

## Historical Overview of the Church of ʿAddiqāḥarsi Pāraqlīṭos (Gulo Mākāda): Site, Traditions and Library

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In 2010 and 2011, the team of the project *Ethio-SPaRe: Cultural Heritage of Christian Ethiopia – Salvation, Preservation and Research* carried out four field missions. From its base in ʿAddigrat, the team explored the ecclesiastical landscape of the Gulo Mākāda *wārāda* (East Təgray Zone, see map 1). Within some weeks of intensive work, the team visited numerous historical sites, many of them completely unknown or little known to scholars. Among the latter, there was the church of ʿAddiqāḥarsi Pāraqlīṭos, visited twice, in May 2010 and May 2011.

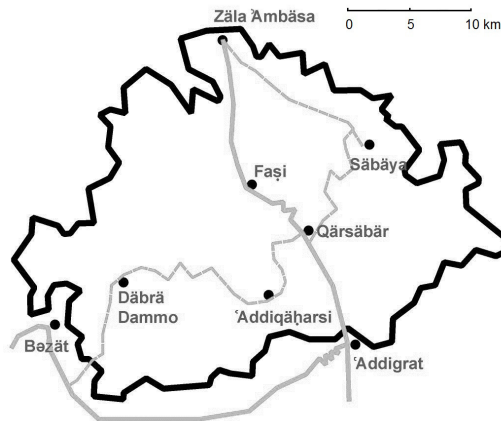
At a first glance, the site of ʿAddiqāḥarsi (ʿAddāqāḥarsi) Pāraqlīṭos appears absent in historical sources and practically unknown before. However, it deserves close attention for a number of reasons. First, some remains at the site bear witness to its ancient tradition of religious veneration. Second, its relatively rich and extensive manuscript collection, with sixty five books dating from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, places the church of Pāraqlīṭos among the important centres of manuscript culture in the region. Of particular scholarly interest are the testimonies of a previously unknown hagiographic tradition of the group of saints called *Ṣadāqan zā-Pāraqlīṭos* “the Righteous ones of the Paraclete” or *Sāmaʿtatā Pāraqlīṭos* “the Martyrs of the Paraclete”. Six manuscripts of their *Vita* (*gādl*) accompanied by a set of miracles (*tāʾamrat*) and poetry (*mālkeʾ*) attest to this tradition. They have been recorded alongside the larger part of the entire collection. It shall be thus possible for the researchers to reconstruct the evolution of the collection and to study the previously unknown hagiographic corpus.

In the course of the field research, the project team had the chance to collect oral traditions concerning the site. On analysing the available different sources, written or oral, I would like to propose a historical overview of the church of ʿAddiqāḥarsi Pāraqlīṭos, bringing to light some previously unknown facts about its history and hagiographic tradition.

### Oral tradition, material testimonies and historical references

The full name of the church of Pāraqlīṭos is ʿAddiqāḥarsi Mākanā Ḥəywāt Pāraqlīṭos, “ʿAddiqāḥarsi, the place of life, Paraclete”.<sup>1</sup> The church is lo-

<sup>1</sup> Both the first-order and the fourth-order variants, Pāraqlīṭos and Pāraqlīṭos (cp. LESLAU 1987:415), have been locally used. The former seems to dominate today (the

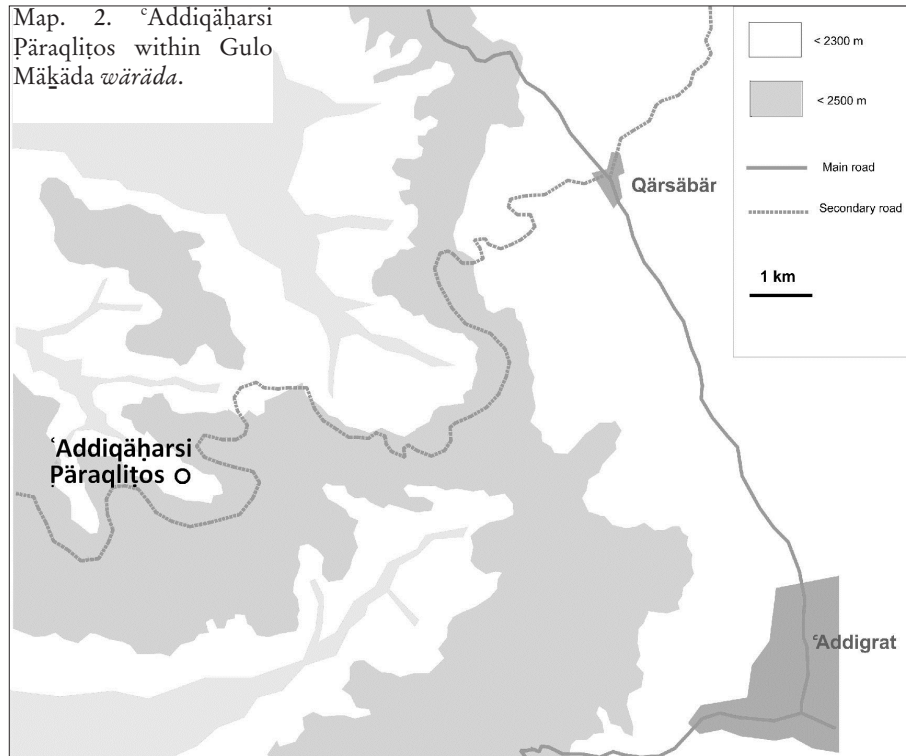


Map. 1. Map of the Gulo Mäḳäda wäräda, East Təgray Zone.

