



**Addis Ababa University**

**College of Performing and Visual Arts**

**School of Theatre Arts**

**Exploring the Aesthetics of Liturgical Performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox  
Tewahedo Church at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery, Addis  
Ababa**

**By**

**Meseret Mebratie**

**A Thesis Submitted to the College of Performing and Visual Arts, School of Theatre Arts,  
Addis Ababa University, in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master  
of Arts in Multimedia Theatre**

**June 2023**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

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**Meseret Mebratie**

**Adviser**

**Balew Demissie (PhD)**

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## Letter of Approval

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

College of Performing and Visual Arts

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by **Meseret Mebratie**, entitled **Exploring the Aesthetics of Liturgical Performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery, Addis Ababa** is submitted for the fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master's Degree (MA) in Multimedia Theatre complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards of originality and quality.

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Advisor	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Examiner	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Examiner	Signature	Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Department of Graduate Program Coordinator

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to explore the aesthetics of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. In particular, it is focused on Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A qualitative research design was used for the study, employing observation, document analysis, and interviews as data collection methods. The results show that religious chants, songs, visual arts, and literature are important elements of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church liturgy. Participants in the study emphasized the importance of these elements in creating reverent and meditative atmosphere, in conveying the message of the liturgy, and in promoting spiritual transformation. The study has significant implications for our understanding of Ethiopian Christianity and the arts and can contribute to a deeper appreciation of how aesthetic ritual and spirituality involve aesthetical elements often observed in the realm of the Arts.

## Chapter One

### 1. Introduction

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is known for its rich and vibrant liturgical services. Considering the variety of prayers offered at different times of the day and year, the church can truly be called a stage for a variety of spiritual performances. Even a first glance at the Book of Anaphora, with which this study is closely associated, reveals that the prayer of the Mass is arranged in a truly theatrical manner. The book gives the priest specific instructions on certain gestures and styles of dress. Furthermore, the words that the priest is to say are prescribed as in a play, leaving no room for improvisation.

The term "liturgical" refers to anything related to liturgy, that is, the set of rituals, prayers, and practices used in public worship (Abba Goergoryos, 2012). Liturgy is a central aspect of many religious traditions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, to name a few (Aalund, 1985). In Christian churches, liturgy typically includes a series of prayers, hymns, readings from the Bible, and other rituals, such as the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper (Abbink, 2003). In general, Christian liturgy is often performed by a priest and is intended to facilitate the worship of God and the expression of religious devotion. The liturgical traditions of different Christian denominations can vary widely (Alebachew, 2020). Some emphasize formality and ritual, while others emphasize simplicity and spontaneity. Overall, the term "liturgical" refers to the religious rituals and practices used to express devotion and worship in a religious setting. These practices are often deeply rooted in tradition and are intended to facilitate spiritual connection and communion with the divine (Alemayehu, 2004).

The term "art" refers to a wide range of creative activities that aim to express and communicate ideas, feelings, and experiences through visual, auditory, or performance-based media (Ambaw, 2012). Examples of art include painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, music, dance, theater, literature, and film. Art is often used to explore the human condition and to convey complex ideas and feelings that are difficult to express through everyday language or other common means of communication. It can be both personal and universal, allowing individuals to express their unique perspectives and experiences while connecting with others on a deeper level (Assefa, 2009). Art has been part of human culture for thousands of years, with different cultures and

societies developing their own forms of artistic expression. Throughout history, art has been used for a variety of purposes, including religious worship, political propaganda, and personal expression. The arts are an essential part of human culture and play an important role in shaping our understanding of the world and our place in it. They are a means of communication and expression that is both personal and universal, allowing individuals to connect with others and express their deepest thoughts, feelings, and experiences (Day, 1972).

These arts, which include religious chants and performances, play an essential role in the worship of the Church and are closely interwoven with its theology and spirituality (Desta, 2012).

From an aesthetical perspective, the liturgical arts of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are characterized by their complexity, depth, and emotional power. The religious chants, for example, are often performed in a complex system of modes and rhythms that are difficult for outsiders to understand but create a deep and powerful religious resonance for those who appreciate them. The particular performances of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are also highly stylized, with offerings that often combine chant and performance to tell stories from the Bible or from the lives of the saints. These performances are characterized by the use of symbols and metaphors (Engedayehu, 2013).

