



The Role and Significance of Hagiography as Agent of Healing in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahédo Church: the Case of Dérsanä Rufayél

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Article info

Received Date: 22 October 2024

Accepted Date: 11 December 2024

Published Date: 31 January 2025

Keywords:*

[Homily, Archangel, Dérsanä Rufayél, Holy Water, Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahédo Church (EOTC)].

Abstract*

This article examines the connection between Dérsanä Rufayél and the healing methods evident in EOTC tradition and liturgy. The purpose of the study is to demonstrate Dérsanä Rufayél's impact on the healing of illnesses and other related issues. The author's content analysis from the majority of his doctoral dissertation serves as the study's primary source. In addition to Dérsanä Rufayél, intertextual analysis has also received attention, encompassing other important texts such as the Book of Enoch and the Dégg^wa of Saint Yared. In certain regions of Ethiopia, the study also involves the indirect monitoring of healing services conducted in certain St. Raphael's churches. According to the research, one of the easily accessible liturgical books on the theme of healing in the EOTC is Raphael's Homily. It is also mentioned in Mäséhäfä Sénksar throughout the yearly and monthly festivities. Therefore, healing is primarily associated with devotion to the magnificent archangel Rufayél. The EOTC's devout pilgrims commemorate the days of the archangel and use the holy water to cure themselves of illnesses and other issues. Insofar as it opens up new avenues for study across the humanities, the relationship between ancient literature and modern considerations is fascinating.

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1. Introduction

A range of devotional texts is available to the faithful of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahédo Church (henceforth EOTC) when looking for liturgical books that feature prayers for healing and emancipation from associated concerns. Among these liturgical texts, the Homily of St. Raphael holds a prominent place, as demonstrated by the many churches and monasteries across Ethiopia that are devoted to the Archangel Raphael.

It is important to note the unique importance placed on the curative properties of holy waters associated with the Archangel Raphael. First, the EOTC followers and others travel to the Sacred Water of St. Raphael, which is sourced from various springs in various Ethiopian communities, in order to get healings. Secondly, there are holy water pools found in churches, monasteries, or St. Raphael's sanctuaries. Third, on September 8, the third day of Pag^wémen, the faithful celebrate a unique occasion during which they enjoy water showers from rainfall; this rainfall is regarded as blessed (Holy Water), associated with St. Raphael, and is thought to be the source of blessings and healing for people, cattle, and crops.

Many among the faithful gather in churches on this day and enjoy the celebration. In most areas of the country, EOTC believers gather together in the nearby rivers on the day of the 3rd Pag^wémen Dawn and bathing is a common and unique trend. It must be emphasized that the belief in the healing power of rainfall is linked only with the Archangel Raphael in EOTC Christianity Worship. Given that the interaction between Dérsanä Rufáyel and the current healing practices has not been given enough attention the following research questions are worthy of note.

- (1) What are Dérsanä Rufáyel's primary contributions to the EOTC healing tradition?
- (2) How much does Dérsanä Rufáyel participate in addressing and resolving continuing problems associated with healing?

Examining the healing narratives found in St. Raphael's homily that are relevant to the study of modern healing practices is crucial to answering these issues and examining the relationship between Dérsanä Rufáyel and the lively healing traditions in Ethiopia.

Interpretation of †"Dérsan" or homily means the exegetical or homiletic activity developed by an ecclesiastical interpreter of "Raphael"

The etymological meaning of Raphael is as follows: El, means "God" in Hebrew, and Rapha, means "to heal,". Raphael thus means "God has healed." Gregory the Great and other Latin writers (Evangelia Homiliarum 34.9) understood the notion as a "treatment of God." According to a Coptic text, it means "cure." CE.2052b–2054b.

In the EOTC faith tradition, the Archangel Raphael holds a prominent place. (Aethiopian Encyclopedia, 2003, p. 265) It is thought that St. Raphael is the third of the seven Archangels. The Miracles and a related Homily are read during the festivities in the several churches devoted to the Arch Angels, and hymns unique to each Arch Angel are sung. Examining Dérsanä Rufáyel's unique position in the EOTC spiritual practice, worship, and healing tradition is the goal of this study. The main focus is on the homily's contents and the real EOTC incidents. One of the seven archangels, Raphael, is honored in the homily. The research is predicted the content analysis. It was from a PhD dissertation in the Department of Linguistics and Philology at Addis Ababa University served as the foundation for this investigation.

EOTC members believe that the church's healing tradition includes protection, guidance, and healing power, as well as the exorcism of bad spirits and the lessening of birthing agony. The

† EAE Gesamt (Encyclopaedia Aethiopica) P: 136

Dérsanä Rufáyel makes mention to these activities in a number of different settings. Members of the EOTC and others have used these therapeutic rituals with faith to cure illnesses, drive out bad spirits, find a happy marriage, protect cattle and crops from pests and diseases, and guarantee a safe delivery, all while taking inspiration from the homily devoted to St. Raphael. Some questions arise when one contrasts the homily's practices with those encountered in everyday life.