cated in the Gulo Mäḳäda wäräda. From ʾAddigrat, it is possible to reach the church after a drive of approximately fifty minutes, first along the main ʾAddigrat–Zäla ʾAmbäsa road until the church of Qärsäbär, and then turning next on a secondary road linking Qärsäbär to Däbrä Dammo and Bəzät (s. maps 1–2). The church is well visible from the road. The church compound lies at an altitude of 2,440 meters above sea level and overlooks a deep gorge. It includes several buildings, and the construction of a new huge church building outside the main compound is underway [fig. 1]. The church of Päraqliṭos itself is relatively recent, built in the traditional Təgrayan style and painted with the colours of the Ethiopian flag. It stands on a podium, with stairs leading to the west entrance of the church. It is a rectangular stone church with metal doors and window frames [fig. 2]. This church is a *däbr* with seven *tabots*: Sämaʾtatä Päraqliṭos (the Martyrs of Päraqliṭos), ʾIyäsus (Jesus Christ), Šəllase (Trinity), Maryam (St. Mary), Gabrəʾel (St. Gabriel), Mikaʾel (St. Michael) and Kidänä Məḥrät (Covenant of Mercy). The clergy consists of five priests, thirty deacons and two teachers. A monastic community is said to have existed at ʾAddiqäharsi, but to have disappeared out long ago. Today, no trace of a monastic settlement can be discerned in the compound of the church.

According to the local oral tradition, the site was already a sanctuary in pre-Christian times (“*bä-ʾOrit gize*”). During the Aksumite time, a group of “the Righteous Ones” (*Šadaqan*) came to Ethiopia from the Middle East and started to evangelise the region. They were martyred by those who opposed the new religion: it is said that they died on the very site of the actual church. A stone platform at the southern side of the church, with a curious surface showing traces of ancient volcanic activity [fig. 3], is believed to be the burial

preference cannot be clearly established for the past as the two orders are difficult to distinguish in writing).



place of the group of saints. It is a sacred area that is inaccessible to females. Some years after the martyrdom, the Aksumite King ʿĪllä ʿAmida (called here ʿAlʿameda) established a church, donated lands and dedicated it to the *sāmaʿtatä Pāraqlīṭos*, “the Martyrs of the Paraclete”. The church was then re-established in the sixteenth century by King Ləbnä Dəngəl (r. 1508–1540).

The Gulo Mākāda wārāda is known as an important historical area with many remains from pre-Aksumite and Aksumite times.<sup>2</sup> A testimony of the Sabaean presence in Ethiopia, an inscription in Epigraphic South Arabian from ʿAddiqāharsi Pāraqlīṭos is engraved on a flat stone slab, of approximately 30–32 centimetres [fig. 4]. This inscription was photographed by Paul Henze in 2005 and subsequently translated by Stefan Weninger.<sup>3</sup> This inscription mentions the supreme deity of the Sabaean pantheon ʿAlmaqah. Also, it possibly mentions the site of Yəḥa, where a temple dedicated to this deity was located. The presence of this inscription might bring the history of the place back to the eighth or seventh century B.C. However, there is no hint elucidating the

2 LECLANT – MIQUEL 1956; GODET 1977.

3 WENINGER 2007.



Map. 3. Location of Pāraqlīṭos and the places mentioned in the report by Alvares.

relationship between the inscription and the site; the local tradition does not offer any explanation for the presence of the inscription at the church.

There are other remains found on the site that might well originate from the Aksumite period. Among them there are three recently painted stone pillars, approximately 2.5 meters high on the average. The first one, standing on the left side of the podium [fig. 5], bears an anthropomorphic relief on one side [fig. 6], and a relief of a cross on the other [fig. 7]. The second pillar, on the right side of the podium, bears no decoration; it is included in the wall recently built around a water cistern [fig. 8]. The third pillar stands in the doorway of the *däggä sälam* of the church, the western door of the churchyard [fig. 9]. Despite the presence of the cross, local tradition connects these remains to the pre-Christian Aksumite times. The anthropomorphic relief has gender identification, seen by the local population as a testimony of pagan beliefs.