Liturgical celebrations that take place in different parts of the world in general and in our country Ethiopia in particular play an important role in reflecting and preserving rich cultures. They also demonstrate the aesthetics of religious performance (Ephraim, 1995).

The word 'Aesthetics' derives from a Greek root meaning 'of or pertaining to things perceptible to the senses, material things (as opposed to imaginable or immaterial things).' This means that liturgical performance is inherently an esthetic activity. The term "esthetic" does not refer to something attractive or pleasing, but rather to a sense of order or form. Just as art is not merely illustrative or mimetic, but is capable of expressing a content inherent in its aesthetic form and thus communicates through its aesthetic nature and form. The other form of beauty that is central to liturgical action or performance is primarily for the glorification of Almighty God (Eshete, 2020).

This study relies primarily on the concept of esthetics, not in its philosophical application, but in its relationship to the study of esthetic art and performance. At the heart of esthetics is the idea of

esthetic judgment, which refers to the process of evaluating or judging the esthetic qualities of an object, process, or work of art. This judgment is formed based on a variety of factors, including the shape, color, texture, composition, and context of the object, as well as the viewer's personal experiences, feelings, and cultural background (Esler, 2019). Aesthetics also includes the study of artistic movements, styles, and genres, as well as the historical and cultural contexts in which works of art are created and appreciated. It addresses issues of artistic creativity, expression, and interpretation, as well as the relationship between art and society (Galaw, 2002). Overall, aesthetics is a broad and interdisciplinary field that encompasses many different areas of research, including philosophy, psychology, sociology, and art history. It is concerned with the study of beauty and art and the role these concepts play in shaping our perceptions and experiences of the world around us.

The aesthetics of liturgical performance arts in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are rich and diverse, reflecting the deep spiritual and cultural heritage of the church. These arts include religious chants, movements, and body actions that are integral to the worship and spiritual life of the church (Garland, 2003). The melodies are often accompanied by a variety of traditional instruments. In the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, bodywork is also an integral part of liturgical performance (Gebre Amanuel, 2000).

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, God possesses all perfections because He is a self-existent being. He must have all the perfections because he is the cause of the perfections in the creatures. God is the most beautiful and the most supra-beautiful being, both because of His supreme greatness (like the sun in relation to other hot things) and because of His causality as the source of all beauty. So in everything that gives us the pure, authentic sense of beauty, there is truly the presence of God. And that is why liturgical celebrations that commemorate the divine elements are also full of beauty.

The connection between liturgy and the performing arts is explored here. The esthetics of liturgy can be likened to a performative utterance, as it is transformed from a profane action into a perceived transcendent meaning in the act of performance (Heine, 2007). The connection between liturgy and performance is a fundamental aspect of worship in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Liturgy refers to the rituals, prayers, and practices used in the worship of the

church, while the performance aspect includes music, song, movement, and rhetoric. In the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the performing arts are not separate from the liturgy, but rather an integral part of it (Heldman, 1992). The songs, movements, and performances used in the church's worship are not for entertainment or decoration, but are deeply interwoven with the church's theology and spirituality. The rhythms and melodies of religious chants and songs are carefully chosen to evoke a particular mood or feeling and are often accompanied by lyrics that express the worshipers' devotion to God (LeMarquand, 1998).

Theology and spirituality are two distinct but related aspects of religious belief and practice. Although they are often used interchangeably, there are some important differences between them (Mellaku, 1995). Theology refers to the intellectual study of God and religious beliefs. It is concerned with understanding the nature of God, the meaning of religious texts, and the interpretation of religious doctrines and traditions (Merahi, 1990). Theology is often practiced by scholars or religious leaders who use reason and critical thinking to analyze and interpret religious ideas. Spirituality, on the other hand, refers to the personal and subjective experience of a connection to God or a higher power. It is concerned with the individual's relationship with God and his or her personal experience with the divine. Spirituality is often based on personal beliefs, experiences, and practices and may be expressed through prayer, meditation, or other forms of religious or spiritual practice (Molla, 2018).

