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e-mail: office@htu.edu.et**A COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION AMONG THE GƏ'ƏZ ACTS
OF SAINT MARK THE EVANGELIST:
THE SHORT RECENSION IN MULTIPLE-TEXT MANUSCRIPTS**

This article aims at comparing the Gə'əz Acts of Saint Mark the Evangelist, one of the Four Evangelists and of the 70/72 Disciples of Jesus Christ. His Vita is regarded as it was originally composed in Greek and translated into Gə'əz in the 4th century CE. The Gə'əz texts, which all deals with the combat and martyrdom of the Saint, are preserved in distinct extant manuscripts with different recensions, in single and multiple-text manuscripts. The texts of the multiple-text manuscripts, in which this article is considered, are short and found in three discrete recensions. Based on the data collected from the aforementioned sources, comparison and analysis of the texts were carried out with a qualitative method. Eventually, based on the comparison of the three texts, it is indicated that each text could be transmitted through its own distinct line of recension, for each text contains discrete features in wordings, names and formulation of details.

Key words: comparison, Gə'əz Acts, Recension, Mark the Evangelist and Multiple text Manuscript.

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Холи Тринити университети, Аддис-Абеба, Эфиопия
e-mail: office@htu.edu.et**Әулие Марк Евангелисттің Гээз тіліндегі «Іс-әрекеттері»:
көпмәтінді қолжазбалардағы қысқаша нұсқалардың салыстырмалы талдауы**

Бұл мақала Иса Мәсіхтің 70/72 шәкіртінің бірі әрі төрт евангелисттің бірі болып саналатын Әулие Марк Евангелистке қатысты гээз тіліндегі «Іс-әрекеттердің» мәтіндерін салыстыруды мақсат етеді. Бұл шығарманың түпнұсқасы грек тілінде жазылып, IV ғасырда гээз тіліне аударылған деп есептеледі. Әулиенің ерлігі мен шейіттік жолын баяндайтын бұл гээз мәтіндері әртүрлі нұсқаларда сақталып, бірімәтінді де, көпмәтінді де қолжазбаларда кездеседі. Осы мақалада қарастырылатын мәтіндер – көпмәтінді қолжазбаларда кездесетін қысқаша нұсқалар. Бұл мәтіндер үш түрлі редакция түрінде таралған. Зерттеу барысында аталған дереккөздер негізінде сапалық әдіс қолданылып, мәтіндерге салыстырмалы талдау жүргізілді. Үш нұсқаға жүргізілген салыстыру нәтижесінде, әр мәтіннің өзіндік ерекшеліктері – лексикалық құрылымында, есімдер мен баяндау тәсілінде – бар екені анықталып, олардың әрқайсысы жеке редакциялық дәстүрге негізделген деген тұжырым жасалды.

Түйін сөздер: салыстырмалы талдау, гээз тіліндегі «Іс-әрекеттер», редакция, Әулие Марк Евангелист, көпмәтінді қолжазба.

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Университет Холи Тринити, Аддис-Абеба, Эфиопия
e-mail: office@htu.edu.et**Сравнительное исследование гээзских «Деяний Святого Марка Евангелиста»:
краткая редакция в составе многотекстовых рукописей**

Данная статья посвящена сравнительному анализу гээзских версий «Деяний святого Марка Евангелиста» — одного из четырёх евангелистов и одного из 70/72 учеников Иисуса Христа. Его житие считается первоначально написанным на греческом языке и переведённым на гээз в IV веке н.э. Гээзские тексты, в которых описываются подвиги и мученическая смерть святого, сохранились в различных рукописях, как однотекстовых, так и многотекстовых, и представлены в нескольких редакциях. В данной статье рассматриваются краткие версии текста, содержащиеся в многотекстовых рукописях, существующие в трёх различных редакциях. На основе собранных текстов был проведён качественный сравнительный анализ. В результате анализа установлено, что каждая из редакций, вероятно, восходит к своей отдельной традиции передачи текста, поскольку они демонстрируют различия в лексике, именах и деталях повествования.

Ключевые слова: сравнение, гээзские «Деяния», редакция, Марк Евангелист, многотекстовая рукопись.

1. Introduction

In the Gə‘əz literary treasure, the hagiographical text, which accounts the life of both foreign and local Saints, may perhaps take the largest portion of the Ethiopian literature. It includes the translated lives of the Saints of the early Oriental Churches, such as the Vitae of St Cyrus (Kiros) and St Anthony (Ἄντων), and the lives of local Saints, like Gädlä Zena Marəqos and Gädlä Täklä Alfa (Taddesse Tamrat 1970, 2; Kaplan 2014, 642a-643b; 1982, 10, 2012, 371). The Vita of Saint Mark the Evangelist, with which this study is focused, is one of the translated lives of the foreign Saints estimated to be translated in the 4th century CE.