So far only one, though important, reference to the church of Pāraqlīṭos has been identified in historical sources. The sixteenth-century narrative of the Portuguese embassy to Ethiopia, written by Francisco Alvares, mentions, in chapter 44, “a monastery on a river, called Paraclitos”<sup>4</sup> that the embassy passed after leaving Ādwa in August 1520 and before arriving in “Agroo”.<sup>5</sup> According to Alvares, the monastery was inhabited by 20 or 25 monks and was a place of great sanctity and good agricultural production. The translators, Beckingham and Huntingford, could not identify the site. They tentatively placed it in the vicinity of the actual towns of Wəqro (“Agroo”) and Āṣbi.<sup>6</sup> According to them, the Portuguese embassy left Āmba Sānnayt,

4 BECKINGHAM – HUNTINGFORD 1961:175.

5 “A town named Agroo, where the Tigrimahom has a Beteneguz” BECKINGHAM – HUNTINGFORD 1961:176.

6 BECKINGHAM – HUNTINGFORD 1961:584.

went by the ʿAlāqwa pass (near today’s ʿAddigrat) and then went directly southward to Wəqro, making a halt at “Paraclytos” (see map 3). However, the translators apparently confused Wəqro Qirqos, a rock hewn-church in today’s town of Wəqro, with Wəqro Maryam church of ʾAmba Sānnayt, near the town of Nābällät,<sup>7</sup> and thus overestimated the distance covered by the embassy. Today, we can propose another hypothetical reconstruction of the itinerary that is more in line with the information given by Alvares. Coming from ʿAdwa, the Portuguese embassy passed by the ʿAlāqwa pass and went to the monastery of Ɔāraqlīṭos in Gulo Mākāda, northwards. After that, they went in the opposite direction, to the church of Wəqro Maryam of ʾAmba Sānnayt. It seems quite plausible that the monastery of “Paraclytos” described by Alvares was indeed ʿAddiqāḥarsi Ɔāraqlīṭos, even though the description is difficult to match with the current situation of the site; the mention is also a hint to the importance of the church of Ɔāraqlīṭos during the reign of King Ləbnā Dəngəl.

A note preserved in manuscript London, British Library, Oriental 481,<sup>8</sup> might provide a second reference to the site. According to this note (f. 132vb), King Ləbnā Dəngəl (regnal names Dawit and Wānag Sāgād) granted lands to a church called Ɔāraqlīṭos. Unfortunately, the note is not very clear, and none of the other toponyms mentioned in that document has been identified. Thus, one cannot be sure, at least for the moment, that the church of the land grant is the same as our church of Ɔāraqlīṭos.

### Manuscript collection of ʿAddiqāḥarsi Ɔāraqlīṭos

In the ʿəqa bet of the church, sixty five manuscripts are preserved in a cupboard and two chests [fig. 10]. Of these, the Ethio-SPaRe team could completely digitise fifty two.

As one could expect from a *däbr*-church, the main part of the collection is represented by liturgical texts. Sixteen manuscripts were recorded: two *Mäṣḥafä qəddase* (Missal), two *Fəṭḥat zä-wäld* (“Absolution of the Son”), a complete *Sənkəssar* (Synaxarion, divided in two manuscripts), two *Mäṣḥafä ʿəṭan* (“Book of Incense”), two *Mäṣḥafä gənzät* (“Book of the Funeral [Rite]”), two *Mäṣḥafä gəṣṣawe* (Lectionary for the year), a *Gəbrä ḥəmmamat* (“The Rite for the Passion Week”), a *Mäṣḥafä təmqät* (“Book of Baptism [Rite]”), a *Mäṣḥafä təklil* (“Book of Marriage [Rite]”), and a *Mäṣḥafä ʾasləṭi* (Scriptural readings for the feast of the year).

7 MORDINI 1939:517–26.

8 See WRIGHT 1877:1–6, no. 2; the purported copy of the *Mäṣḥafä təfüt* preserved at ʾAmba Gəṣān, it contains the Octateuch, the Four Gospels and the *Senodos*, and a number of documents.

Sixteen manuscripts contain hagiographic texts: three copies of the Vita (*gädl*) of St. Gäbrä Mänfäs Qəddus, two copies of the Vita of St. Kiros, two copies of the Vita of St. Täklä Haymanot, a Vita of ʾabunä ʾArägawi, a Vita of St. George of Lydda, and the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles (*Gädlä ḥawaryat*). The hagiographic tradition around the Martyrs of Pəraqliṭos (*Gädlä Şadəqan zä-Pəraqliṭos*) is attested in six manuscripts.

Eleven manuscripts contain other literary works: three copies of the *Täʾamrä Maryam* (“Miracles of Mary”), a copy of the *Täʾamrä ʾIyäsus* (“Miracles of Jesus”), several homiliaries – two manuscripts of the *Dərsanä Mikaʾel* (“Homily of St. Michael”), a collection of homilies (*Dərsanat*), a *Dərsanä sänbät* (“Homily on the Sabbath”) and a *Dərsanä mädhane ʿaläm* (“Homily of the Saviour of the World”), – a *Zena şəllase* (“The Story of the Trinity”), a *Nägärrä Maryam* (“The Story of Mary”).

