Katama included in the Aerkanana branch. It is presented as the husband of his daughter, Dinar Warq, and as the father of Takla Nabiyaṭ. So he replaces the RAS Delay.

Ras Katama

The last site, called Ras Araya quite north of the church of Maryam Mesḥāla, beyond the river Say, combines a story related in the name of Ras and activated by the presence of remnants memory. Ras Araya Araya is also known as Gur Gur designating a heap of stones. This cluster is actually a mound, as there are dozens on the board on both sides of the Say 17. The tumulus of Araya was partially dismantled to build the houses in the village installed nearby.

(17 See F.-X. FAUVELLE-AYMAR, DERESSE, AYENACHEW, B. HIRSCH, R. BERNARD, 2007-2008.)
Regarding Ras Araya, informants have no evidence to link it to the genealogy of King Ba'eda Maryam but they specify that the function of the Ras was to police the royal camp. It is remarkable to note that only the mound Araya joined the legendary geography royal camp while many other tumuli could serve as points of attachment of memory. This shows at least that the reading of the space around Meshala Maryam linked to the royal camp is not firing on all cylinders but distinguishes between sites, ruins and places. Besides the mounds are usually integrated into another speech, referring to *jihad* Gran: these piles of stones are presented either as the remains of mosques or as cairns born of counting losses suffered by Muslim armies 18. This shows that there is no single interpretation of the space in the region of Meshala Maryam, based solely on the presence of a royal camp, but that use different levels at different times of the local history.

To return to Ras, sites and characters, everything happens as if high officials of the kingdom had married daughters of King Ba'eda
Maryam and her granddaughters, as confirmed pedigrees collected from informants, they whether oral or written. And if one believes the current place names, these military leaders have set up camp near the king’s. This would explain that they left their names to the sites. However, we must remain cautious about these identifications. Firstly because it is not uncommon in Ethiopia, but mountains are called Ras, as defined peak, as Ras Dasen culmination of Ethiopia in 4550 meters. Secondly, because one of the eminences named Ras is associated with a term that may not be a proper name. Katama, Amharic, means military camp to which the place name Ras Katama perhaps returns. This raises the question therefore reconstructions of etymology around the names.

21 This overview of the surrounding plateau Mesḥāla Maryam and traditions associated with the landscape seems to deliver a system, that of the royal camp, specifically the Royal camp Ba'eda Maryam, as some reliefs are called dignitaries who the daughters of the king. Although this system seems locked, and therefore indéfaisable some loopholes allow to understand how it was built and what are the elements that have been considered in the form. The space around Mesḥāla Maryam is not the holder of a single event, but a story that needs to track.


Statutes land toponymy

22 In oral information collected on the territory surrounding Mesḥāla Maryam mingle actually several types of data. Place names is not the only level of information, it is even less represented. If we operate a countdown with Mesḥāla Maryam Katama Ras, Ras Delay, Ras and Ras Araya Gabriël, they are in fact only five places that are appointed by a place name. The rest is other records: the places are identified either by the functions traditionally attributed to them (this is the case, for example, stone circles considered kitchens or mews) or their property status, Example of differentiation between mangešt beta and beta rest. However one can not deny that these ways of saying space, and therefore to construct a coherent territory, part of
the same process of "toponymisation" a name becoming a place name which can possibly find the etymology, but not always.

23 Now consider which places named after their tenure status. *Genda ball* is one of them, it is relatively well known for the region Sawa, through the work of Berhanou Abebe on land ownership in this region since the late Nineteenth century until 1931. Lands *genda ball* is land whose fees are for military transport. The usufruct of these lands should therefore provide either pack animals, or their own strength to carry the military camp during the campaigns. Accomplishing this task exempts the holder *genda ball* of other taxes. So it's a relatively privileged status in peacetime. We do not know when was this land status. According to some historians, it is linked to the Christian reconquest of the XVII\textsuperscript{th} century would be the fact Nagase Krestos. But it has no formal element to prove it. Anyway, today in this part of Manz, while the land tenure system prevailing in xix\textsuperscript{th} and early xx\textsuperscript{th} century was abolished by the revolutionary Marxist government (the *Derg*, that is ie the French Committee) which has established itself at the head of Ethiopia in 1974, it continues to permeate space. The old statutes persist in the minds of people, no doubt because, despite the new distribution of land-holding families of the privileged status still trying to assert their rights.