2. Literature that is intersexual

The phenomena of one text citing, referencing, or making references to every other work is known as intertextuality. It is the way that various texts interact and are interrelated, influencing or shaping the meaning of one text. Intersexuality, in the words of Fair Clough, refers to the ways in which works can rework preexisting conventions (genre, discourse) and create new ones by transforming earlier texts. Intertextuality according to Kristeva definitions is a mosaic of quotes; each text is the absorbing and transforming power of another.

The book of Tobit, which is thought to have been authored by a Diaspora Jewish author in the third century B.C., possibly in Egypt, is where the archangel Raphael first appears. According to Tobit, St. Raphael is one of the seven angels who approach God with the petitions of the virtuous and remain in His presence (Tb. 12:15). This clarifies the different responsibilities he plays when assisting others. Under the name Azarias, which means "the Lord helps," he travels with Tobias, the son of Tobit, to Raguel of Medes in Ecbatana, where Tobias encounters Sarah (Tb. 5:13; 7:7).

As they travel, Raphael saves Tobias from a gigantic fish that attacks him as he is taking a bath in the Tigris River (6:1-3). Later, he and Sarah escape the grasp of Asmodeus, the devil, who had previously murdered Sarah's seven husbands (6: 14; 8:3). Ultimately, true to the meaning of his name, Raphael restores Tobit's vision, Tobias' father (11:7-14).

Before Tobias reached his father, Raphael said to him, "I give you my sentence that your father's eyes will be opened." Applying fish gall to his eyes is a good idea because the medication is intelligent and has the potential to extract the whites from his pores, skin, and eyes. And even though he might see the light, your father won't be blind any more. The mother hurried forward and enveloped her son's round neck with her hands. "I even saw you again," she remarked, adding, "I can die now." She started crying. Tobit got up and staggered out the door, across the courtyard. With a fish gall in his hand, Tobias approached him. "Take courage, father!" he reassured him, blowing into his eyes. After that, he took out the medication, waited a little, and then used both palms to remove the clogged skin and pores from the corners of his eyes. Then his dad collapsed into his neck, sobbing. He said, "I see you, my son, the gentleness of my eyes!" And he said, "Glory to God!" God bless his first-rate name! Glory be to all his angels of purity! Forevermore, blessed be his marvelous call! (New Jerusalem Bible)

The difficulties that Sara, Raguel's daughter, faces are the central focus of the homily about Tobit. It is revealed that an evil spirit that was hidden and bonded to her caused the terrible deaths of seven of her prior husbands when they were having sexual relations. Zacharias, also known as St. Raphael, gives Tobit the order to wed Sara. Tobit's life is spared when the archangel tells her to smoke a fish's heart and liver to expel the evil spirit that is inside of her.

ወበይእቲ ዕለት ረከባ ለወለተ ራጉኤል ስዕራ እንተ እምነ በጣኒ ዘማይን ወተአዩራሃ
አዕማት አቡሁ እስማአስተዋስብዋ ፯ ዕደውውተሎ ወጋኔን እኩይ አስምነዴዎስ ... (f.142a-
b)

He encountered Raguel's daughter on this day; her parents had married her off to seven young men who had been slain by Asmendewos, the terrible demon.

The previously described narrative highlights the prominence of St. Raphael and establishes a link between the Homily of Raphael and the book of Tobit. The homily also mentions, in passing, how Tobit's son receives an instruction from the Archangel Raphael to put the fish's bile to his father's blind eyes in order to improve his vision (Encyclopedia Aethiopica 2003:123).

The Ethiopian Book of Enoch's portrayal of Archangel Raphael as a revealer, informant, and punisher

Raphael is mentioned as one of the four great archangels in the Book of Enoch (1 Enoch), together with Michael, Suriel (or Uriel), and Gabriel (1 En. 9.1; 10.4-8), or as one of the seven (1 En. 20.3). There are a total of 14 references to St. Raphael in 1 Enoch. Though he is only referenced once in a more generic sense, his link with healing contributes to his multifarious position in the book.

Raphael, the angel, is mentioned in the Book of Enoch (1 Enoch) as having a major part in Enoch's celestial voyage. Most notably, he clarifies how souls are distributed among the many Sheol realms after death (1 En. 22.3-6). Furthermore, Raphael shares knowledge about the tree of wisdom with Enoch when he meets him in the delightful paradise of righteousness (1 En. 32.6). God gives Raphael three crucial responsibilities during Enoch's visions: confining Asael, bound his hands and feet, and cleaning up the soil that the angels polluted (1 En. 10.4-8; 54.6).

