

Medieval Art: Development, Significance, and Current Challenges of Mural Painted Churches With Gondarian Style

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Paintings in Ethiopia have a long history. Ancient peoples of Ethiopia and others who had lived in caves developed a tradition of depicting animal motifs they domesticated and their daily activities. The growth of sacred painting in Ethiopia was a result of the introduction of Christianity in the 4th century AD. In addition the Ethiopian Orthodox Church approval of using paintings as a medium of teaching contributed for this development. Due to lack of evidences and insufficient researches conducted in the field little is known about ancient history of Ethiopian paintings. Most of the researches conducted focused on medieval period religious paintings and lately developed. The aim of this study is to investigate the development, significance, and challenges of churches with murals of the Gondarian painting style. The study was qualitative in approach and descriptive in design. In order to get valuable information for the study both primary and secondary sources were collected through interview, observation, and review of related literatures. And the data obtained through the above mentioned data gathering tools were analyzed qualitatively. The finding revealed that medieval period in Ethiopia witnessed the development of religious paintings mainly during the Gondarian period. Religious paintings of the period painted mainly on foundations of parchments, wall, and wood panel. Like other tourist attractions, wall paintings contributed a lot in attracting both domestic and international tourists. Due to several man-made and natural problems those wall paintings faced serious challenges which need an immediate intervention from the concerned bodies.

Keywords: art, Gondarian style, mural, significance, challenge

Introduction

Ethiopia is a country with rich historical background tracing its origin back to 3000 years. Historians devised Ethiopian history into three major periods called ancient, medieval, and modern.

Medieval period which is the focus of this study was full of events. Those historical events occurred during the period under consideration that considerably transformed the political, social, and economic life of the peoples of Ethiopia and the horn. According to various historical documents events of the period brought new things in the region. These include large scale territorial expansion by the rulers of the CHK followed by religious expansion, population movement, interstate conflict, Jesuits arrival, and others. That's why this period in Ethiopian history was considered as full of events.

Territorial enlargement of Christian rulers since the second half of the 13th century brought large scale expansion of Christianity towards different parts of the state. For instance Tadesse Tamrat (1972) described in

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detail about the wide scale spread and expansion of Christianity in the region. This territorial expansion reached its peak during the reign of Amde Tsiyon (r. 1314-1344).

Following the restoration of the so called “Solomonic” dynasty in 1270 rulers of the state shifted the political center from Lasta towards Showa. In terms of administration, this period brought a new strategy of ruling/administering from roving capitals. Christian rulers of the period were later forced to shift their political center from Shewa towards Gondar. This was mainly due to the wars of Ahmed Ibn Ebrahim al-Ghazi and the Oromo Population Movement of the 16th century feared the advance of Nur Mujahid’s force, Minas (r. 1559-1603) shifted the political seat to Gondar following the death of his brother and predecessor Gelawdewos in 1559.

According to Victor Fernández et al. (2012) between 1559 and 1636 six successive Ethiopian emperors ruled the Ethiopian kingdom from their political seats at Guba’e (Guzara), Qoga, Dahna, Gorgora, Azezo (Genete-Iyesus) Denqez, and lastly installed in Gondar. In 1561 Minas (r. 1559-1563) shifted his camp from Shoa to Guba’e (Guzara) or its vicinity. The causes for this shift according to La Verle Berry (2005) were the growing pressure of the Oromos and the desire to secure the trade routes that stretched from the Red Sea coastal region to the interior.

The Gondar period was marked immediately following the formation of Gondar as a permanent political seat of the state by Emperor Fasilades in 1636. The Gondar (Gondarian) period witnessed the development of art in general. Architectural achievement was one of the chief legacies of this period. The architecture of the period according to Berry (1995) was called Gondarian architecture and he associated the Gondar architectural style with the ruling class. In relation to this he stated that “all castles, churches, and bridges in Gondar-style architecture are popularly assigned to specific members of the Solomonic dynasty. Gondar-style architecture was an exclusive royal prerogative” (Berry, 1995, p. 10).