Saint Mark the Evangelist, also called ‘John’¹, is one of the four Evangelists and of 70/72² disciples of Jesus Christ. He was born in Cyrene, one of the Five Western Cities (Pentapolis), the present day ‘Libya’ around the beginning of the 1st century CE.³ His Acts asserts his birthplace as follows: “... (ወ)በመዋዕሊሆሙ፡ ለሐዋርያት፡ አሙ፡ ተካፈለዋ፡ ለኩሉ፡ ምድር፡ ከፈሎ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ለብሔረ፡ ግብጽ፡ ... ውእቱኬ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ቀደሙ፡ ወበጽሐሙ፡ ቀሬኔ፡ ሀገረ፡ ጳንጠጳሊስ፡ እስሙ፡ ውእቱ፡ ብሔረ፡ ፍጥረቱ፡ ... *when the Apostles, in their days, divided all (parts of) the Earth, St Mark received the land of Egypt ... Now St Mark came first to and reached Cyrene, a city in Pentapolis, for it was his native land ...* “ (Andualem Ermias 2023, 29; Lusini 2009, 31/37; Budge 1899, 257; 1901, 309; 1928, 845; Getatchew Haile 1981, 124/129). The name ‘Mark’ is to mean a ‘Lion’⁴: as lion is a

master to the cow and breaks it down, Mark too destroyed the idol made in the image of cow from Egypt roaring as a lion.

His parents⁵ are belonged to the tribe of Levites of Jews: his mother is called ‘Mary’, one of the faithful women who used to follow Jesus Christ (Acts 12, 12), and his father ‘Aristopolus’. In the Ethiopian Orthodox Church tradition, St Mark is also the cousin of Barnabas, for his mother Mary, who opened her house to the faithful to gather and pray there, is the sister of Barnabas.⁶ However, as for his father Aristopolus, there is no Biblical reference, and he is mentioned only in some apocryphal texts (Malaty 1993, 18; Shenouda 1995, 9, 11; Atiya 1991, 1529a; Coptic Synaxarium 1995, 319).

The Acts of Saint Mark is supposed to be originally composed in Greek and translated into Gə‘əz during the 4th century, soon after the introduction of Christianity (Kaplan 2014, 42a; Lusini, 2003, 2 and Getatchew Haile 1981, 117-118). The Gə‘əz Acts of St Mark the Evangelist is preserved in different recensions: **short**, **medium** and **long**. Currently, the text of the medium recension is preserved in seven single-text manuscripts, whereas the long one dose in nine extant witnesses (Andualem Ermias 2021, 32-33). The short recension, on which this study focusses, is preserved in three different multiple-text manuscripts (Getatchew Haile 1981, 117).

2. The Acts in Multiple-Text Manuscripts

Few scholars suggest that the Gə‘əz Acts of St Mark the Evangelist are likely to be of three recensions. For instance, Getatchew Haile (1981, 124-134) and Lusini (2009, 31-36) indicate the variants of the texts in their critical apparatuses. This study attempts to make a comparative discussion tabulating what each text reads to evidence whether the texts can certainly be classified in three recensions.

began to pray. The two beasts fell dead, and because of this miracle, the father believed in Christ and baptized by the hand of his son Mark (Coptic Synaxarium 1995, 319; Shenouda 1995, 16-17; Malaty 1993, 19). In the Ethiopian iconographic tradition, his icon is often seen painted with a winged lion nearby his seat.

⁵ Migrated from Palestine, they were rich farmers who produced agricultural products which they marketed internationally (Oden 2011a:46)

⁶ Cf. Acts 12, 12-17; Col. 4, 10-11

¹ ‘John’ was his Hebrew name whereas ‘Mark’ was of Latin (cf. Acts 12, 12).

² The number of Disciples is attested to be 70 in the Bible (Luke 10), but it is recorded as 71 and 72 in some other Ethiopic literature including the Acts of St Mark (Andualem Ermias 2023, 29).

³ Saint Mark was most likely born close to Cyrene which is in the region of Cyrenaica (sometimes identified as ‘Ptolemais’ or ‘Barka’) in North Africa between 5 and 15 CE. His birth place could also be Ebryatolis (‘city of Jews’), a settlement of Jews on the outskirts of Cyrene (Oden 2011a:21, 45-46).