Biblical books are represented by at least three manuscripts: the Four Gospels (*ʿArbaʿtu wəngel*), the Pauline Epistles (*Məpəktä Pawlos*), a manuscript with the Epistles, the Revelation of John and the Acts of the Apostles (*Gəbrä ḥawaryat*). Books of liturgical chants and a recent copy of the *Kəbrä nägəşt* (“Glory of the Kings”) complete the collection. Curiously, no copy of Psalter (*Dawit*) was found.

The great majority of the manuscripts (thirty-five circa) were written during the twentieth century. At least ten date from the nineteenth century. Only one manuscript could be dated to the eighteenth century. There is no manuscript from the seventeenth century, and five manuscripts can be dated to the sixteenth century. From a closer look at these manuscripts – with a particular attention paid to the copies of the hagiography of the Martyrs of Pəraqliṭos – a first overview of the evolution of the manuscript collection of the church becomes possible.

#### *Late 15<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> century witnesses*

The older part of the collection of Pəraqliṭos goes back probably to the late fifteenth – the first half of the sixteenth century. The five surviving manuscripts from that time are of impressive quality and hint at a possible significance of the collection during that period. The first impressive witness is the collection of homilies AP-005<sup>9</sup> [fig. 11]. This well preserved manuscript is directly connected to another codex, the *Täʾamrä Maryam* (AP-035),<sup>10</sup> also in good condition [fig. 12]: in fact, both of them were copied by the same scribe,

9 Manuscript shelf marks quoted below are the call numbers assigned by the Ethio-SPaRe cataloguing database. Manuscript AP-005 measures 31 x 24 x 8cm (height x width x thickness), 119 ff., 16 quires.

10 AP-035: 24 x 19 x 8cm, 190 ff., 26 quires.

Habtä ʿIyasus [fig. 13ab]. A well-preserved copy of the *Gädlä ḥawaryat* (AP-016)<sup>11</sup> [fig. 14] and a finely decorated book of *Gəbrä ḥəməmat* (AP-009)<sup>12</sup> [fig. 15] can also be tentatively dated to the same period.

One of the oldest manuscripts of this part of the collection is the Vita and Miracles of the Martyrs of Pāraqlīṭos (AP-046).<sup>13</sup> The manuscript is bound between two wooden boards with two pairs of sewing stations. The first folium of the introduction to the Vita (f. 11r) has an elaborate *ḥaräg* ornamental band; rubrication is applied, as usual, to the lines of the incipit (f. 13v) [fig. 16ab]. The manuscript’s extensive and complex colophon (ff. 84rb–87rb) is of great interest as it provides exceptionally many details concerning the production of the manuscript.

At the beginning of the colophon (f. 84rb), the precise date of writing can be found [fig. 17a]: 175 “year of mercy” (= 1523 A.D., only three years after the visit of Alvares). The scribe further defines the time (f. 84va) as that of King Ləbnä Dəngəl (r. 1508–1540), Metropolitan Marqos (d. 1529/1530), Archbishop Yoḥannəs (John XIII) of Alexandria (1483–1555) and the governor of ʿAgamä (*ṣəyyum ʿagame*) Natan [fig. 17b].

Another part of the colophon (f. 85rb) gives us the names of the scribe, Täsfa Şəyon [fig. 17c], and of the translator (*zäʿa ʿläwkəwwa*), a certain *fälasi* Danəʿel (f. 85va) [fig. 17d], as well as of the name the person who, apparently, had furnished the parchment for the manuscript (f. 87ra, *bäʿälä branna*), a certain Təklä Giyorgis [fig. 17e].

The mention of a translator apparently indicates that the Gəʿəz text of the Vita (or at least of the Miracles, that the colophon follows upon) is a translation from another language.<sup>14</sup> The first quick check of the text, however, does not seem to support this claim of the scribe.

The first two quires were added later, making it a composite manuscript. The first quire provides an addition (ff. 2ra–5vb): it is a (sixteenth-century?) long note listing the names of the individuals who commemorated the Martyrs of Pāraqlīṭos [fig. 18a]. The second quire has the *mälkə*<sup>2</sup>-hymn in honour of the Martyrs of Pāraqlīṭos (ff. 7ra–10vb). Written by a crude hand, it is the earliest version of this *mälkə*<sup>2</sup>; however, this part is significantly more recent than the part with the Vita [fig. 18b]. The hand of the main part of the manuscript is similar to that of Habtä ʿIyasus of mss. AP-005 and AP-035.

11 AP-016: 36 x 24 x 10cm, 182 ff., 23 quires.

12 AP-009: 51 x 37 x 11cm, 218 ff., 28 quires.

13 AP-046: 18 x 15 x 4cm, 88 ff., 14 quires.

14 The term *fälasi* means in Gəʿəz “foreigner, stranger, wanderer, etc.”, LESLAU 1987:160; also “hermit”, KIDANÄ WÄLD KƏFLE 1948 A.M.: 724. Possibly, the first meaning is intended here, as a further substantiation of the claim that the text is a translation.