In addition to the architectural achievement, the Gondar period also showed the development of religious paintings.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study was examining medieval period art, the development of wall painting during the Gondarian period, significance and the current challenge faced.

Specifically the study aims to:

- Investigate the development of mural painting during the Gondar period;
- Explore the significance of mural painting;
- Observe challenges of churches with mural painting.

Methodology of the Study

The study emphasized on development, significance, and challenges of churches with wall painting qualitative in terms of research approach and descriptive in design. The study focuses on mural painted churches located in central and South Gondar zones. The study selected four churches, two from each zone purposively. Data for this research were collected from Debre Berhan Selassie in Gondar, Debre Sina Maryam in Gorgora, Koma Fasilades in Estie, and Betlehem in Lay Gayint Wereda. The churches are known by a splendor mural painting painted during the Gondar period. Unlike other churches the ceiling of Debre Berhan Selassie is decorated with winged angels that are depicted in the spaces situated between the upper beams. The study collected data found from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources of the study were collected by

using interview, observation, and photography as main data gathering tools and secondary sources were collated through review of papers related with the issue. Sources collated through the above mentioned data gathering tools were analyzed qualitatively.

Discussion and Results

Religious Paintings in Ethiopia

The tradition of painting in the world traced its origin from rock art. Rock art refers to rock paintings (pictographs) and engravings (petroglyphs) performed on rock façades in naturally made rock shelters, caves, and boulders. Concerning the significance of rock art Teklie briefly said that “it is repository or source of information for things that it may contain like the types of vegetation, wild and domestic animals, natural and cultural landscapes, ritual practices, division of labors and historical events” (Teklie, 2011).

The advent of Christianity to Ethiopia in the 4th century marks the beginning of a tradition of religious painting that continues to this day (Chojnack, 1999). Since this period until recently religious paintings showed improvement. Cutts, Harrison, and Higgitt (2010) describe that “the ancient tradition of church painting is a vital expression of faith, inspiring devotion amongst Ethiopian Christians”.

Ethiopian religious painting comprised some elements from abroad. Concerning this Chojnacki asserted that:

By virtue of its geographic situation, Ethiopian art belongs to Africa, yet its development over many centuries is interwoven with the introduction of models borrowed from Eastern as well Western Christian art. It absorbed the impact of Islamic culture and art and responded to the influence emanating from the vast area of the Indian Ocean. (Chojnacki, 1999, p. 48)

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church used those paintings to teach the religious traditions of the church, to teach christen ethics especially for children; it is very important to remember what they see and it’s also important to teach christen dressing, to teach history of the church and Christianity, to narrate history and it is also used for festivals. Heldman states that:

The emperor Zara Yaeqob in particular recognized the power of the visual image as an effective means of public communication. He sponsored the production of panel paintings of Our Lady Mary, a necessary adjunct for the mandatory ritual of Marian veneration he introduced in 1441, and encouraged the development of iconographic programs to express the message of his teachings concerning the central position of Our Lady Mary in the Christian scheme of salvation. (Heldman, 1993, p. 142)

The 16th century wars of Ahmed Gragne resulted in the destruction of several churches with art works. Compared with other movable heritages of the church, mural paintings attached with the wall of the church were highly vulnerable for destruction. Regarding this Heldman (1993) affirms that “the wars of conquest waged by Ahmad Grany in the 16th century spread destruction and brought large areas of Ethiopia under the power of the Muslim Sultanate of Adal”. The impact of the war was limited to the northern part of Ethiopia, its influence also reached as far as the peoples of southern part of the country. The period of chaos, disorder, and instability continued till the formation of Gondar. “Stability and peace only returned with the founding of Gondar as the capital of Ethiopia under Fasil ሥጊጵ in the 17th century” (Girma Fisha, 2004, p. 114).