24 It is perhaps for the same reasons, near the church of Maryam Mesḥāla two areas are presented as *QAN* and *gra dabortara*. These terms refer to singers serving the church, but also to the land they had and they could exploit directly or indirectly. Generally, these lands were called *dabortara Maret* ("land of dabortara") . Presumably *QAN* and *gra* do not refer to the entire choir but just the two choir of left and right that had to be responsible for distributing the profits. The old system that was not current because the church lands were reverted into the public domain after 1974, continued to refer to these spaces by their former status, as for the area named *genda ball*.

25 It is probably also explains the difference made between *mangešt beta* and *beta rest*. Again, we are faced with the old
land status, which distinguishes a royal estate: on the field, the use of some land was awarded to persons performing particular functions — one finds the QAN and gra dabtara — or these land provided the food necessary for the maintenance of the royal camp. If the site designated as the royal kitchens (mā'ed BET) takes on its full meaning. Indeed, mā'ed BET is a land status, a "rural area with revenues earmarked for the king's mouth".

26 This example is used to better understand how the oral tradition worked and how it helped to preserve memories of the installation of a royal camp in the region. There is little doubt that the memory of a former land status, such as that of mā'ed BET, is linked to a royal camp, given his position, and the locals were able to keep this name because it was useful for matters of inheritance and land rights. Since, in addition, on the area of mā'ed BET are the remains of a large structure, whereas in the oral tradition these remnants became the royal kitchens themselves, and not just the land that was reserved for the benefit the king's table.

27 On the ancestral domain, the beta rest, the investigation has not been conducted. But the genealogies collected, together with their short stories, reveal that one of the king's daughters Maryam Ba'eda named Ayer Kenana, founded the Church of Wayn Maryam and at the death of her father, she received the area that was in this church rest, while one of his nieces, Batmoč, received Mesḥāla Maryam church and land inheritance. It is difficult to know what is the authenticity of the division of lands of the plateau between girls and granddaughters of King Ba'eda Maryam. However, this distribution was probably a sense at some point to claim rights over these lands, based on membership in one or more of genealogical branches.

28 The distinction between names and property statutes have their names printed in spaces and between the etymologies and recent interpretations of ancient place names, is therefore essential. In my view, beta rest, beta mangešt, mā'ed BET are the remains of an ancient royal occupation. However, nothing tells us that all these names are contemporary and are evidence of the existence of one large camp. Onomastic these investigations have revealed that the name spaces around Mesḥāla Maryam retains traces of the installation of a royal camp in the region. But these traces have been reinterpreted or etymological or functional. However, the royal camp
in question was that of the king he Ba'eda Maryam, or is it another or several other camps?

29 Investigations into the genealogies of the inhabitants of the region provide some answers. They not only help to identify the genealogical position dignitaries whose names marked space (such as Ras) but also to measure the importance of genealogy for the inheritance of the earth and therefore better understand the functioning memory about the area around Mesḥāla Maryam.


Genealogies and space: the XVII th century as the hub of the local memory

30 Many informants who held a beginner genealogy King Ba'eda Maryam and her children, and going back to the informant himself, who thus lies as a descendant of the royal family of the XV th century. Pedigrees with four of our informants were collected Mersa Gulele, QES Debaba, Hanna and Walda Bagaşaw Baykadañ Gabra Heywat. Most of the time, they were able to give us both their maternal and paternal ancestry. Such capability is not surprising. It is related to inheritance rights, and in particular to the legacy of the land. Indeed, the succession being bilateral, anyone can stake his claim on land provided it is able to prove by family, lineage property is inalienable (that is the system of rest). The genealogies are thus an indispensable support to defend its rights. So it is not uncommon that a person exhibits one of his pockets a small notebook, often used, which is recorded in his genealogy. It can therefore be based on both memory and on the transcribed genealogy. We were able to photograph three of these notebooks graciously entrusted by Bagaşaw Walda Hanna and Mersa Gulele that give read some of the genealogies that we were recited orally.

31 Around these genealogies and discursive developments they call, the entire local history that is collected from the presence of Maryam Ba'eda to Manz, one of his daughters married regional
dignitaries whose names are now registered in the names around Mesḥāla Maryam, to the major players in the rebirth of Manz after the invasions of Gran and installation of Oromo - Gera and Nagase Krestos - to the elites of xix \textsuperscript{th} century that made the kingdom Sawa of a step to conquer the kingdom of Ethiopia, Menelik to Sahla Šellāsē. And all these genealogies lead through matrilineal or patrilineal by our informants is thus located in the ancestry of famous ancestors.