One way to understand the difference between theology and spirituality is to think of theology as the intellectual study of religion, while spirituality is the personal experience of religious or spiritual life (Nekatibeb, 2018). Theology is about understanding the nature of God and religious beliefs, while spirituality is about experiencing the presence of God in one's life. While theology and spirituality are distinct, they are also closely related. Theology can help inform and deepen one's spirituality by providing a deeper understanding of religious beliefs and practices. At the same time, spirituality can help ground and enrich one's theology by providing a personal experience of the divine that can bring religious ideas to life (Shemelis, 2007).

In a world where human performance alone is the criterion for an existence worth living, man is undoubtedly degraded to the level of a machine. And in such a situation the existential crisis about the meaning of life arises. Man cannot satisfy his 'restlessness' with what is offered to him

on the market (Shemelis, 2007). He will undoubtedly be dissatisfied even if he consumes everything that is offered to him. Man is a being to whom this restlessness is inherent. The ability to transcend the material plane of realities could only help him in such a situation (Molla, 2018). If and only if the mechanical lifestyle of the modern world changes and returns to a value-based lifestyle, the human race will have a bright future on this planet. We have experienced that listening to music, enjoying a work of art, or spending time in a place of scenic beauty quiets our minds. In such a situation, the miseries of life, the hardships we suffer, etc. are forgotten. This is an elevation from "being-in-the-world" When the divine element is present along with these esthetic elements, man will feel a superhuman reality that cares for him and is the source of all these beautiful objects. This is the being with the eternal beauty, and all other beauties refer to the absolute beauty of God (Nekatibeb, 2018).

This study focuses on the esthetic dimension of Ethiopian liturgy and is very relevant in today's context. The world has become more technology-oriented than ever before and therefore lends itself to a mechanical lifestyle (Tadesse, 2005). In such a lifestyle, transcendent values such as love, beauty, etc. have no place. All that matters is whether the functional role of a person or a thing is fulfilled. And so human capabilities shrink to the level of a mechanical way of life. Ethiopia is in some ways different in terms of the category of cultures described above. It has values and wisdoms that need to be studied and interpreted through different means. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

An accurate estimate of the number of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido believers is difficult, as numbers can vary widely depending on the source. However, some estimates suggest that the number of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido believers is about 50 million, or about 0.6% of the world's population (Tamiru, 1960). It is worth noting that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church is one of the largest and oldest Christian churches in Africa and has a significant presence not only in Ethiopia but also in almost all countries where Ethiopians live in the diaspora. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church is undoubtedly very present and influential both in Ethiopia and in the global Christian community (Merahi, 1990). This East African

outpost of Orthodoxy reflects two major trends. First, the Orthodox Christian population in Ethiopia has grown much faster than that in Europe over the past 100 years.

In Ethiopia, liturgy and liturgical performance are essential to spiritual growth and have their roots in creation itself. To create, participate in, or appreciate art is to be transformed by it. As Melaku (1995) puts it, art breathes life into prayer, worship, theological reflection, and justice work.

In the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, liturgical performances are performed for all and practiced daily. Although performance and liturgy share common characteristics and practices, the significance of liturgical practices in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to the development of performance art in Ethiopia has not been explored in depth. The focus of this study is to explore the esthetics of liturgical practices, as liturgical performance is not only for spiritual benefit, as most worshippers believe. Its benefits and relationship to the performing arts, as well as its physiological and health benefits, have yet to be explored. The approach itself and the methodology of liturgical performance seem puzzling to many believers. The aesthetical beauty of this unique art and spiritual performance is not clearly explored and revealed to the faithful and others (Nekatibeb, 2018).

This study aims to explore the aesthetics of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The study will have its observation point at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa and will try to answer what are the main esthetic elements of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and how these elements contribute to the spiritual experience of the faithful (Molla, 2018). To answer this question, the study will examine the use of music, dance, and theater in the liturgy of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and how these art forms are used to express and communicate religious ideas and experiences. The study will also examine the role these art forms play in creating a spiritual atmosphere and how they contribute to the overall aesthetic experience of worshippers.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

1. What are the main aesthetical elements of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, and how are they expressed in the liturgy of the Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa?
2. How do the various forms of liturgical performance contribute to the spiritual experience of worshippers in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church?
3. How do the aesthetics of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church reflect the theology and spirituality of the church, and how do they contribute to the expression and communication of religious ideas and experiences?
4. What role do the elements of liturgical performance play in creating a spiritual atmosphere at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery, and how do they contribute to the overall aesthetic experience of worshippers?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This study is aimed at exploring the aesthetics of liturgical performances in Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

#### **1.4.1 Specific Objectives:**

Based on the above research questions, the study focused on the following specific objectives.