This heavenly force perfectly encapsulates the dual meaning of the term "rapha," which is "to bind" as well as "to heal." Additionally, Raphael is said to have the ability to heal wounds and lessen disease (1 En. 40: 9–10). These incidents highlight Raphael's pivotal function in mentoring and enlightening Enoch during the story.

ወይቤለኒ፡ ዝቀዳማዊ፡ ወእቱ፡ ማህሪ፡ ወርሐቀ፡ ማዕቕ፡ ማኅኤል፤ ካልእ፡ ዘዲበ፡
ኩሎ፡ ሕማም፡ ወዲበ፡ ኩሎ፡ ቀስል፡ ዘውሉደ፡ ሰብእ፡ ወእቱ፡ ፍፋኤል፤ ወሃልስ፡
ዘዲበ፡ ኩሎ፡ ንይል፡ ወእቱ፡ ገብርኤል፤ ወራብዕ፡ ዘዲበ፡ ንስሓ፡ ለተስፋ፡ እለ፡
ይወርሱ፡ ሕይወተ፡ ዘለዓለም፡ ዘስሙ፡ ፋኑኤል። ወእሉ፡ አርባዕቱ፡ ማእኸኑ፡
ለእግዚአ፡ ” 1 Enoch 40:9–10.

And he told me: "This is Michael, the merciful and long-suffering one; this is Raphael, the second, who is in charge of all the diseases and wounds that affect young people; this is Gabriel, the third, who is in charge of all the powers; and this is the fourth, who is in charge of repentance toward the desire of those who inherit eternal life, and the ones are the four angels of the Lord of Spirits and the four voices I heard within the ones days."

(Charles Old Testament Pseudepigrapha)

As we've seen above, this is the well-known location that the book of Enoch attributes to the Archangel Raphael. Based on the etymology of the word "Raphael," there is a connection between the Archangel and the healing of wounds. In addition, St. Raphael is one of the seven Archangels listed in EOTC religious writings, ranking third after Mikael and Gabriel. St. Raphael was plainly revealed in Dársanä Mäla'Ykt (Homily of Angels), Täyamer (Miracles), and Mälkä Rufáyel (Effigy of Raphael), just like in the Book of Enoch. Those service books are utilized in EOTC church services for chanting on various holidays. Because of this, St. Raphael is a well-known Angel in the liturgical practice of EOTC adherents.

In Ethiopia, there are numerous churches bearing St. Raphael's name. In certain regions of the nation, there are also sacred water springs known as İäbäl springs named for the Angel, which are frequented by EOTC adherents seeking healing. Furthermore, on the yearly feast day of St.

Raphael, at dawn, certain EOTC adherents follow a custom that is customary in most places: they swim and sprinkle in the local river water. Those who follow the EOTC view today's rain shower as sacred water as well. Not to be overlooked is the fact that several EOTC members called after the Archangel's name. Thus, St. Raphael has a special place in EOTC rituals.

In Orthodox Christianity, St. Raphael

A. Raphael's healing homily narratives

The sermon begins by highlighting the importance of reading the passage on the third day of Ethiopian Leap Year, which honors the kindness of Archangel Raphael in curing Gebael's son Tobit. Inspired by the events detailed in Tobias, Chapters 5 through 14, the homily explores Archangel Raphael's healing miracles. We hear of a vision that Enoch related to us, in which he describes seven archangels living in the sky. Archangel Raphael stands out among these celestial creatures as the holy messenger that God has designated to heal believers' ailments. He not only has the ability to mend broken bodies but also cleanses the soul and releases it from the grip of sin.

“...ዝንቱ ወእቱ ፍፋኤል ዘዲበ ሕመም ወቀኅል ዘይትፊኖ ከመይፈውሶ መለነ ፍሳት እለ ቁስለ በኅ ጠኡት ወለቁስለ ሥጋኒ በሥጋ ደዌ...” (f.138b)

This is Raphael, sent to heal the wounded and suffering in order to mend the souls of those wounded by sin, as well as those who have been injured by leprosy and have wounds in their flesh.

The passage from St. Raphael's homily that we just viewed is similar to what we already saw in the Book of Enoch. On the other hand, the homily provides some details that are worth considering. The homily distinguishes between two kinds of injuries. According to the EOTC, one is about the bodily wound, while the other is about the outcome of sin. One could refer to the second kind of wound as moral or metaphysical. Maybe the figurative hurt created by sin is being used.