*18<sup>th</sup> century witnesses*

The collection has no manuscript from the seventeenth century, and only one dates to the eighteenth century. It is difficult to suggest an explanation to this fact; it could well be that the older manuscripts were still in use and seemed sufficient, without need of new or additional manuscripts. Or the economic factor may have played a role: possibly, after the reign of Ləbnä Dəngəl, the church of Pəraqliṭos became a second-rank institution.

The only eighteenth century manuscript is the second manuscript of the Vita of the Martyrs of Pəraqliṭos (AP-045).<sup>15</sup> Its single production unit contains the Vita and eleven miracles. The first folia are missing, and with them, unfortunately, the introduction to the Vita and the beginning (the first two pages) of the Vita itself [fig. 19]. The binding has been repaired: only the back cover is a wooden board that may have been part of the original binding; the front board has been replaced by a piece of cardboard. The scribe of AP-045 has left us a colophon (ff. 49vb–50rb). Shorter than in AP-046, it still provides some information on the circumstances of writing. The date is given as *Mäggabit* 7229 “year of mercy” (March/April 1737 A.D.), during the time of King ʾIyasu [II] (r. 1730–1755) [fig. 20ab]. The colophon mentions the name of the commissioner – priest ʿAmdä Mikaʿel (his wife and children are also recalled) – but does not provide the name of the scribe.

*19<sup>th</sup> century witnesses*

At least ten manuscripts in the library of Pəraqliṭos were written during the nineteenth century. Their number and content might indicate that the collection was largely re-shaped during that period, new manuscripts replacing those from the sixteenth-century original collection. Most of the nineteenth-century manuscripts contain liturgical and religious works absolutely necessary for running a church: a *Mäṣḥafä qəddase* (AP-001), two *Mäṣḥafä gənzät* (AP-031 and AP-032), a *Mälʾəktä Pawlos* (AP-008), a *Täʾamrä Maryam* (AP-028), a *Täʾamrä ʾIyäsus* (AP-038), a *Nägärä Maryam* (AP-044) and a lavishly illuminated *Dərsanä Mikaʿel* (AP-011) [fig. 21]. The “Golden Gospel” of the church (AP-003) is also in this historical layer [fig. 22].<sup>16</sup> This Four Gospels manuscript can be dated to approximately the end of the nineteenth century. It is not illuminated but, as an exceptionally rare case, has a finely decorated metal covers over the common binding (wooden boards covered with reddish-brown leather). Images incised on the front cover represent the Holy Trinity, the Crucifixion and Christ in Majesty, images on the back cover

15 AP-045: 17.5 x 17 x 3.5cm, 51 ff., 7 quires.

16 AP-003: 28 x 23 x 8cm, 222 ff., 33 quires.



show the Virgin and Child, St. George of Lydda and ʿabunā Zā-Mikaʿel ʿArāgawi [fig. 23ab]. The historical circumstances of such a gift have not been clarified yet.

Another (third) copy of the Vita of the Martyrs of Pāraqliṭos (AP-022)<sup>17</sup> dates to the nineteenth century. This manuscript is a single production unit containing a complete version of the Vita, with the introduction, the Vita proper and eleven miracles. The wooden boards of the binding are covered with reddish-brown tooled leather. Like in the sixteenth century copy, the *ḥaräg*-decoration appears on the incipit page of the introduction [fig. 24a], and the incipit of the Vita is rubricated [fig. 24b]. A colophon at the end of the manuscript (ff. 30vb–31ra) mentions only the date of writing: 30 *Gənbət* 1885 “year of mercy” (6 June 1893 A.D.); it provides no information on the copyist or the circumstances of the production.

#### 20<sup>th</sup> century witnesses

The section of the collection that was formed during the twentieth century is by far the largest; it contains at least thirty five manuscripts. Among them, many liturgical books can be found such as a *Mäṣḥafä qəddäse* (AP-004), a complete Synaxarion (in two volumes, AP-014 and AP-015), two copies of the *Mäṣḥafä gəṣṣawe* (AP-026 and 037), a *Mäṣḥafä təmqät* (AP-021) and a *Mäṣḥafä täklil* (AP-027). Also prominent are hagiographies of national saints such as Gäbrä Mänfäs Qəddus (three copies, AP-007, AP-010, AP-023) or Täklä Haymanot (two copies, AP-030, AP-047), a fact which shows us the late tradition of veneration of Ethiopian saints not immediately associated with the Təgray region.

The Vita of the Martyrs of Pāraqliṭos is represented by three more manuscripts.

The first of these (AP-019, the fourth copy)<sup>18</sup> has no colophon and provides no information concerning the date of production. One can estimate the time of writing as mid-twentieth century, mainly on the basis of handwriting and parchment quality. Wooden boards are covered with reddish-brown tooled leather. The manuscript is a single production unit containing the complete hagiographical dossier consisting of the *gädl*, the eleven miracles and the *mälkä*<sup>2</sup>. There is no *ḥaräg*-decoration at the beginning, but the red colour is used for the rubrication in the *incipits* of both the introduction to the Vita and the Vita itself [fig. 25a]. The manuscript is the second witness in which the *mälkä*<sup>2</sup>-hymns of the Martyrs of Pāraqliṭos is preserved [fig. 25b]; it is the

17 AP-022: 25 x 19 x 3.5cm, 32 ff., 6 quires.

18 AP-019: 27 x 20 x 4.5cm, 48 ff., 7 quires.

same text as the one infixed into the sixteenth-century manuscript AP-046.