These are:

- To explore how liturgical acts and performing arts are related.
- To examine what element of arts is practiced during the religious performance of liturgy.
- To explore how believers perceive the importance of liturgical performance.

### **1.5 Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the study is to investigate the aesthetic aspects of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The study aims to deepen our understanding of the use

of music, dance, and theater in the liturgy of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and how these art forms contribute to the spiritual experience of worshipers. This study aims to answer research questions related to the key aesthetic elements of liturgical performance, their historical and cultural context, and their role in creating a spiritual atmosphere. By examining the aesthetics of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the study can provide valuable insights into the role these art forms play in the spiritual lives of worshippers and how they contribute to the overall experience of worship. The results of this study may be of importance to both scholars of religion and practitioners of liturgical performance art. For scholars, the study can provide a deeper understanding of the esthetic aspects of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and how these art forms reflect the theology and spirituality of the church. For practitioners, the study can provide insights into how the spiritual experience of worshipers can be enhanced through the use of liturgical performance and how to create a more meaningful and engaging liturgical environment.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Liturgical performance is unique since it engages all the sense organs when practiced, hence this study has a major significance for those who are in different sections of the society beyond the believers and the actors. The believers will benefit from this study by gaining important and practical information about liturgy and its relation with art, and its benefit for social, physiological, psychological as well as spiritual growth. The study has several potential meanings, including:

1. Improving our understanding of the aesthetic aspects of liturgical performance art in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church: the study can shed light on the use of music, dance, and theater in the liturgy of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and how these art forms contribute to the spiritual experience of worshipers.
2. Provide insights for practitioners of the liturgical performing arts: The study may provide insights into how the spiritual experience of worshipers can be enhanced through the use of liturgical performing arts and how to create a more meaningful and engaging liturgical environment. This may be particularly relevant to those involved in planning and leading worship services in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

3. Contribution to the broader field of religious studies: This study can contribute to the broader field of religious studies by providing a case study of the aesthetic aspects of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. This may provide a valuable reference point for future studies of liturgical performances in other religious traditions.

4. Promote cultural understanding and appreciation: this study can promote cultural understanding and appreciation by examining the historical and cultural context of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. This can provide insights into the cultural heritage of the church and how liturgical performance arts have evolved over time.

Overall, the study has the potential to provide valuable insights and contribute to our understanding of the role that liturgical performance arts play in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and in religious worship more broadly.

### **1.7 The Scope of the Study**

The aesthetics of Liturgical Performance is broader in its scope and deeper in its information, however, this study is limited to exploring the aesthetics of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The study examines the liturgy of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and how these art forms contribute to the spiritual experience of worshipers. In addition, the study is based on an observational approach focusing specifically on the Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa and uses qualitative research methods such as observation, interviews, and document analysis.

The study involved interviews with church leaders, performers, and worshipers, observation of liturgical services, and analysis of relevant liturgical texts and documents. While the study provided valuable insights into the aesthetic aspects of liturgical performance art in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, it is important to note that the findings are not necessarily transferable to other churches or religious traditions.

### **1.8 Limitation of the study**

The study can be done in a better way than its current shape, however, time, resources, the sensitivity of the issue, and current situations are some of the limitations encountered by the researcher. The researcher encountered the following challenges:

1. Potential Bias: The study may be subject to the researcher's bias, as his or her own cultural and religious background may influence his or her interpretation of the data.
2. Limited sample size: the sample size of the study is limited to the Mass service or otherwise known as the anaphora. It does not assess night-long services and performances.
3. Language Barrier: The study may be limited by a language barrier, as the primary language of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is Ge'ez, which may be difficult for non-linguists to understand and interpret in the highest accuracy.
4. Time constraints: The study may be limited by time constraints, as it is not possible to observe and analyze all relevant liturgical services and performances within the given time frame.