This story claims that those who have wounds like leprosy and similar conditions believe that St. Raphael is a healer. Many pilgrims in EOTC healing traditions apply St. Raphael's holy water to heal wound-related diseases. This is the real way that EOTC adherents recount the homily's narrative and its applicability today in various St. Raphael Church locations. Dersane Rufa'el's theme also tells the story of how St. Raphael freed Rakun and Raguel's daughter from an evil spirit that had rendered her a widow and prevented her from becoming a mother. The following is mentioned in the homily:

“...ወፈውሶ፡ ለወለተ፡ ራኩን፡ ወአወፅአ፡ እምኔሀ፡ መንፈሶ፡ ርኩሰ፡ ወወሀባ፡ ከመትለድ፡ ወልደ፡” (f. 3a)

And He drove an evil spirit from Rakun's daughter, cured her, and made it possible for her to conceive a son.

This story tells us that Archangel Raphael is particularly skilled at repairing broken marriages that are thought to have been caused by demonic entities. Not only does he deepen and repair these connections by his supernatural intervention, but he also bestows upon them the blessing of progeny. A major problem for EOTC adherents is infertility, and many turn to spiritual support in the hopes of overcoming this obstacle. For couples struggling in their relationships and family-building endeavors, Archangel Raphael's ability to heal marriages and make childbearing easier is a great source of comfort and hope. For those who wish to experience the pleasures of children

and long for a peaceful and satisfying marriage, his presence and prayer offer consolation.

In the next section of the homily, we hear about the miraculous recovery of a person who was on the verge of death by St. Raphael. This person attested to the angel's amazing compassion after being revived. The incident is described in the homily as follows:

“ወዘይእቲ፡ ሰዓት፡ ገብአት፡ ነፍሱ፡ ለወእቱ፡ ብእሲ፡ ኅቤሁ፡ በኃይለ፡ እግዚብሔር፡ ወበስእለቱ፡ ለሊቀ፡ ማእእክት፡ ሩፋኤል፡ ወሶቤሃ፡ ተንሥኡ፡ ወእቱ፡ ብእሲ፡ ወአኃዘ፡ ይትናገር።” (f8b)

At this precise time, the Archangel Raphael's prayer and God's authority combined to restore the man's soul. The guy reappeared and declared, "Thanks be to God, who raised me from the dead, by the living God and by the archangel," to his brothers and parents.

The homily quoted above states that St. Raphael preserved the life of a man who was critically hurt and on the verge of death. The harm was inflicted by the Archangel as retribution for the person's disobedience of the sacred site, not by human action. The injured person's relatives have now filed a complaint with the king after making false accusations against other people.

On this particular occasion, the injured party regained consciousness and disclosed the true reason for his injuries. It is possible to claim that the Archangel's intervention has double effects. The afflicted individual has, on the one hand, been healed. However, the miracle is made up of revelation that offers a crucial lesson and caution. No one should therefore dare to disrespect or despise a holy location. As a result, on the yearly feast day of St. Raphael, it is customary to witness a few EOTC adherents attest to the angel's compassion, saying that he spared their lives in the St. Raphael Churchyards.

It is an important indicator of the homily's narration and the relationships between the ancient practices and modern ones. Prayer to angels is a custom among EOTC believers in the event that a family member is gravely ill. In an attempt to get supernatural healing, they frequently sprinkle holy water over the wounded, in hopes of enlisting the aid of angels. After the patient is well again, it is traditional for the devout to offer alms in the name of the Archangel and, on the day of the yearly celebration, to testify about the angel's miracle in the church courtyard, telling other pilgrims about one's experience.

The final account in the homily describes how St. Raphael's stepped in to save a church guard from a large serpent's jaws. The creature had imprisoned the man and guided him to a solitary island in the middle of the wide ocean. The relatives of the hostage were so desperate that they begged St. Raphael to intervene on their behalf and save them from this dangerous situation. Thus, St. Raphael moved quickly to remove the vulnerable soul from the monster's teeth, sending him flying to the solid earth and saving his life. The homily tells the following story about this:

ወሰምዓ፡ ስእለቶሙ ወተሠሃሎሙ ማእክከ፡ ሣህል፡ ዓቢይ፡ ሩፋኤል፡ ወሐረ፡ ኅበ፡ ወእቱ፡ አርዌ፡ እንዘ፡ ወስተ፡ አፋሁ፡ ወእቱ፡ አቃቢ፡ ወማእቆ፡ ወማንቶት፡ ወስተ፡ እዴሁ፡ ለዓቃቢ፡ ወአወፅኦ፡ እምደሴት፡ ወገደፎ፡ ኅበ፡ ጽንፈ፡ ባሕር” (ff. 26b-27a) ወበአሐቲ ዕለት ቦአ ከመያበርሀ ማህቶተ ቅድመሥዕሉ ክቡር ሩፋኤል ወረከቦ ወርእዮ ዘረስሐ ፈድፋድ እብዝኃ ቅብዕ እስመነበረ ብዝኃ ማዕላ እንበለ ይሕፀብዎ ወከነ ወእቱ ማንቶት ዘእምወርቅ ንጠፍ ወነሥኡ ወእቱ አቃቤ ወሐረ ኅበ ባሕር ከመ ይሕፀቦ ወናሁ አርዌ ዓቢይ እምኡራዊተ ባሕር ዘይሰመይ ቅርሳ ወበዲቦ ርእሱ ቀርን ዓቢይ፡ ፡ ወሶበ ርእዮ እንዘ ይመጽእ ወፅኦ እመጥ ባሕር ወአኃዘ ለወእቱ ዓቃቢ እንዘ ሀሎቀንዲል ወስተ እዴሁ ወመሠጦ ወወስዶ ኅበ ደሴት ዘወስተ ባሕር