The fifth available copy (AP-050) can be tentatively dated to the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>19</sup> It is a single production unit containing the Vita (with the introduction [fig. 26]) and eleven miracles.

The most recent witness (AP-034) was completed in 1979 E.C., i.e. 1986/87 A.D., according to the date mentioned at the end of the manuscript.<sup>20</sup> It is a single production unit with the Vita (with the traditional introduction [fig. 27]), and twelve (sic!) miracles. The quality of both the handwriting and binding is poor.

The tradition of the Martyrs of P̄äraqlīṭos is completed by a commemorative notice dedicated to them in the local copy of the Synaxarion (AP-015)<sup>21</sup> for the 4<sup>th</sup> of Säne [fig. 28]. This Synaxarion is a recent one, copied in 1968 E.C. (1975/76 A.D.). The notice seems to be an abbreviated version of the Vita, without the miracles.

#### *Gädlä Šadəqan zä-P̄äraqlīṭos: features of the tradition*

As shown above, the manuscript collection of °Addiqāḥarsi P̄äraqlīṭos preserves six manuscripts of the previously unknown *Gädlä Šadəqan zä-P̄äraqlīṭos* from different periods – AP-046 (16<sup>th</sup> cent.), AP-045 (18<sup>th</sup> cent.), AP-022 (19<sup>th</sup> cent.), AP-019 (first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> cent.), AP-050 (second half of 20<sup>th</sup> cent.) and AP-034 (1996/97 A.D.) – as well as a manuscript of the Synaxarion containing a commemorative notice for the Martyrs of P̄äraqlīṭos for the 4<sup>th</sup> of Säne (20<sup>th</sup> cent.). Table 1 summarises the most general characteristics of the seven witnesses. The relatively constant number of folia and quires used for manuscripts (with the exception of the oldest copy which uses a format totally different from the others) indicates that the size of the text did not greatly vary with time. The number of the miracles is also constant. Only the most recent copy has twelve in place of eleven miracles (see p. 102 below for details).

#### *A previously unknown group of the Šadəqan*

According to the story narrated in the Vita (which somewhat differs from the oral tradition mentioned above), a group of the “Righteous Ones” (*Šadəqan*) left Tiberias (*Ṭabəryados*) because of a conflict with the king. They came to Ethiopia in the region of P̄äraqlīṭos and started preaching Christianity to

19 AP-050: 27 x 18.5 x 4cm, 59 ff., 8 quires.

20 AP-034: 25.5 x 20 x 4cm, 32 ff., 6 quires.

21 AP-015: 36.5x28x8.5cm, 186 ff., 24 quires.

Table 1. Textual witnesses of the *Gādlä Şadāqan zä-Pāraqlīṭos* in ʿAddiqāharsi Pāraqlīṭos.

Ms	AP-046	AP-045	AP-022	AP-019	AP-050	AP-034	AP-015
Date	1523	1737	1893	mid 20 <sup>th</sup> cent	2 <sup>nd</sup> half 20 <sup>th</sup> cent.	1996-97	Synaxarion 1975-76
Ff./ Quires	88 / 14	51 / 7	32 / 6	48 / 7	59 / 8	32 / 6	
<i>Gādl</i>	Long version, complete	Long ver- sion, in- complete	Long version, complete	Long version, complete	Long version, complete	Long version, complete	Short version
Miracles	11 (number- ed as 12)	11 (numbered as 12)	11 (not num- bered)	11 (number- ed as 12)	11 (not num- bered)	12 (number- ed as 12)	no
<i>Mälkä</i> <sup>o</sup>	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no

the local population. Finally, the “Righteous Ones” and their followers (777 persons in total) were killed by the “Jews”. But two priests and one deacon survived and continued preaching Christian faith. When the Aksumite King ʿAlʿameda fell ill, the angels brought him to the place where the “Righteous Ones” had died. Cured, the King decided to dedicate a church to the martyrs. The Vita incorporated the list of lands donated by the King to the church.

This synopsis shows that the Martyrs of Pāraqlīṭos seem to be a previously unknown group of the *Şadāqan* – saints credited with the early evangelisation of Ethiopia. Several hagiographic traditions dealing with groups of *Şadāqan* preaching Christian faith during the Aksumite times exist.<sup>22</sup> According to these traditions, some saintly monks of Byzantine origin arrived in Ethiopia in groups. They split into smaller groups and spread throughout the highlands of Təgray and Eritrea. Each group is named after the place in which they settled. The hagiographic tradition keeps the memory of at least five groups with some common characteristics (names and number of the members of the group is unknown and they lived and died in group) that form a hagiographic “cycle”: *Şadāqan zä-Baräknaha*, *Şadāqan zä-Kādih*, *Şadāqan zä-Däg<sup>w</sup>e*, *Şadāqan zä-Qaḥen*, *Şadāqan zä-Hawzen* etc.<sup>23</sup> Apparently, the *Şadāqan zä-Pāraqlīṭos* should be added to the list.