⁴ There is a story in the relation between St Mark and lion in the Coptic tradition: Once a lion and lioness appeared to John Mark and his father Aristopolus while they were traveling near the Jordan River. The father was very frightened and begged his son to escape, while Mark awaited his fate. John Mark assured his father that Jesus Christ would save them, and

The three texts, which are supposed to be of three recensions, are preserved in different multiple-text manuscripts, most importantly in:

I. I. The Acts of the Saints (Gädlä Qəddusan, ገድለ፡ ቅዱሳን), such as in EMMML 1763, ff. 224r-227r, which is edited and translated by Getatchew Haile (1981, 124-134), and in a Ms located in an Italian library, *Pistoia, Bibl. ioteca Forteguerriana (Martini etiop. n. 5, ff. 82-89)*. This is what Lusini (2009, 31-42) uses for edition and translation comparing with two Greek texts, i.e. *Patrologia Greca, CXV, coll. 164-169* (Vat. Gr. 881) and *Acta Sanctorum, Aprilis, III, pp. XLVI-XLVIII* (Vat. Gr. 866);

II. II. The apocryphal Acts of the Apostles (Gädlä Hawarəyat, ገድለ ሐዋርያት), for instance, in CI⁷, ff. 116a-119b, which is found in British library, and is edited and translated by Budge (1899, 257-264 and 1901, 309-318 respectively); and

III. III. The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church (Gəʿəz Synaxarium, ስንክሳር), which is edited and translated by Budge (1928), the entry for St Mark on the Month of Miyaziya the 30th, in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church calendar and the 30th of Baramoudah in the Coptic one.

The texts are given the name ‘short recension’, ‘medium recension’ and ‘long recension’ for this study to distinguish them one from the other. Hence, from now onwards, each recension is termed as follows:

1. The text found in the Book of the Saints (Sənkəsar, ስንክሳር) is coded as: ‘**Short Recension One (SRI)**’;

2. The text included in the Acts of the Apostles (Gädlä Hawarəyat, ገድለ ሐዋርያት) is named as: ‘**Short Recension Two (SRII)**’ and

3. The text incorporated in the Acts of Saints (Gädlä Qəddusan, ገድለ፡ ቅዱሳን) is termed as: ‘**Short Recension Three (SRIII)**’;

4. The text preserved in seven separate Mss are named as: ‘**Medium recension (MR)**’;

5. The text found in nine separate Mss is termed as: ‘**Long Recension (LR)**’.

The first three texts, supposed to be of three recensions that the scholars published, are used as the main sources of the data to make the comparative discussion; the medium and the long recensions are not used as sources of the data. I

selected eleven points from the texts for the comparison displaying whether the three texts are different recensions based on the events they deal with, the wordings they use and the way they are formulated, in the consecutive tables below.

3. Comparative Discussion

As shown in the table, SRI starts that St Mark became a martyr on that day, which is a common introductory phrase in the entry of the Book of the Saints (Sənkəsar, ስንክሳር). The SRII announces that the text is about the martyrdom of St Mark the Evangelist, whereas the SRIII begins that the text is about the combat and martyrdom of St Mark the Evangelist, so both seem to have similar introductory phrase.⁸

SRI introduces the parent of St Mark, but it says nothing about the lot⁹ that the Apostles casted on the world for their apostolic mission, and what St Mark got. On the other hand, SRII and SRIII do not mention about the parents of St Mark, but both of them state that the Apostles divided the world to preach the Gospel, and St Mark was assigned to go to the cities of Egypt, but they do not discuss his parental issue. Here, we can draw that SRI shows a conceptual difference from SRII and SRIII, and even the SRII differs from SRIII in the way that it expresses the concept, for instance, though both deal with the division of the world, SRIII does not state about the lot (‘əsa ǝፃ) the Apostles casted.

⁸ The MR begins: “በስሙ፡ አብ፡... ንዌጥን፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ገድለ፡ ለብ፡ ወቅዱስ፡ ማሪ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ... In the name of the Father..., we start the book of the Acts of the blessed and Holy Mari Mark ...”, whereas the LR do: “በስሙ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ አብ፡ ቅዱስ፡... In the name of God, the Holy Father ...” (Andualem ermias 2021, 78-80).