He came one day to light a lamp in front of Raphael's portrait. He discovered that it was tarnished by overuse of oil. It was neglected for a long while without being cleaned. The lamp has a gold galvanized finish. After taking it, the guard went to wash by the water. He was spotted there by a large beast by the name of Qersa, which had a large horn on its head. Emerging from the ocean, it seized the guard who had the lantern in his grasp. It brought him to an island with a sea.

The accounts above clarified how St. Raphael rescued a person from a beast. Followers of EOTC engage in analogous practices in the modern era. Many EOTC devotees think that the rain shower on Pag^wémen 3rd is blessed water that shields them from attacks by beasts and serpents. Because they felt that it would shield people and cattle from attacks by beasts and serpents, they gather the blessed rainwater and sprinkle it over their house and the surrounding compounds. This is a very usual custom. Additionally, they save the day's miraculous rainfall in regular containers throughout the entire year.

The homily's following explanation described how St. Raphael used fish bile to cure Tobia's father's vision. The Archangel told Tobia to apply fish bile on his father's eyes after explaining things.

ወይቤሎ ሜላክ ክ ኦጎዞ ለዝንቱ ዓሣ ወአሐዞ ወእቱ ዝኩ ወልድ ወአወፅኦ ወስተ ምድር ወይቤሎ ዝኩ ሜላክ ክ ምቲሮ ለዝኩ ዓሣ ወንሣእ ልቦ ወከብዶ ወሐሞቶ ወአጸንእ ዓቅባ፡ ፡ ወገብረ ወእቱ ወልደ በከመ አዘዞ ወእቱ ሜላክ ክ ወዓሣሁሰ ጡብሱ ወበልዑ ወንሱ ክልኤሆመወበጽሑቤጤምክ ወይቤሎ ዝኩ ወልድ ለሜላክ ክ(f146a) ... ወሐሞቶሰ ይኩሐልዎ ዐይኖ ለብዕሲ ዘቦ ጠሰ ወስተ አዕይንቲሁ ወዩሐዩ ... ወሶበ ቦእክ ወስተ ጽርጎ ንሣእ ለከ ሕራረ ዕጣን ወደይ ወስተ ልቦ ዓሣ ወእም ከብዱ ወአጠሰ ቦቱ ወሶበ ጼነ ወለወእቱ ጋኔን ይጌይይ ወኢይገ ብእ እንከ ለዓለመዓለም ፡ ” (f.149a)

This passage presents us with a situation in which the angel gives Tobias instructions on how to face and defeat a demon. Tobias has been given a duty to accomplish when the angel tells him to catch a fish and bring it to land. We are forced to ponder what this seemingly insignificant deed means and how it relates to the demon they are trying to vanquish. Second, Tobias is given instructions by the angel to consume the fish, specifically to take its liver, bile, and heart. This particular request emphasizes how crucial these specific organs will be in the upcoming battle with the demon. It gives the story an element of ceremonial or spiritual importance. Thirdly, Tobias's compliance with the angel's instructions is demonstrated by the act of frying and eating the fish. Overall, the story weaves together aspects of ceremony, religion, and obedience.

Furthermore, the homily discloses that upon Tobia's arrival, the Angel urged him to smear the bile in order to restore his father's vision. As he worked, something that looked like smoke appeared, and he was able to see again.

“ወሐሞቶሰ ይኩሐልዎ ዐይኖ ለብእሲ ዘቦ ኢስ ወስተ አዕይንቲሁ ወዩሐዩ -(f151a&b) ወትቤሎ ለአቡሁ ነዋ ወልድነ ምጽኦ ለዝኩኒ ብእሲ ዘሐሩ ምስሌሁ ወይቤሎ ሩፋኤል ለጡቢዶ ኦነ አእምር ከመይትከሰት አዕይንቲሁ ለአቡከ ወአንተሰ ኩጎሎ ዘንተ ሐሞተ ወስተ አዕይንቲሁ ወሶበ ተኩጎሎ ዩሐሲ ወዩሐዩ ወይወፅእ እምወእቱ ጠሰ እምኦ ዕይንቲሁ ዘይሩ፡ ” (f.146a)

Additionally, bile can be used to treat eyes that have a white spot on them, curing them. She said to her husband, "Look, your son is coming." Raphael then addressed Tobias, saying, "As I teach you to recover your father's sight, anoints his eyes with this fish gall." Then, after

extracting the fish gall, Tobias anointed his father's eyes, causing white skin to start to emerge from them.