32 It should be noted both the high accuracy of these genealogies as informants cite all the children of a couple and their offspring, and their elastic appearance. For example, in the genealogy recited by Mersa Gulele, there are fifteen generations Ba'eda between Maryam and a character murdered by the Derg between 1974 and 1991, and another branch of the same genealogy, only ten generations to xxı \textsuperscript{e} century. In as in the other case, the strata missing. In all likelihood, the historical disruptions such as the xvi \textsuperscript{th} century have left voids in the family memory. But we must admit that it is time for the impossible to determine where are the shortcuts in time, what are the layers that have been forgotten. In this, the very coherence of the various genealogies on which the direct ancestry of King Ba'eda Maryam Gera to provide a barrier.

33 Every major site in the region is integrated into these genealogies through inheritance. They are the daughters of King Ba'eda Maryam which are the main heirs and transmit the earth then their descendants, which include Gera. So the genealogies collected highlight two moments in the history of Manz: Installation of King Ba'eda Mesḥāla Maryam Maryam; Christian reconquest committed from xvii \textsuperscript{th} century and embodied by Gera. Both times included the highlight of all traditions gathered and play a role in the design of space in the region, as reflected in the geography of the legendary royal camp.

34 It is likely that the oldest genealogical levels are built to assert the rights of the descendants of Gera on land Mesḥāla Maryam, highlighting his family ties with the king of the xv \textsuperscript{th} century. This hypothesis is based primarily on the intersection of oral traditions with the written documentation. Several times a rhymed poetry recalling the founding of the Royal Church of Maryam Mesḥāla us was recited.
We will not dwell on all the terms of this poem, but the case of Abune Krestodolu, which means either the metropolitan of Ethiopia, is the patriarch of Alexandria, and the administrator (QES gabaz) Habta Maryam us retain more particularly. According to the poem, the Abune contemporary of the foundation was a Krestodolu. This information raises a problem to the extent that, during the reign of Ba'eda Maryam, there was no metropolitan of that name, or even Metropolitan at all. As the patriarch of Alexandria, one might also recognize in this "Abune Krestodolu" it was called Yohannes. Therefore, Metropolitan mentioned in this poetry was not a contemporary of King Ba'eda Maryam. Only three Abune Krestodolu are known in the lists of metropolitans, the first exercised his office at the end of the XVIth century, the second between 1665 and 1672 during the reign of Fasiladas, and the third between 1720 and 1742 under the Bakaffa.

On the other hand, a gospel now preserved in a private collection retains acts registered on blank folios of the manuscript. In all likelihood, this is the gospel given to Maryam Mesḥāla when it was founded by King. Among the documents that have been registered, there is a note stating that the king appointed the head of his church administrator (qaysa gabaz) called EDA Warq not Habta Maryam. EDA Warq held its charge over a relatively long period since it is confirmed by King Eskender between late XVth century and beginning of the XVIth century. This anachronism between oral tradition and the written documentation may be a clue to determine the period in which this poem was written and distributed.

At the time of the founding of the church, he probably was not necessary to resort to this type of poem crystallizing memory, especially that written documentation existed, as evidenced by the Gospel Mesḥāla of Maryam. However, after the destruction of the
church, around 1531, by the armies of Gran, and especially during its reconstruction, it was probably necessary to re Mesḥāla Maryam in the inheritance of Christian kings prior to the destruction of Gran. But the composition of the poem that was involved in this recall was necessarily influenced by the context of the time: Habta Maryam is probably one of the clergy who was appointed head of the church reconstructed as Krestodolu was Metropolitan of Ethiopia during reconstruction. So at the end of the XVIIth or XVIIIth century the church was rebuilt Mesḥāla Maryam, which seems quite plausible given the context of Christian reconquest in this period. And it is this reconstruction that is probably at the root of a search of the Christian past of the region, with reaffirmation of the founding of the church by King Ba'eda Maryam and, why not, reaffirmation of the rights his heirs on earth.

38 The end of the XVIIth century is a key period in the construction of the local memory in connection with the Christian reconquest of the region by Manz Gera and reconstruction of the church of Maryam Mesḥāla accompanying this reconquest. The genealogies are then used as storage medium in connection with space.