⁹ There are two expressions in the MR: the first states that the lot of St Peter fell upon Egypt, but the lot of St Mark did on the other one: ወተዓፀዉ፡ ላዕለ፡ አህጉረ፡ ዓለም፡ በልባዊ፡ መንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ወበጽሐ፡ ዕፃሁ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ኢጥሮስ፡ ላዕለ፡ ግብጽ ... ወበካልእ፡ መጽሐፍ፡ ይብል፡ አመ፡ ተካፈሉ፡ ሐዋርያተሁ፡ ለእግዚእን፡ ኢየሱስ፡ በልባዊ፡ መንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ በጽሐ፡ ዕፃሁ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ወንጌላዊ፡ ላዕለ፡ ግብጽ... And they casted lots upon the cities of the world through the knowledge of the Holy Ghost, and the lot of Saint Peter fell upon Egypt. ... but in another scripture, it says, “When the Apostles of Our Lord Jesus divided the world through the knowledge of the Holy Ghost, the lot of Saint Mark the Evangelist fell upon Egypt ... (Andualem Ermias 2021, 165/269).

⁷ It is the code given to the Ms by the cataloguer Wright 1887, 50.

Table 1 – Beginning Phrase

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
በስሙ፡ አብ፡... ወበዛቲ፡ ዕለት፡ ኮነ፡ ሰማዕተ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ... <i>In the name of the Father... On this day St Mark became a martyr ...</i> (p. 845).	በስሙ፡ አብ፡ ... ዝንቱ፡ ስምዑ፡ ለማርቆስ፡ ወንጌላዊ፡ ... <i>In the name of the Father ... This is the martyrdom of Mark the Evangelist ...</i> (pp. 257/309) ¹⁰ .	ገድል፡ ወስምዕ፡ ዘቅዱስ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ወንጌላዊ፡ ... <i>This is the Acts and martyrdom of St Mark the Evangelist ...</i> (pp. 124/129, 31/37).

Table 2 – The Lot St Mark Got

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወለዝንቱ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ስሙ፡ አቡሁ፡ አርስቶጶስ፡ ... ወስማ ለእሙ፡ ማርያም፡ ... <i>The name of the father of this holy man was 'Aristopolus' and his mother's name was Mary ...</i> (p. 845).	ወኮነ፡ ሰበ፡ ተካፈሉ፡ ሐዋርያት፡ አህጉረ፡ ዓለም፡ በጽሑ፡ ዕፃ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ከሙ፡ ይሑር፡ ኀበ፡ በሐውርተ፡ ግብጽ፡ ... <i>And it happened that, when the Apostles divided the countries of the world, the lot came to St Mark to go to the countries of Egypt ...</i> (pp. 257, 309).	(ወ)እሙ፡ ተካፈለዋ፡ ለምድር፡ ከፈሎ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ለብሔር፡ ግብጽ፡ ይምሀር፡ በእጃምሮ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ <i>When they (the Apostles) divided the earth, St Mark received Egypt to teach the knowledge of God ...</i> (pp. 124/129, 31/37).

Table 3 – The Cities St Mark Preached

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወሰበከ፡ ውስተ፡ ሀገረ፡ አፍራቅያ፡ ወበርቃ፡ ወጳንጦጶሊስ፡ <i>And he preached in the city of Africa, Barka and Pentapolis ...</i> (p. 845).	ወውእቱ፡ ሰበከ፡ በውስተ፡ ኩሉ፡ አህጉረ፡ ግብጽ፡ ወሎንያ፡ ወማርቆያ፡ ... <i>And he preached to all the districts of Egypt, Lonya, and Markiya ...</i> (pp. 257/309).	(ወ)በጽሑ፡ ውስተ፡ ብሔር፡ ግብጽ፡ ወሊብያ፡ ወመርማርቄ፡ ወአሞንያቄ፡ ወጳንጦጶሊስ፡ <i>And he arrived in the city of Egypt, Libya, Marmarica, Ammoniac and Pentapolis ...</i> (pp. 124/129, 31/37).

¹⁰ The first number (257) indicates the page reference of the Gəʿəz text, whereas the second one (309) does the translation.

As it is indicated in the table above, every recension states the names of the cities¹¹, where St Mark the Evangelist preached the Gospel, are different except that of Pentapolis known as ‘The Five Western Cities’ mentioned by SRI and SRIII. The SRI remarks, ‘cities of Africa, Barka and Pentapolis’, the SRII mentions, ‘all the districts of Egypt, Lonya, and Markiya’, and SRIII states, ‘the city of Egypt, Libya, Marmarica, Ammoniac and Pentapolis’. Here, the variant nomination of the cities indicates that every text might have its own textual history; they could be composed in different times, for the names of the cities can vary from time to time.