Religious painting during the Gondarian period. Gondar was founded as the political center during the reign of King Fasil around 1630s. Fasil began to use Gondar as his capital four years later after his coronation (Sisay et al., 2009). Following its establishment as a capital of the kingdom, Gondar became an important political, commercial, religious center and center of Art for more than two centuries.

The creation of Gondar as a permanent capital was a result of various reasons. These include its location—surrounded by mountains highly favored by the rulers because it's a guarantee for the safety and security of the kings. Its environment was also another factor for its selection as a capital. The establishment of Gondar as a permanent capital resulted in the end of the tradition of ruling from temporary camps.

Equal to the establishment of Gondar as the Royal court and construction of palaces attention has been given for the establishment of various churches in and around the city. The construction of those churches made Gondar and the surrounding area center of religion, education, and philosophy. This was a result of rulers' close engagement in religious affairs. Compared with the previous periods of Ethiopian history the Church was able to get better support and attention from the ruling classes. The ruling classes gave several land grants to churches and commissioned the painting and decoration of the walls of several churches (Heldman, 2000). Therefore, the revival of the church created a better condition for painting to be flourished.

Church painting in Ethiopia comprises three different forms. These are painting on wood (Icons), manuscripts, and church mural painting (Cutts et al., 2010). Mural painting is a decorative art on the walls of the building in order to convey messages to the society (Abd Rahman, Ismail, & Abdul Rahim, 2020).

Mural painting in Ethiopia has a long history and tradition and there are numerous churches in different parts of the country mainly in the North part decorated with this form of painting. The oldest witnesses to mural painting in Ethiopian churches seem to date to the mid-twelfth century (Ramos & Boavida, 2004).

According to Hedi et al. (2010) “the earliest examples of murals are wall paintings in rock-hewn churches, but mural painting on cloth appears to have been known from the seventeenth century and may be a practice linked to changes in church architecture”.

In Gondar and its surrounding the practice of curving rock churches was little due to natural factors and churches began to construct with different architectural style.

From the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century round, thatched churches with a central square sanctuary surrounded by two concentric circular areas (the inner for non-officiating clergy and the outer for choristers and congregation) started to be constructed. Painting directly onto the mud and chaf plaster walls was no longer possible, so cotton cloth supports were employed, which were nailed or pasted onto the church walls and ceilings. (Hedi et al., 2010)

Mural painting is applied on the wall of the church mainly on the outer part of the *meqdes* where the Ark of the Covenant is located. The application of this form of painting is not uniform in churches constructed (curved) from rock and other materials.

Gondarian painting style was developed with the patronage of the ruling class. Concerning this, Heldman (1993) asserts that:

Supported by royal patronage, the new forms of visual expression became increasingly sophisticated and came to be known as the First Gondar style. Reflecting a variety of traditions dating back to the 15th century, it employed soft, warm tones and was defined by clearly marked areas of flat color with each figure depicted as a separate entity, in which the Virgin's drapery folds were portrayed with the parallel lines inherited from the early 1600s. (Heldman, 1993)

The exact time when the first Gondarian painting style developed was uncertain. Regarding this, Ramos and Boavida assert that:

We do not know yet when the so-called First Gondarine style took shape, because we are not sure of the identity of the donor of Dâbr à Sina's murals at Gorgor á which would place their production either in the 1620s or at the end of the 17th

century. The first dated evidence of the First Gondarine style date back to the middle of the century or to the end of Fasil äläs' reign. (Ramos & Boavida, 2004, p. 83)

Heldmann (1993) briefly asserts that “beginning from the mid-17th century a new style of painting emerged in the Christian Kingdom. This style was generally called Gonderian style. It was named so simply because it originated in Gondar under royal patronage”. As a result, a new Christian painting style was developed in and around Gondar following its establishment as a seat of the king. According to Wion (2015), Däbr äSina Gorgor ä and Qoma Fasil äläs are among the known churches decorated with the first Gondaian painting style.