39 In the end, what is left of the geography of the camp Ba'eda Maryam? The name spaces around Mesḥāla Maryam seems keep track of the installation of a royal camp in the region: mangeşt beta, the royal kitchens ( mā'ed BET), the military camp ( RAS Katama) are we he seems so much evidence of a royal presence in these places. But the traces of it have been reinterpreted or etymological or functional. However, nothing tells us that all these names are contemporary and are evidence of the existence of one large camp. Local memory picked up in one episode, the installation of the camp Ba'eda Maryam, several events. It is clear, in fact, the essential role of Gera and the period of Christian reconquest in the late XVIIth century in the construction of this memory. Perhaps it is at this time that we must locate other important occupations space Mesḥāla Maryam, by including military camps. The end of theXVIIth century was also the time when it is necessary to recall the glorious past of the region, in conjunction with the Royal and Christian power, hence the incorporation of all the genealogical branches to a common ancestor, King Ba 'eda Maryam, through her daughters, heirs to the land. This is also the time when you have to claim their rights to land, forcing forge genealogies.
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Notes

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1. Mr. KROPP, 1988; DERESSE AYENACHEW 2009.

2. The meaning of Maryam Mesḥāla is not very clear, especially as the spelling adopted in the texts of the xv th century is never the same. If one accepts the spelling we have chosen to retain in this article, Mesḥāla, then we can translate the name of this royal church as the "tablecloth Mary" my "āl is the water that covers the altar or one that covers the body. However, another meaning could be accepted by adopting a different spelling: Mashalā Maryam, which would mean "Canopy of Mary." But the spelling is rarer than the first.


4. These remains were reported by Francis Anfray during surveys conducted in the 1980s, see F. ANFRAY, 1983.

5. The region of Manz was hit by the war in 1531 and was regularly traveled by the Muslim army from that date (R. BASSET, 1897, p. 291-306, 340, 351, 402). In some versions of the *homily in honor of the Archangel Raguel*, there is explicit mention of the destruction of the
church of Maryam Mesḥāla by troops from Gran, see C. Bosc-Tiesse, 2010, 17; EMML 41, fol. 65r-66v; EMML 60, fol.53v-55r; EMML 428, fol. 53v-55r.

6 See in particular V. Stitz, 1974, p. 79-82, 98-102.


8 Oral information related to landscape and place names were collected in several ways. First, we multiplied surveys of different informants to share their information. Each time, the course was going around the remains of the church of Maryam Mesḥāla and widened in concentric circles. Moreover, insofar as the starting point of these investigations was the local history, each informant was asked about this story, what brought most often it to deliver genealogies in which a huge proportion of history were stored. Finally, some informants also presented small notebooks in which these genealogies and certain events of local history were recorded. They will be published later in the journal Africas. Six people were regularly interviewed between 1999 and 2001: two clergymen of Mesḥāla Maryam - QES Debaba former marigētā (choir) of the Church of Rufo ēl and SARWA Malaka mezemer (cantor) of this same church - the other three are farmers living around Mesḥāla Maryam Bagāšaw Walda Hanna who presented two recent manuscripts which were transcribed local history; Mersa Gulele which demonstrated exceptional competence in local genealogies; Amesē Sefrayeču, who presented himself as a descendant of dabṭara of the Church of Rufo ēl but whose knowledge was also tinged with a book culture from sometimes interfere with local traditions; and Meqereč Warqē, who presented himself as the descendant of the Nagase Krestos and Elaye (his grandfather). A final figure was presented by us all as one of the most knowledgeable of local history: it is Baykadañ Haywat Gabra, living in the village artisans, whose father was a blacksmith, the great-great-grandfather azmari ("minstrel") and whose family owned a written Manz until the manuscript is burned in the time of history Derg.

9 These two moments of destruction in the traditions surrounding churches are very traditional.


13 J. Perruchon, 1893, p. 125, 137, 142, 173-175.

14 For example Mr. Kropp, 1988, p. 83

15 Guebre Sellassie, 1930, p. 216, n. 9.

16 Regarding the names given to the Ethiopian slave, see R. Pankhurst, 1977.


22 Berhanou Abebe, 1971, p. 75.


25 S. Kur, 1972, p. 79 (trad.).

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>URL</th>
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<tr>
<td>The site Mesḥāla Maryam</td>
<td>Photo: Marie-Laure Derat</td>
<td><a href="http://afriques.revues.org/docannexe/image/764/img-2.jpg">http://afriques.revues.org/docannexe/image/764/img-2.jpg</a></td>
<td>image / jpeg, 52k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Structures on the ground around the church of Maryam Mesḥāla

Structure presented as the royal kitchens (māʿed BET)

Gendaball where soldiers stayed a RAS (military leader)
Title  Yafarenj bota, "the place of the Franks" (foreigners)
Credits  Photo: Marie-Laure Derat
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Title  Ras Katama
Credits  Photo: Marie-Laure Derat
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Title  Ras Araya
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