It is important to keep these limitations in mind when interpreting the results of the study and to consider them in the context of the broader literature on liturgical performance art in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

## **1.9 Definition of Terms**

**Aesthetical Aspect:** The aesthetical aspect refers to the artistic or sensual qualities of an object, event, or experience that are perceived as beautiful or pleasing to the senses. In this study, the aesthetical aspect refers specifically to the use of religious chants, movement, action, visual arts, and poetry/literature to create a reverent and meditative atmosphere, convey the message of the liturgy, and promote spiritual transformation within the religious tradition. The study will examine how these elements contribute to the overall aesthetic experience of liturgical performance and how they are perceived by study participants. In this context, the aesthetic aspect is considered an integral part of the liturgical practices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (Marcus,2002).

**Aesthetics:** Aesthetics is the branch of philosophy concerned with the study of beauty, art, and the nature of taste and perception. It is concerned with the subjective perception and interpretation of sensory experiences, including the appreciation of beauty and the emotional responses that result from encounters with art, nature, and other aesthetic objects. Aesthetics deals with questions such as: What makes something beautiful? How do we experience beauty? What is the relationship between art and beauty? How do cultural, social, and historical factors influence our aesthetic judgments? In short, aesthetics is concerned with the nature of sensory experience and the way we respond to it emotionally, intellectually, and culturally (Marcus,2002).

**Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church:** The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is an Oriental Orthodox Christian church that is the largest Christian denomination in Ethiopia. It is also known as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The word "Tewahedo" means "to become one" or "to be united" and refers to the belief in the unity of the divine and human natures of Jesus Christ. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has a unique liturgical tradition and is characterized by a rich and vibrant culture deeply rooted in Ethiopian history and heritage. It is an ancient church with origins dating back to the first century A.D. and a long and complex history that has been shaped by political, social, and religious factors over the centuries. Today, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has millions of followers in Ethiopia as well as a significant diaspora community around the world (Tamiru,1960).

**Liturgical:** The term "liturgical" refers to the practices and rituals associated with public worship in various religious traditions, especially Christianity. Liturgical practices typically involve a structured and written order of worship, including prayers, hymns, readings from Scripture, and other elements designed to create a communal experience of worship. Liturgical practices vary widely among different Christian denominations and traditions but generally emphasize the importance of ritual and symbol in expressing faith and nurturing spiritual life. Liturgical practices are often seen as a way to connect the individual believer to the larger community of faith and to provide a deeper experience of the divine presence (Tamiru,1960).

**Performing Arts:** Performing arts refers to any form of art that is created and performed for an audience. It includes a wide range of artistic disciplines such as music, theater, dance, and spoken word. In the performing arts, artists use their bodies, voices, and instruments to create a live performance that can be experienced by an audience. The performing arts often require artists such as composers, musicians, choreographers, actors, and directors to work together to create a cohesive and meaningful performance. The performing arts are an important component of many cultures and societies and often serve as a means to express and explore complex emotions, ideas, and experiences (Takla-Haymanot,1981).

**Phenomenology:** It is a philosophical and psychological theory concerned with the study of conscious experience and subjective perception of phenomena. It is concerned with the study of the structures of experience and how individuals interpret and make sense of the world around them. Phenomenology emphasizes the importance of the first-person perspective and aims to describe the nature of subjective experience rather than focusing on objective facts or external stimuli. It was first developed by the German philosopher Edmund Husserl in the early 20th century and has since influenced a variety of fields, including psychology, sociology, and anthropology (Molla,2018).

**Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery:** This is a church and monastery located next to the Grand Palace in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A church commemorating the image of the Holy Mary. This church is part of the complex of the old imperial palace (Menelik Palace) and was built by Empress Zewditu as a mausoleum church for the remains of her father, Emperor Menelik II. Menelik's wife, Empress Taitu, and the builder of this church, his daughter, Empress Zewditu, are also buried here. More than 100 years old, the church was built by Empress Zewditu and houses numerous manuscripts, icons, and other ecclesiastical and secular items of great historical and spiritual significance to Ethiopia. The church also serves as a mausoleum for Emperor Menelik II, his wife, Empress Tayitu, and his daughter, Empress Zewditu (Tamiru,1960).