Later during the times of Iyasu I, another style of painting developed in Gondar and this style came to be known as the second Gondarian painting style. Heldma (1993), Abebaw (2000), and others clearly put the distinctive features of the second Gondarian painting style from its predecessors. For instance, Heldman asserted that:

The so-called Second Gondar style began to emerge during this time, characterized by more crowded compositions, heavy ornamentation and lush colors, which were now more fluid and graded. Shading and delicate facial modeling were developed, while the flat backgrounds previously used in Ethiopian painting were superseded by a greater concern for representing the spatial reality of the scenes depicted; this also included the rendering of clothing, which became more detailed and sumptuous.

Abebaw (2000) also explained that the appearance of secular figures, dominance and emphasis on decorative pattern, and other elements distinguishes this style from others. The origin of this painting style associated with Gondar city itself and the monasteries located around Lake Tana. Debre Berhan Selassie was the first church decorated with the second Gondarian painting style. Following its development into a full-fledged style in the 1740s and 1750s the Second Gondarine style spread into many parts of Christian Ethiopia and Mentewab played enormous roles in this expansion. Most of the paintings of this style are done on the walls of churches and on folios of manuscripts (Abebaw, 2000).

Another main feature of the Gondarian period religious painting was that all mural painting of the church were made under the patronage of the ruling class. Painters depicted the portrait of the patrons beneath Virgin Mary or Crucifixion. Pankhurst (1990) briefly asserts that “this custom, which became common during the time of Emperor Fasiladas, flourished in the eighteenth century, and resulted in the painting of numerous pictures of the redoubtable Empress Mentewwab and her son Iyasu II” (p. 106). As a result of such development the study area housed numerous churches with mural paintings.

Mediums

A material that is used by an artist for the purpose of painting is called an art medium (Ocivark et al., 1998). On mural the painters used different mediums, local textile called Fätälä (ፈትላ) was prepared locally by the weavers, and homemade glue called Muqä (ሙቅ) was prepared from *täff-powder* for the purpose of laminating the local textile and the wall of the M äqd äs. Murals on cloth were either first painted and then affixed to the walls or the cloth was prepared and attached with the wall using the above mentioned homemade glue and painted in situ.

The other medium that the artist used for the purpose of this painting is colors. Some colors like yellow, green, white, and black are produced locally from different plants and other materials, the other colors like red and blue are imported from abroad.

Colors Applied for Mural Painting and Their Symbolism

Color is one of the most important mediums in mural painting. For the purpose of painting mural paint painters in the study area used both primary and secondary colors. Most of those colors are locally produced.

Concerning colors of the period Anais Wion briefly describes that:

some colors are prepared in the locally and some of them were imported from abroad. The imported pigments include red, yellow and blue. Other colors, such as black, white and green, were produced with local pigments. The imported pigments were probably traded from red sea and could have traded in Europe, India and the Middle East. (Wion, 2015)

The choice of colors of the painting in Ethiopian Orthodox Church had its own meanings, so the painters used colors depending on the story of that painting. For instance the costumes of Maryam is always blue, red, green, and sometimes white, this is because meanings of those colors have a spatial connection with the story of Maryam.

Red color. Painters of the mural painting of churches under study excessively applied red color for costumes of different characters, for blood of martyrs, for decorating the face of humans, for animals, for decorating frames of the painting, for decorating the post and lintel of doors and windows, in rare case for flame of fire, tongue, devils eye, and for writing the caption of the painting. Red color is widely symbolized as martyrdom, because the painters use a red color to show that the saints give their life to adversity and death for the name of God and also it symbolizes love, scarification, salvation, holy enthusiasm, blood, and youth but in the case of Maryam the red color symbolizes the flesh of Jesus who shares from her body.