Both of the aforementioned sections deal with customary healing procedures used by the EOTC. Fish bile is one such procedure that is used to treat a variety of ailments. This technique has been used by local traditional healers because of its therapeutic benefits.

Furthermore, it is significant that fisherman in the vicinity of Lake Zéway pray to angels while fishing and give alms afterward. These devotional practices and rituals are significant in light of the story the homily tells.

B. St. Raphael in several additional Ethiopian texts

As stated in Encyclopedia Aethiopica (2003: 265), the EOTC places great emphasis on the image of Saint Raphael who is, as mentioned earlier the third of the seven Archangels. Specific hymns for each Archangel are sung, and miracles and a homily are recounted at festivals in the many churches dedicated to the Archangels.

This is how the homily honoring Archangel Raphael is written. It stipulates that this sermon is to be read during the third Ethiopian Leap year in remembrance of Archangel Raphael's kindness in healing Gebael's daughter Tobit. The homily draws inspiration from Tobias, specifically from Chapters 5 to 14, as well as the book of Enoch and Abuna Zacharias. ...

“በስመ አብ ወወልድ ወመንፈስ ቅዱስ አሐዱ አምላክ፡፡ ድርሳን ዘይትነ በብ አመ ለወረኃ ቸ ጳጉሜን ዘከመ አሕዩ ወ ወፈወሶ ለጦቢት ወልደ ግበኤል፣ ዘአሴል ወእቱ ሩፋኤል እምእለ ይተግሁ ማእከት ቅዱሳን ዘርእዮ ሄኖክ ወልደ ያሬድ...”(f.137a)

In the name of the only God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, The third Pagwémen will hear the homily of Archangel Raphael, one of the missionaries, regarding how Enoch the son of Yared saw and healed Tobia the son of Gebael from the Ase'sl side.

The third Pag^wémen (September 8) was designated for St. Raphael's Day in the EOTC lectionary. One of the church service books has this homily. It is therefore included in the EOTC Lectionary on the specific day of the Third Pag^wémen. The EOTC uses the Dégg^wa, a collection of hymns and chants, to celebrate the seven archangels, including St. Raphael. The Matsehafa Dégg^wa recalls the following chants during these days:

“ዋኬማ ዘቅዱስ ሩፋኤል ... ማእከት ፍሥሐ ዘይትነ ፀፍ ንጹሃነ ንበ ጦብያ ሩፋኤል ወረድኦ ማከረሠ ዓሣ ነ ሢኦ ሰብሐ ዘምከለ ሐሞት ከብዶ አዕይንተ ዕወር ስወቶ ወአጋንንት ሰደዶ...” ሊቀ ሥልጣናት ሀብተ ማርያም et. Al (1958)

With the heart, liver, and gall of a fish, Raphael, the angel of gladness who guards the defenseless, went to Tobias and thanked God. casRaphael, the joyful angel who guards the defenseless, went to Tobias bearing a fish's heart, liver, and gall. He thanked God, drove the demons from his life, and restored his sight.

“ዋኬማ ዘሩፋኤል ... እግዚእ ለጦብያ አነ ወእቱ ሩፋኤል ማእከት ፩ እምነ ፯ ሊቃነ ማእከት ዘፈኖኩ ንበ ጦቢት...” EMIP 1082_AddisAlem (f72vb)

The Lord declared to Tobias, "I am the one who sent the seven archangels to send to Tobit.

“...መልአክ ፍሥሐ ዘይትአጸፍ ነደ ኅበ ጦብያ ሩፋኤል ወረደ እምክርወ ዓሣ ነሢአ ሰብሐ ዘምክላ ሐሞት ከብዶ አዕይንተ ስወር ፈወሰ አጋንንተ ሰደደ...” EMIP Gesamt 1126_AddisAlem084 (f170vc)

Going to Tobias with the heart, liver, and gall of a fish, Raphael, the angel of joy trained in fire, thanked God, saved the lost eye sight, and drove away the demons.

As previously noted in the passages from Raphael's other homily that was quoted above, the angel gave Tobias two instructions to tackle two problems. One has to do with a demon that keeps causing Sarah's husband to die on the same night that she is weeding. The other one talks of his father's blindness. Thus, The Archangel gave Tobias instructions to apply bile to his father's eyes in an attempt to restore his sight and to smoke a fish's liver in an attempt to drive the demon from Sarah. Motivated by this, some followers of the Eastern Orthodox Theodiceutical Church have taken it upon themselves to extract mud from the spring's holy water cellars of St. Raphael and apply it to cuts and open wounds in the hopes of mending. As a result, the chants that were taken from the EOTC antiphonary, or Dégg^wa, are included in the celebration of St. Raphael on the three Pag^wémen.