Table 4 – The Order St Mark Received and the Place He Arrived at

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወእምዝ፡ ሖረ፡ ውስተ፡ ሀገረ፡ እስክንድርያ፡ በትእዛዘ፡ እግዚእነ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ... <i>And after this, he went to the city of Alexandria in the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ ...</i> (p. 845).	ወበውእቱ፡ መካን፡ ተከሥተ፡ ሎቱ፡ በመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ከሙ፡ ይፃእ፡ ኀበ፡ ሀገረ፡ እስክንድርያ፡ ኀበ፡ ተቅዋም፡ <i>And in that place, the Holy Spirit revealed him to go forth to the city of Alexandria, to the Tāqwam (lamp stand) ...</i> (pp. 258/310).	ወእምህየ፡ ተከሥተ፡ ሎቱ፡ በመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ከሙ፡ ይሑር፡ ሀገረ፡ እንተ፡ ስማ፡ ፋሮስ፡ ... <i>And thence, it was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit to go to a town called 'Faros' ...</i> (pp. 124/130, 31/38).

In both cases, that is, the subject¹² who ordered St Mark to go to Alexandria and the particular

¹¹ In the MR, the areas where St Mark preached in general, and the name of the most cities in particular are different: (ወ)በጽሑ፡ ዕፃሁ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ወንጌላዊ፡ ላዕለ፡ ግብጽ፡ ወደባ፡ ወኢትዮጵያ፡ ወፎ፡ አህጉር፡ ዘምዕራብ፡ ዘውእቶሙ፡ በርቃ፡ ወረስ፡ ዘዊላ፡ አውሀላ፡ ሰንተይትያ፡... *And the lot of Saint Mark the Evangelist fell upon Egypt, Noba, Ethiopia, and the Five Western Cities viz. Barqa, Wāräs, Zāwila, Awhala and Sāntädätya* (Andualem Ermias 2021, 165/269).

¹² In the MR too, it is reported that the Holy Spirit appeared and told him to go to the city of Alexandria: ወእምዝ፡ በእለተ፡ ሰንበት ... አስተርአዮ፡ መንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ በፎ፡ አህጉር፡ ወይቤሎ፡ ተንሥእ፡ ውሑር፡ ሀገረ፡ እስክንድርያ ... *And on the day of Sunday, the Holy Ghost revealed to him (when preaching) throughout the Five Cities and He said to him, "Arise and go to the city of Alexandria"* (Andualem Ermias, 2021, 190/201).

place he arrived at are similar conceptually. Nevertheless, they differ in wordings they narrate: the SRI states that St Mark went to the city of Alexandira by the order of Jesus Christ, and the SRII asserts that it (the impression) revealed to St Mark by the Holy Spirit to go out to the city of Alexandira, specifically known as ‘Täqwam, ተቅዋም’. The SRIII expresses that it (the knowledge) revealed to St Mark by the Holy Spirit to go out to the city of Alexandira, specifically a city whose name is known as ‘Faros, ፋሮስ’ in Alexandira.

Table 5 – The Place St Mark’s Sandals Broken off

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወሰበ: በአ: ሀገረ: እስክንድርያ: ተበትከ: ቶታነ: አሣእኒሁ: እምእገረሁ: ... <i>And while he entered to the city of Alexandira, the strap of his sandals broke off from his foot ...</i> (p. 845).	ወሰረ: ንበ: ሀገረ: እስክንድርያ: ወሰበ: በጽሐ: ወበአ: ንበ: አንቀጽ: ሀገረ: ተመትረ: ቶታነ: አሣእኒሁ: ... <i>And he went to the region of Alexandira. And while he reached and entered into the gate of the city, the strap of his sandals broke ...</i> (pp. 258/311).	ወበጽሐ: ውስተ: መካን: ዘስሙ: ብንዲዲዮስ: ወእንዘ: ይበውእ: ውስተ: አንቀጽ: ሀገረ: ተበትከ: ቶታነ: አሣእኒሁ: ... <i>And he arrived in a place called ‘Bəndidiyos’. And while entering the gate of the city, his shoe broke ...</i> (pp. 125/130, 32/38).

The place¹³ where the strap of his sandals was broken off is described differently in every recension: SRI states that it was broken off while he was entering into the city of Alexandira. SRII describes that it occurred when reaching the Gate of the city of Alexandira; while SRIII expresses that it happened while he was arriving at the Gate of the city of Alexandira, specifically known as ‘Bəndidiyos, ብንዲዲዮስ’, which is not mentioned in the other recensions.