Yellow color. In most cases the painter uses red and yellow colors interchangeably. When he used red color for dress then he used yellow color for robe and vice versa. And all the nimbuses of saints and God have a yellow color and the painter frequently used this color for decorating shoe and other decorative patterns. It was locally produced from አርቶ and from sunflower. And it was also imported from abroad as like other colors. Yellow color mostly symbolized for truthfulness and glow because in Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo church, the saint's halo had a yellow color, "you are true light of the worlds". In addition it also symbolizes cowardice, love, constancy, dignity, and wisdom.

Green color. In this painting the painter used two types of green color, dark green and bright green for decorative patterns, costumes, lives of plants and for background color of the paintings. According to Petit described by Wion (2015) the following plants are important to produce green color locally: *ägam's* fruits (*Carissa edulis*), *änsusilla's* leaves (*Impatiens tinctoria*), *arag resa's* leaves (*Zehneria scabra*), *astänager's* leaves (*Datura stramonium*), *besanna's* leaves (*Croton macrostachyus*), *doqma's* fruits (*Syzygium guineensis*), and green coloured earth.

According to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo church, green color symbolizes growth, new life, well-being, hope, fidelity, and immortality.

Blue color. Blue color is another dominant color in mural painting with the second Gondarian painting style. In churches decorated with the first Gondarian painting style blue color was used in limited way due to its availability. Mariological themes are mostly painted by this color. In rear cases painters used for kings and apostles. Blue color signifies heaven or sky, wisdom, charity, humility.

Black color. Black color is extensively used for hear, eye, decorative patterns of the wall, decorating costumes, writing the captions, depicting the devil and sinners during the coming of Jesus in his majesty, for depicting the stools and animal motifs.

During the 17th century, black color was locally produced by the painters in different raw materials. According to Anais Wion (2015) the manufacture of black ink was well known in Ethiopia, which can be obtained

by burning cereals, plants, or other organic material through the process of carbonization. Concerning its symbolism, black color symbolizes sinners and devilish personality, grief, sorrow, sickness, and death.

White color. This color was used for hair, adorning costume, decorating frames, and for other decorative patterns, for depicting the animal motifs, writing captions, for depicting houses and holy places, for painting musical instruments and other house hold materials. White color as like black color in 17th century was locally produced by painters from lime stone. According to the pigment analyses result of Anias Wion Modern Ethiopian recipes still use limestone, locally called “B äha d ängay” in the production of white pigment. In the EOTC thought, white color symbolizes as victory, light, purity, innocence, joy, and purification.

Brown color. Brown color is rarely used in this painting and it was used for Jesus’s hair and beard, sinners in the hell, and animal motifs. Ethiopian painters produced brown color by mixing the red and black colors. It symbolizes the rejection of this world.

Orange color. This color is produced by mixing yellow and red color on the wall, this is because the painters first embellish yellow color then embellish the red, and the mixing of the two colors can create the orange color. Wion (2015) describes that “it is one of the most ancient artificial pigments. Orange color was used by painters frequently for the background of the paintings, for decorating and rendering of costumes and for shoe. Generally colors in EOTC had its own symbolic representation. No color can add without meaning in painting”.

Significance of Mural Painting as a Heritage

Mural paintings as a heritage have several values. It has economical, educational, spiritual, aesthetical, and historical value (significances).

Economic significance of mural painting. Gondar and its surrounding housed several natural and cultural heritages and some of them are registered by UNESCO as a world heritage. Those heritages found in the area attracted numerous domestic and international tourists. It constitutes an essential engine for economic development and growth through heritage tourism. Heritage tourism is one of the most popular ways of thinking about the connections between heritage and economic development (Donovan Rypkema and Caroline Cheong). It is a broad category that embraces both eco-tourism (nature-based tourism) and cultural tourism. It is a category of market segment that includes travel to historic sites, museums, and forests. Therefore, the study area played a crucial role in the tourism sector and this sector supports the economy of the nation.

Among tourist attraction destinations churches with mural painting attract huge numbers of visitors. For instance, Debre Berhan Selassie attracts tourists not only because of the church architecture but mainly due to its splendor mural (wall painting). According to information obtained from Gondar city culture and tourism office the wall painting of the church is one of the main attraction sites for both domestic and foreign tourists and this made the church one of the top tourist attraction sites not only in Gondar town but also in Ethiopia.