#### *Variance among the witnesses*

The hagiographic tradition of the Martyrs of Pāraqlīṭos preserved its purely local, closed character and did not spread in other areas. All witnesses of the

22 BRITA 2010:3; see EAE IV: 446.

23 BRITA 2010:3–8.

Vita of the Martyrs of P̄äraqlīṭos contain the same recension of the text, and there are relatively few textual variations that I will deal with below.

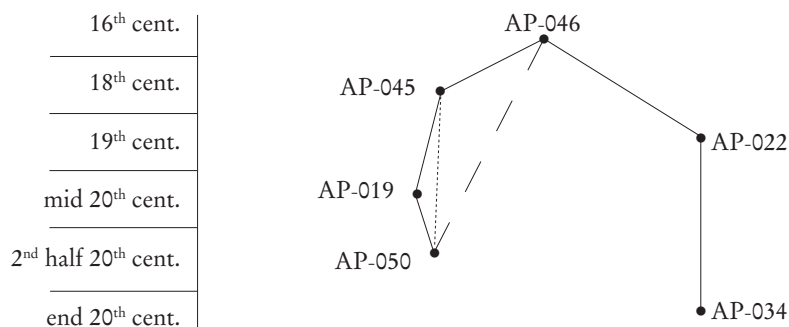
Non-textual variance is clearly visible. The most obvious aspect is the layout: size of page, decoration, rubrication and punctuation. Comparing manuscripts AP-046 (16<sup>th</sup> cent.) and AP-022 (19<sup>th</sup> cent.) one establishes that while in ms. AP-046 the numbers are in red whereas the name P̄äraqlīṭos is not [fig. 29a], in ms. AP-022, on the contrary, numbers are in black, but the name P̄äraqlīṭos is rubricated [fig. 29b]. As the chapter divider, ms. AP-046 uses the nine-dot asterisk and a chain of black and red dots [fig. 29c]. The copyist of ms. AP-022 preferred to use the double nine-dot asterisks without dashes in-between [fig. 29d]. The stylistic innovations introduced by the scribe of ms. AP-022 were followed by the copyists after him (the earlier AP-045 has the same features as AP-046).

Another distinct non-textual variance concerns the arrangement of the miracles. In all manuscripts, the last miracle is numbered “12”. However, nearly all manuscripts have eleven miracle stories, skipping number “10” (miracle 9 is followed by miracle 11). Only the most recent manuscript, AP-034, has twelve miracles, numbered correctly. However, there is no new text. The copyist solved the problem by dividing one of the already existing stories (miracle 3) into two, numbering each part separately (miracles 3 and 4 in AP-034). This story indeed contains two distinct, though similar, miraculous situations. In both cases, the Martyrs of P̄äraqlīṭos help a woman. The earliest manuscripts (AP-046 and AP-045) handle the text as a single story (no rubrication and no chapter dividers) [fig. 30]. In the nineteenth-century manuscript AP-022, as well as in the copies AP-019 and AP-050, the beginning of the second part is marked by a rubricated incipit, but no number is assigned [fig. 31]. It was only the copyist of AP-034 who decided to use the rubricated incipit but also give a separate number (4) to this story [fig. 32], finalising the creation of a new unit in the series of the miracles.

Most of the textual variations seem to be of stylistic nature. As an example, here is the incipit of miracle 7 in manuscript AP-046 (16<sup>th</sup> cent., f. 63vab): **ወካፅበ ፡ ስምዑ ፡ ኦኦኦወዮ ፡ ዘገብረ ፡ ተኦኦረ ፡ ወመንክረ ፡ ጳራቅሊጦስ ፡ መንፈስ ፡ ሕይወት** (...), “Furthermore, O my brethren, listen to the sign(s) and miracle which the Paraclete, Spirit of Life, worked (...)”. Manuscript AP-045 (18<sup>th</sup> cent., f. 34vab) has the same phrasing. But in manuscript AP-022 (19<sup>th</sup> cent., f. 23rb) the text runs: **ወካፅበ ፡ ስምዑ ፡ ኦኦወዮ ፡ ዘገብረ ፡ ወመንክረ ፡ ጳራቅሊጦስ ፡ መንፈስ ፡ ሕይወት**. The copyist dropped the emphatic article of “O my brethren” and omitted the word **ተኦኦረ** (“sign”), that he probably saw as an unnecessary repetition of **መንክረ** (“miracle”). The twentieth-century copyists preserve the original phrase (AP-019, f. 31vb, and AP-050, f. 40vab); only the most recent AP-034 follows the suit of AP-022 (f. 23rb).