¹³ There is no a specific name of place rather than Egypt in the MR: ወእንዘ: ያንሶሱ: በእስክንድርያ: ተአቅፈ: እገረሁ: ወተበትከ: ቶታነ: አሣእኒሁ: *And when he was walking through Alexandira¹³, his feet obstructed and his shoelace broke apart from his shoe* (Andualem Ermias 2021, 192/292).

Table 6 – The Names of the Ordinated Clergy

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
(ወ)ሣሞ: ለአንያኖስ: ኤጲስ: ቆጶስ: ወለደቂቁ: ቀሳውስተ: ወዲያቆናተ: ... <i>And he appointed Anianus episcopacy and his sons the priests and deacons ...</i> (p. 846).	(ወ)ሣሞ: ለአንያኖስ: ኤጲስ: ቆጶስ: ወ፫: ቀሳውስተ: ... መልዮስ: ቆረዶኖስ: በሪሞስ: ... <i>And he appointed Anianus to be (their) episcopacy and three priests ... Malyos, Kordonos and Barimos ...</i> (pp. 260/313).	(ወ)ሣሞ: ሎሙ: ለምእመናን: ጳጳስ: አንያኖስሃ: ወቀሳውስተ: ፫ተ: ሜሌዎስ: ወሳቢኖስሃ: ወቀርዶንሃ ... <i>And he appointed for the faithful Anianus bishop, three priests: Milios, Sabinos and Cerdo ...</i> (pp. 126/131, 33/39).

The names of the clergy that St Mark the Evangelist appointed in Alexandira are recorded differently.¹⁴ SRI reads that St Mark ordained Anianus a bishopric and his sons made them priests and deacons; they are not mentioned by name except Anianus. SRII mentions the name of the three priests, ‘Mälyos, መልዮስ, ‘Qordonos, ቆረዶኖስ’ and ‘Barimos, በሪሞስ’, that St Mark appointed beside to the bishopric of Anianus, but it says nothing about the ordination of the deacons stated in SRI. The SRIII reads that St Mark ordained Anianus episcopacy, that is bishopric in SRI and SRII, and the names of the three priests are: ‘Milios, ሜሌዎስ’, ‘Sabinos ሳቢኖስ’ and ‘Qärdon, ቀርዶን’, which are absent in SRI and named differently in SRII.

¹⁴ The clergy whom St Mark ordained are not mentioned by name, but mentioned by number in other sources: ወሰቤሃ: ሣሞ: ለአንያኖስ: ኤጲስ: ቆጶስ: ... ወሣሞ: ቆዱስ: ማርቆስ: ወንጌላዊ: ምስለ: አንያኖስ: ፲ወ፪ተ: ቀሳውስተ: ወ፯: ዲያቆ ናተ: ወ፲ወ፬: ሰብአ: ለመልእክተ: ቤተ: ክርስቲያን: ቅድስት: ... *And at that time, he appointed Anianus a bishop... and Saint Mark the Evangelist ordained with Anianus twelve presbyters, seven deacons and fourteen faithful for the service of the Holy Church* (Andualem Ermias 2021, 196/296). ወሣሞ: (አንያኖስ: ኤጲስቆጶስ): (ወ)፲፪: ቀሳውስተ: ወ፯: ዝ(ዲ)ያቆናተ: ... *and he appointed (Anianus a bishop and) 12 presbyters and seven deacons* (Bausi and Camplani 2016, 266).

Table 7 – The Establishment of Church in Alexandria

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወሐነጹ፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ውስተ፡ መካን፡ ዘይሰመይ፡ ዐፀደ፡ አልህምት፡ ... <i>And he built a Church in a place known as the 'Field of the Bulls'...</i> (p. 846).	ወሐነጹ፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ውስተ፡ መካን፡ ዘይሰመይ፡ ዐፀደ፡ ላህም፡... <i>And they built a Church in the spot called the 'Field of the Bull'...</i> (pp. 260/313).	ወቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ሐነጹ፡ ለርእሰሙ፡ ውስተ፡ አገለ፡ ዘሰሙ፡ በቀሉ፡... <i>And they built a Church for themselves in a quarter called 'Bucoles'...</i> (pp. 126/132, 33/40).