Similarly Debre Sina Maryam attracted both domestic and international tourists due to its wall painting depicted with the first Gondarian painting style. Other churches with mural also experienced similar issues. As a tourism destination those churches with mural brought economic significance.

Educational significance. Painting in the EOTC was/is used as a medium to teach religious values to its followers since the beginning of employing religious painting. Compared with script, images/pictures contribute a lot in conveying information. Illiterate people easily understand visual things than written forms. Therefore, the church used painting in order to preach its followers about several issues. Heritages have educational meaning and value for a society. Not only wall paintings but built heritages also provide opportunities for people to gain

knowledge about the past, provide primary research material for academics and an archaeological record that can be studied in context. Concerning the importance of painting Stanislaw Chojnacki (2000, p. 40) briefly asserts that “it is an important component of Christian education though it was not given high emphasis like that of liturgy, chanting etc....which are necessary in the day to day routine of the church”.

Historical significance. It stands for the ways in which the present can be associated with the place, people, events, and aspects of life in the past. Heritage has a significant value to promote interpretation of the past by making relations with, and providing insight to past people and events through shared experiences. The historical value of heritage sites mainly depends upon direct experience of elements that have survived from the past. E.g. currently used churches and abandoned sites of settlement structures may indicate important historic events. They provide information about the past and are useful for reconstructing development.

Spiritual significance. It relates with places or activities that have religious significance. Spiritual value reflects existing perceptions of a place. Such heritage values include the sense of inspiration and wonder that can emanate from personal contact with places honored over many generations. Religious practices have also immense contributions to a given community for their spiritual satisfaction. Mural paintings also heal people from evil spirits and such kinds of miracles were observed in various icons of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

Aesthetic significance. This value is derived from human appreciation of the beauty of heritage because of visual sensing. Aesthetic value is usually the results of beautiful designs, unique architectural style, and other attractive features of the heritage. It also relates with the age, rarity, and uniqueness of the paintings.

Challenges of Mural (Wall Painting)

Mural paintings need a special care and treatment. It's easily vulnerable to deterioration and destruction if proper conservation and protection is not carried out. Mural paintings of the study area faced several challenges/problems arise from nature and human being. The following are some challenges/problems that churches with mural paintings are facing.

Negligence. According to scholarly works conducted heritages are damaged due to natural and manmade causes. Negligence is one of the main causes for the deterioration of art works in general and mural paintings in particular. In the study area churches with mural painting lacked attention from the concerned bodies and due to this their condition was deteriorated and in Betlehem Church the mural painting is totally removed from wall of the church. According to the information that I obtained from informants, the rationale behind the removal of the mural from the church was due to the perception of the church leaders. They believed that the architecture of the church was impressive and the wall of the *meqdes* was spectacular. In order to disclose this spectacular scene for visitors and others they decided the removal of the mural from the wall.

Lack of conservation. Conservation is an activity which focused on the protection of heritages from further deterioration. Conservation is further divided into preventive and curative conservation. According to Elena Charola and Robert J. Koestler (2006, p. 13) conservation is:

an interdisciplinary field that needs to take into account such disciplines as the humanities, the arts, the sciences and technology, and crafts. Although the actual conservation intervention is, or should be, carried out by trained conservators, the degree of that intervention cannot be decided by the conservator alone. (Charola & Koestler, 2006, p. 13)

The conditions of wall paintings are deteriorated due to human and natural made factors unless proper and regular conservation activity is carried out. Many are damaged by bird and bat droppings and seepage of rainwater

through the roofs. Others are highly affected by light (flash photography), insufficient ventilation, termites, and other insect pests (Aalund, 1985, p. 67, 69, 70).

Proper and regular conservation is important for any kind of art works in general and mural paintings in particular needs a special attention. Therefore, lack of proper conservation is another challenge that churches with mural paintings are facing in the study area.