Another example is an extract from the incipit of miracle 10 from AP-046 (f. 73ra): ስምዑኬ ፡ አኃድዮ ፡ ከመ ፡ ናብጽሕ ፡ ለክሙ ፡ በዐቅሙ ፡ ኩሎ ፡ ዘይገብሩ ፡ በታሕተ ፡ ሰማይ ፡ ወዘይትገበር ፡ ሎሙ ፡ በዲበ ፡ ምድር (...), “Listen, O my brethren, as to how we shall explain you, according to the capacity, everything they did under the sky and what was done for them on the earth (...)”. Once again, this is faithfully copied in the eighteenth-century AP-045 (f. 41ra). In the nineteenth century, the copyist of AP-022 (f. 26vb) dropped a part of the sentence: “they did under the sky”. The copyist of AP-019 uses the phrasing of the first manuscripts without omissions, but introduces a change of his own (ff. 36vb-37ra): ስምዑኬ ፡ ኦ ፡ አኃድዮ ፡ ከመ ፡ ናብጽሕ ፡ ለክሙ ፡ በዐቅሙ ፡ ኩሎ ፡ ዘይገብሩ ፡ ላዕሌክሙ ፡ በታሕተ ፡ ሰማይ ፡ ወዘይትገበር ፡ ሎሙ ፡ በዲበ ፡ ምድር, “Listen, O my brethren, as to how we will explain you, according to the capacity, everything they did upon you under the sky and what was done for them on the earth (...)” – “upon you” – “upon you” is added. The copyist of AP-050 (f. 47va) followed the first version, while the copyist of AP-034 (f. 26vab) followed the correction made in AP-022 during the nineteenth century.

The last example is particularly interesting. Here is an extract from the incipit of the miracle no. 8 [fig. 33], according to the first manuscript, AP-046 (f. 68rb): ወሀለወት ፡ አሐቲ ፡ ብዕሲት ፡ ዕውርተ ፡ ዐይን ፡ እምጉንዳይ ፡ መዋዕል ፡ ወ መጽአት ፡ እንዘ ፡ ይመርሕዋ ፡ በሐልፍ ፡ (...), “There was a woman, blind since a long time, and she came while (the people of Pāraqliṭos) were leading her [*bä-half*]...”. The main problem is the expression *bä-half* which is not clear, and was not clear also for the copyists. Ms. AP-045 (f. 37v) has the phrase without any change, but manuscript AP-022 (f. 24v) adds a clarification: ወሀለወት ፡ አሐቲ ፡ ብእሲት ፡ ዕውርተ ፡ አይን ፡ እምጉንዳይ ፡ መዋዕል ፡ ወመጽአት ፡ ምድረ ፡ መንበር ፡ እንዘ ፡ የሐልፍዋ ፡ ይመርሕዋ ፡ በሐብል ፡ (...), “There was a woman, blind since a long time, and she came into the land of the throne while (the people of Pāraqliṭos) made her pass through leading her with a rope...”. The copyist specified the location as “land of the throne” (of the *tabot* dedicated to the Martyrs?), and “corrected” the difficult reading *bä-half* as *bä-habl* (“with a rope”). Once again, the first twentieth-century manuscript, AP-019, does not consider the corrections suggested by the nineteenth-century AP-022 (f. 34rb). It follows quite closely the text of the original, correcting however *bä-half* into *bä-habl*: ወሀለወት ፡ አሐቲ ፡ ብዕሲት ፡ ዕውርተ ፡ ዐይን ፡ እምጉንዳይ ፡ መዋዕል ፡ ወመጽአት ፡ እንዘ ፡ ይመርሕዋ ፡ በሐብል. It cannot be determined with certainty whether this was a spontaneous correction while copying from the original, or whether at least this idea of the “rope” was inspired by AP-022. AP-050 (f. 43vb) follows the more faithful AP-019. While in the previous cases AP-034 seemed to follow AP-022 quite literally, in this case the copyist, while certainly basing as usual on the nineteenth century exemplar, did not follow it word for word (ff. 24vb-25ra). He kept the idea of the place (“the

Table 2. Transmission history of the *Gädlä Šadəqan zä-Pəraqliṭos* (stemma codicum).

land of the throne”) and replaced *bä-ḥalf* with *bä-ḥabl*, but did not take over the verbal form *yäḥalləfəwwa*.

These few examples may suggest a reconstruction for the relationships possibly existing between the available manuscripts of the Vita. Manuscript AP-045 seems to be an exact copy and direct descendant of the oldest manuscript AP-046. The nineteenth century copyist of AP-022 introduced several innovations (new rubrication, chapter dividers, and corrections in the text). The early twentieth century AP-019 is closer to AP-046 and AP-045; it is not clear whether its copyist consulted AP-022. The copyist of AP-050 used the older text of AP-046 and AP-045, but also AP-019. Finally, AP-034 is a nearly exact copy of AP-022, with a few innovations (the new numbering of miracles). It is the most distant from the earliest witnesses.

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