In this section, there is a variety of expression in the subject who built the Church in Alexandria and the name of the place where the Church was built.¹⁵ SRI states that St Mark built a Church in a place called ‘ዐጸደ፡ አልህምት’, ‘Aṣädä ’Aləhəmt’ Lit. ‘Field of the Bulls’; SRII reports that they built a Church in a place called ‘ዐጸደ፡ ላህም’, ‘Aṣädä ’Lahəm’ Lit. ‘Field of a Bull’; and SRIII asserts that they built a Church to themselves in a quarter whose name is ‘በቀሉ’, Bāq’älu’¹⁶.

Table 8 – Terms the Unfaithful used to Ridicule St Mark

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወሰሐብዎ፡ ውስተ፡ ሀገር፡ ወይብሉ፡ ንሰሐብ፡ ለዳቤላ፡ ውስተ፡ ፀደ፡ አልህምት፡ ... <i>And they dragged him in the city, and they said, “Let us drag the bull to the ‘Field of the Bulls’...”</i> (p. 847).	ወሰሐብዎ፡ ውስተ፡ ፍኖት፡ እንደ፡ ይብሉ፡ ንሰሐብ፡ ለዳቤላ፡ ውስተ፡ ዐፀደ፡ ላህም፡ ... <i>And they dragged him into the road saying, “We will drag the bull into the ‘Field of the Bull’...”</i> (pp. 261, 314).	ወሰሐብዎ፡ እንደ፡ ይብሉ፡ ንሰሐብ፡ ለቢባሎስ፡ ውስተ፡ በቁሉ፡ ... <i>And they dragged him saying, “Let us drag the bibalos (antelope) through the Bucoles”...</i> (pp. 127/132, 34/40).

The name of the place where the unfaithful dragged St Mark and the term they used to ridicule him during his martyrdom are differently preserved in the texts.¹⁷ The SRI and SRII read that the

heathens dragged St Mark in a place called ‘ዐጸደ፡ ላህም/አልህምት’, ‘Aṣädä Lahəm/’Aləhəmt’, lit. ‘Field of the Bull/s’ using the term ‘ዳቤላ, dabela’, lit. ‘bull’ to insult. The SRIII records this expression that they dragged him in ‘በቀሉ’, Bāq’älu’ insulting as ‘ቢባሎስ, bibalos’, lit. ‘antelope’¹⁸.

Table 9 – The coming of God to St Mark

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወከዊኖ፡ መንፈቀ፡ ሌሊት፡ አስተርአየ፡ ሎቱ፡ እግዚእ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ወወሀብ፡ ሰላሙ ... <i>And when the night came, Jesus Christ appeared unto him and saluted him...</i> (p. 847).	ወሰበ፡ ከነ፡ መንፈቀ፡ ሌሊት፡ ... መልአክ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ወረደ፡ እምሰማይ፡ ወለከፎ፡ ሥጋሁ ... <i>And at the midnight ... the angel of Lord came down from Heaven and tapped his body ...</i> (pp. 261/315).	ወማእከለ፡ ሌሊት፡ ከዊኖ፡ ... መልአክ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ወረደ፡ እምሰማይ፡ ገሠሠ ... <i>And when it was midnight ... the Angel of God touched him descending from Heaven...</i> (pp. 128/133, 35/41).

The SRI indicates that Jesus Christ appeared to St Mark in the midnight and made a covenant with him.¹⁹ However, the SRII and SRIII describe that the Angel of God descended from Heaven to St Mark in the midnight, and the discourse is took place with him. Here, one can see that the difference is not only a matter of words and expressions, but also a variant of agent through which the event took place.

In this section, there is a great disparity among the three recensions towards the place where the cremation took place; every text states it differently. The SRI does not describe the name of the place where the body of St Mark was cremated. However, the SRII states that the cremation took place in a place called ‘Awbakälyon, አውባክልዮን’,

SRII, is preserved in both the MR and LR (cf. Andualem Ermias 2021, 97 and 205/301).

¹⁸ “ወሰመይዎ፡ እንከ፡ ቢባሎስ፡ እስመ፡ ነዊን፡ ገጹ፡ ዘበትርሜሁ፡ ዐገዜን፡... *And they also called him bibalos, meaning antelope, for his face was long*”. This expression is not found in any other recensions (cf. Getatchew Haile 1981, 132; Lusini 2009, 34).