Figure 1. Remaining paintings from Betlehem Maryam church (own photo).

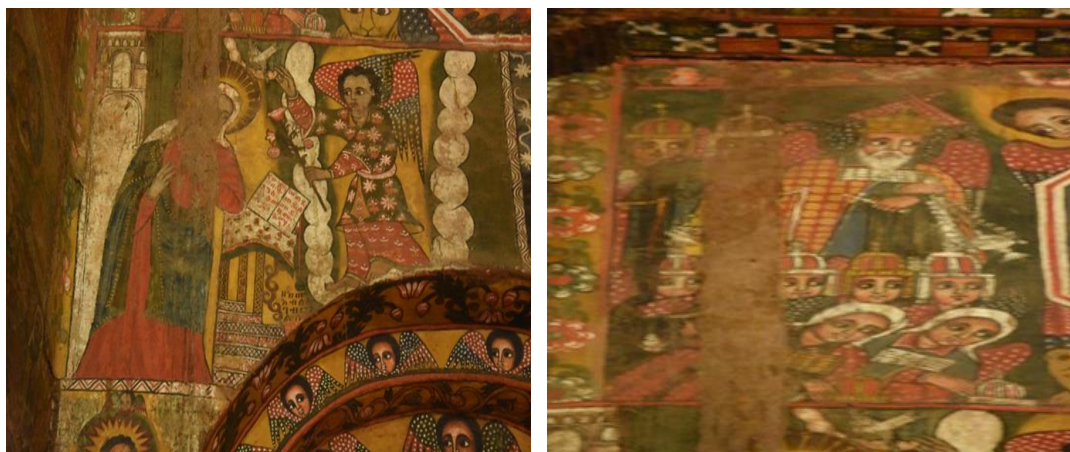


Figure 2. Partially damaged painting (Debre Berhan Selassie).



Figure 3. Mural painting damaged by flood (Qoma Fasilads).

Lightning. One of the basic problems for such cause is: the intensity of the light projected to the artwork was not limited by standard. In Dere Berhan Selassie one of the critical problems is the light that is projected from the fluorescent made the artworks be yellowed and faded. And even some paintings didn't get light exposure and this made the artworks be darkened. According to the justification of conservation and design international light is a radiant energy and it can generate heat and promote damaging photochemical reaction in art. In artworks, especially certain pigments and inks are light sensitive than others, so, light exposure can lead to premature fading and degradation of colors and the most damaging portion of the visible light spectrum is the ultra violet wave length. And from this, the strongest UV light sources are the sun. So it is advisable to keep artworks out of direct sun light both for the heat it generates and to the harmful UV exposure.

Rain water and flooding. Art works in general and wall paintings in particular are damaged due to rain water and flooding. For instance the wall painting of Debre Berhan Selassie Church is at risk because inside the church since water infiltrates from the roof, one of the oldest paintings that depict saint Mariam and Iyasu becomes dark and invisible for visitors. In addition the mural painting of Qoma Fasilades particularly the lower part was damaged due to flood. Figures 2 and 3 above showed wall paintings of Qoma Debre Berhan Selassie partially damaged by droppings of rain water.

Conclusion

The Gondar period witnessed several developments in political, economic, and, social affairs. The formation of Gondar and its establishment as a permanent political seat brought an end to the tradition of ruling from roving capitals. One of the prominent achievements of the Gondar period was witnessed in art and architecture. During this period art in general and mural painting in particular showed development. This development was associated with the ruling class of the period. The royal families patron the wall paintings of several churches found in Gondar and its surrounding particularly in and around Lake Tana. Those churches with mural painting attracted domestic and international tourists but they lack attention from the concerned bodies and they are facing several problems. The major problem that such kinds of churches are facing includes negligence, lack of proper conservation, lightning, flood, and drops of rain water. Such problems affected the mural paintings and the paintings are deteriorated from time to time and some of them were damaged.

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