3. Research Methods

One useful technique used to collect data for philological investigations is content analysis. It is employed to ascertain whether specific terms, themes, or ideas are present in a particular set of qualitative data. This approach has been used to investigate Dérsanä Rufaýel 's healing customs as well as other pertinent manuscripts having inter-textual importance. Indirect observations were also included in the study to support Dérsanä Rufaýel's continuous use of therapeutic techniques. The purposeful selection of five churches included Asko Rufaýel, Nazareth or Adama Rufaýel, Zeway Rufaýel, Debrezeyit or Bishoftu Rufaýel, and Abay or Debrehail Rufaýel.

In order to summarize the findings, the researcher used qualitative approaches to compare the observational results with relevant references and verified that the homily's content aligned with actual EOTC activities. The process of the study began with a preliminary examination of several sources, and then checklists for observations were made in order to gather data. Subsequently, selective sample regions were chosen, and three hours were spent at each site gathering data through indirect observations. Qualitative conversations and result analysis were grounded in the gathered data and content analysis.

4. Novelties

This section of the article discusses the discussion findings that were derived from the information gathered via indirect observations and content analysis. The conclusions that followed were derived from this. The study looked into how Dérsanä Rufaýel was used in EOTC worship and spiritual practices for traditional healing. The information gathered from the aforementioned indirect observation and content analysis revealed that the following healing techniques were up to this point useful in the EOTC ceremony.

St. Raphael's healing methods and miracles reported in EOTC (curing illnesses, driving out evil spirits) the homily's narration is supported by the observation results of sample locations of St. Raphael Churches, which attest to the continued evidence of St. Raphael's active healing practices. The first few items on the observation checklist refer to the use of St. Raphael's holy water in healing a variety of illnesses. In the EOTC, which is named for St. Raphael, this custom is well-known. In churchyards, there is a ritual where believers can bathe in holy water to heal their ailments.

Additionally, several springs close to St. Raphael's church or monastery serve as blessed water for the joyous celebration of these events on the third Pag^wémen of each year, after being blessed by church authorities. Many Christians gathered from various locations to receive St. Raphael's holy water blessings and healings.

The purpose of the upcoming observation checklist is to determine the best continuing procedure that St. Raphael's believers can use to safeguard their assets and well-being. Gathering and storing rainwater from the Third Pag^wémen as part of the customary EOTC activity is one widespread custom in Ethiopia.

This rainwater is believed to be blessed by St. Raphael. During this time, children and youth would stand naked outside and sprinkle the annual blessed rainwater. Elders would collect and store this rainwater in safe containers. They would then spray the grounds of their homes to protect themselves and their animals from snake bites. Additionally, they believed that their property would be safeguarded from voodooists. Furthermore, on the 3rd Pag^wémen before sunrise, many EOTC believers would go to the nearby river and swim to seek relief from diseases throughout the New Year.

The third observational checklist sets out to identify the colorful practices of the Healing of hardship preaching of Raphael in the EOTC traditions. Most often they travel to the holy springs of St. Raphael's and drink and sprinkle and pray for seven days or more to obtain healing. They also brought blessed water and mud around the spring to smear their bodies until they were healed. In addition, the rainwater kept at home on the 3rd Pag^wémen is used for accidental health problems and the birth of children after reading and preaching the homily of Raphael.

The purpose of the fourth observation checklist is to recognize St. Raphael's prayers during potentially dangerous situations. When EOTC devotees faced difficulties, they appealed to St. Raphael. Merchants who are passing through dangerous areas petition for St. Raphael's protection from burglar attacks. Additionally, they ask the angel to protect them against a pandemic. They sprinkle their house with the miraculous water. In addition, the fishermen ask St. Raphael to protect them from waves that might otherwise destroy their traditional sailboat in order to increase harvests. They then give donations to St. Raphael's Church as well.

The goal of the last observation checklist is to identify the custom of asking Saint Raphael to intercede for happy marriages. When a marriage fails, EOTC believers who are impacted by these circumstances go to St. Raphael and carry out the holy water sprinkling ceremony. They express their thanks to St. Raphael's churches by paying alms and taking a serious oath after finding a solid and happy marriage.

In every church of St. Raphael in EOTC, sacred water services are the mainstay of Dérsanä Rufáyel 's well-known healing traditions. On the river, priests and clergy members recite Dérsanä Rufáyel and other prayer services. After that, they invite their devoted followers to drink and spray the worshippers in order to cure their maladies. This is a common and essential ritual in the courtyard of the chapels of St. Raphael.