¹⁹ The description found in the MR and LR are similar to SRI: ወአስተርአየ፡ ሌሊት፡ እግዚእ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ወወሀብ፡ ሰላሙ ... *And Our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to St Mark and saluted him ...* (Andualem Ermias 2021, 203/302)

¹⁵ The MR and the LR preserve similar expression to that of the SRII and SRIII (cf. Andualem Ermias 2021, 96, and 200/299)

¹⁶ It is translated as: ‘Cattle Pasture’ in Gtatchew Haile (1981, 132)

¹⁷ This expression including the place name ‘ዐፀደ፡ ላህም’, and the term ‘ላዳቤላ፡ dabela’, which is similar to SRI and

whereas the SRIII asserts that it was ‘አጌሎስ, Agelos’.²⁰

Table 10 – The Place of Cremation

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወአረማውያን፡ አንደዱ፡ እሳተ፡ ዐቢየ፡ ወወደደ፡ ሥጋሁ፡ ... <i>And the infidels lighted a large fire and threw his body into it ... (p. 847).</i>	ወአንደዱ፡ እሳተ፡ ዐቢየ፡ በውስተ፡ መካን፡ ዘይሰመደ፡ አውባክልዮን፡ ከመ፡ ያውዕዩ፡ ሥጋሁ... <i>They kindled a great fire in the place, which is called 'Awbakälyon' to cremate his body ... (pp. 263/316).</i>	ወብተኃን፡ እሳተ፡ ዐቢየ፡ አንደደሙ፡ ውስተ፡ መካን፡ ዘስሙ፡ አጌሎስ፡ አውዐዩ፡ ሥጋሁ ... <i>And most of the heathens, kindling fire in a place called 'Aggelos', cremated his body... (pp. 128/133, 35/41- 42).</i>

Table 11. The Time of the Martyrdom

Short Recension One (SRI)	Short Recension Two (SRII)	Short Recension Three (SRIII)
ወበተፍጻሜተ፡ መዓልት፡ መጠው፡ ነፍሱ፡ ... <i>And at the end of the day, he gave up his soul ... (p. 847).</i>	ወኮነ፡ ዕረፍቱ፡ ለማርቆስ፡ ... በተፍጻሜተ፡ ወረኑ፡ ሚያዝያ፡ ... <i>And the rest of St Mark was on the last of Miyazya ... (pp. 263/317).</i>	ወአዕረፈ፡ ብፁዕ፡ ወንጌላዊ፡ ... አመ፡ ፴ሁ፡ ለሚያዝያ፡ ... <i>And the blessed Evangelist rested on 30th of Miyazya ... (pp. 128/134, 36/42).</i>

As for the time of the last event of the martyrdom of St Mark the Evangelist, the SRI

reads that he gave up his soul at the end of that day; it doesn't specify when the exact time was. The SRII describes that the rest of St Mark took place at the end of the month of the Ethiopic month Miyazya. The SRIII in other words states the exact time that the event was on the 30th day of the month of Miazia (May 8).

4. Conclusion

In the Ethiopic Literature, the hagiographic text can be classified under two main categories, that is ‘translation’ and ‘original’ texts. The former one contains the life of foreign Saints originally composed in other languages, translated into Gəʿəz, whereas the latter deals with the life of the local Saints, and composed in Gəʿəz. St Mark the Evangelist is one of the foreign Saints whose Vita was originally composed in Greek and latter translated into Gəʿəz in the 4th century AD. This article aims at comparing and analyzing the Gəʿəz Acts of the Saint. The text, particularly the short version with which this study is focused, is found in three sources, the Gəʿəz Synaxarium, the Acts of Saints and Acts of the Apostles. The text extracted from each source are qualitatively compared to prove whether they are of distinct recension. When doing so, it has been found that each text contains distinct features, like variation of wordings, names and formulation of details in general, so it is unlikely to reconstruct a single text. We can draw a conclusion that the Ethiopian tradition could receive different recensions, possibly from different linguistic models in the course of time.

²⁰ The MR contains an expression similar to SRII: ወሰብ፡ ነጻሩ፡ አረማውያን፡ ከመ፡ አዕረፈ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ወንጌላዊ፡ አንደዱ፡ እሳተ፡ ዐቢየ፡ ውስተ፡ መካን፡ ዘይሰመደ፡ አውባክልዮን፡ ከመ፡ ያውዕዩ፡ ሥጋሁ ... *And when the heathens saw that Mark the Evangelist was rested, they kindled a great fire in a place that is called 'Awbaklāyon' (Andualem ermiyas 2021, 205/303)*

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Abbreviation

- CE = common era
- LM = long recension
- MR = medium recension
- Ms/s = manuscript/s
- SRI = short recension one
- SRII = short recension two
- SRIII = short recension three

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