Healing rituals also occur in the vicinity of local springs, often referred to as *läbäl*/, and even in locations far from places of worship. Unlike other streams, it symbolizes the people's belief in the holiness of the spring. The hermit's vision dream is typically the foundation for the holiness of the spring's water. The intention is to make reference to a revelation that purports to provide a divine validation for the water spring's curative properties. Not only is the spring available to EOTC members, but anybody seeking healing is welcome to attend. Even now, pilgrims rub the mud from the spring's basement on their bodies.

The study also explains Dársanä Rufáyel 's vibrant habit of using the 3rd Pag^{wémen}'s rainwater as sacred water in the EOTC tradition. In the EOTC tradition, Pag^{wémen} 3rd is the annual date of St. Raphael's celebration. It is said that the rain that falls on this day is holy water. The majority of EOTC believers get hit by rain outside. Additionally, they would gather it in bottles and store it in their home. They think that the hallowed water of Rufáyel protects them from harmful organisms like insects and snakes. In order to ease the women's difficult labor, they also sprayed the holy water during childbirth.

Additionally, they thought that rain on this day kept bugs and other illnesses away from their crops and livestock throughout the year. Relying on St. Raphael for assistance during difficult marital times and reproduction problems is another customary habit that the study's analysis highlights among EOTC believers. These people drink holy water as part of their prayer, asking St. Raphael to intercede on their behalf. On the yearly Memorial Day, they thank God and declare St. Raphael's mercy in front of a sizable crowd after their prayers are heard and they are relieved of their hardships. They offer alms to the Church of Rufáyel as a sign of gratitude.

In addition, followers of the EOTC who reside near the Church of St. Raphael ask the saint to intercede on their behalf for protection from a variety of threats, chief among them being epidemics. When they get the desired protection, they give donations to the church. Furthermore, the EOTC trailer fishermen who fish around Lake Zéway have been rewarded with bountiful harvests and resort to St. Raphael for the preservation of their sails. They also give alms to St. Raphael's Church as a token of thanks.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this essay was to investigate Dársanä Rufáyel 's primary healing-related impacts within the EOTC healing tradition, as well as his significance in addressing and resolving persistent healing-related concerns. The research questions in this report reflected these goals. A review of the inter-textual material on healing and the significant role that Dársanä Rufáyel plays in the Orthodox Täwahédo Church healing tradition were necessary in order to answer our research questions. As a result, the reader might understand St. Raphael's function in the Book of Tobit, in which he served as an informant and revealer. In the Ethiopian Book of Enoch, the Archangel not only heals the ill and injured but also assumes the function of punisher. The discovery demonstrated the invaluable contributions made by the Raphael homily manuscripts to the EOTC healing tradition.

Both content analysis and philological information on Raphael's homily have been obtained through the use of data gathering technologies. On the other hand, indirect observations were also conducted in order to see Dársanä Rufáyel 's continuing healing practice and to verify the homily account and the follower of EOTC's genuine, living traditional healing techniques. Research and indirect observations reveal a harmony between Dársanä Rufáyel 's narrations and the procedures of healing that are currently in use. Therefore, the possibilities that could be investigated through research relied on the relationship between old books and modern theories.

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Appendices

Fig. 1. Here are some recent pictures of the annual ritual baptizing ceremony with the blessed water of St. Raphael. The ceremony takes place on the 3rd Pag^wémen or 8th September according to the EOTC tradition. The location is the River Abay, under the old Abay Bridge, near St. Raphael Church. Pilgrims can be seen crossing the river from Šäwa to Goêam and from Goêam to Šäwa in the evening, preparing for the ceremony. At dawn, they gather on both sides of the river and bathe in the sanctified river water.





Fig. 2 Areal map of St. Raphael Church besides the Abay River near the Abay (Hidase) Bridge.



Translations of Phonetic Symbols

There are variations in transliterating the *fidäl* as there is no standardized system of transliteration for it. The researcher used EAE-Garamond system of transliteration.

a) The consonants													
ɸ	h	ɦ	s	ʃ	č	ʧ	ɬ	ɖ	d	ʒ	ʂ	ɸ	k ^w
ɦ	l	ɦ	š	ɹ	ɸ	ɰ	w	ɹ	ɸ	ɸ	š	ɸ	g ^w
ɦ	h	ɸ	q	ɹ	n	ɸ	°	ɹ	g	ɸ	f		
ɰ	m	ʃ	ɸ	ɸ	ɸ	ɦ	z	ɸ	ɸ	ɸ	p		
ɰ	ś	ɦ	b	ɸ	°	ɸ	ž	ɰ	č	ɸ	ɸ ^w		
ɸ	r	ɸ	t	ɦ	k	ɸ	y	ɸ	p	ɸ	ɸ ^w		
b) The vowels													
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.							
ä	u	i	a	e	ə or no vowel	o							
ɦ = bā	ɦ = bu	ɦ = bi	ɦ = ba	ɦ = be	ɦ = b, bə	ɦ = bo							