## **2 Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1 Liturgy and Aesthetics**

The study of liturgy in the context of aesthetics is an approach to understanding the experience of worship through the lens and conceptual framework of aesthetics. It examines the sensory and emotional aspects of liturgical practices, focusing on how these practices contribute to a sense of beauty, meaning, and transcendence (Aalund, 1985). Like in what is known as phenomenology, this study is concerned with the study of subjective experience and seeks to understand, in the context of the liturgy, how the faithful experience and interpret the liturgical practices of their tradition.

Aesthetics, on the other hand, is concerned with the study of beauty and the sensory and emotional responses it evokes. The study of liturgy in the context of aesthetics may involve an analysis of the various sensory and aesthetic elements of liturgical practices such as music, architecture, and iconography. It may also involve an examination of the emotional and spiritual experiences that these practices evoke in worshipers, such as a sense of awe, wonder, or transcendence (Abba Goergoryos,2012).

Through this approach, the phenomenology of liturgy in the context of aesthetics can shed light on the ways in which liturgical practices contribute to the spiritual lives of worshippers, and it can provide insights into the role that aesthetics plays in the experience of worship. It can also help deepen our understanding of the relationship between the aesthetics and the spiritual and the ways in which they intersect and influence one another (Engedayehu, 2013). Overall, the phenomenology of liturgy in the context of aesthetics provides a valuable framework for exploring and understanding the sensual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of liturgical practices and can contribute to a deeper appreciation and understanding of the role these practices play in religious life (Abbink,2003).

In his study on the phenomenology of liturgy, Parisian theologian Jean Yves Lacoste examines the experiential aspect of religious practices from a phenomenological perspective. In this attempt, he brings up the Heideggerian concept of 'being-in-the-world' and religious 'being-there.' (Ephraim,1995). Resonating with these two authorities claims presented above, the Ethiopian orthodox Mass prayer proclaims: በሰማይ የሃሉ ልብክሙ (Anaphora of the Lord, 1920) – meaning ‘let your hearts be in the heavens’. This is a call sung by the lead deacon inviting those in attendance to transcend earthly thoughts and join the heavens imaginatively.

According to Lacoste, there is a great gulf between the two worlds. This gap is bridged by liturgical activity, which is supported by the work of art or the aesthetic dimension in the liturgical act. Thus, for Lacoste, liturgy is not only an event of grace but also a real possibility of man through his ability to transcend his 'being-in-the-world.'

Man is a being-in-the-world. Thus, our relationship to being is also dependent on our corporeality. Liturgy bridges human situations. It is a violent transgression and rupture with Heidegger's 'being-in-the-world.' The Chronos (chronological time) of man is dominated by the kairos (eternal time) (Heldman,1992).

As is mostly the case in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the religions of mankind and the art of mankind have always been intertwined; none can be understood without engaging with the other (Ephraim,1995). Most religions have music in their rituals and liturgies and develop architectures for the performance of their liturgies. Most use poetic language when addressing God. Most use the visual arts to represent or symbolize the sacred and divine. These aesthetic aspects of religions shape the affections, emotions, beliefs, and memories of religious participants. However, the relationship between religion and art has not always been smooth (LeMarquand,1998).

Given the close relationship between beauty and liturgy, we should pay great attention to all the works of art used during a celebration. Church architecture, which should emphasize the coherence of the furnishings of the sanctuary, including the altar, the crucifix, the tabernacle, the ambo and the celebratory chair, is undoubtedly an important component of sacred art (Molla, 2018). In this context, it is crucial to keep in mind that the aim of sacred architecture is to provide the church with a suitable place for the celebration of the mysteries of religion,

especially the Eucharist. The liturgy, which is an assembly of believers (ecclesia) who are the living stones of the Church (cf. 1 Peter 2:5), characterizes a Christian church. According to Esler (2019), religious iconography in sacred art, especially in painting and sculpture, should be oriented towards the sacramental stage. This idea also applies to sacred art in general. The commissioning of artists and architects to create works of art for the liturgy could benefit from a comprehensive understanding of the history of sacred art. Therefore, it is crucial that seminarians and priests learn about the history of art, paying particular attention to sacred structures and relevant liturgical rules. According to Merahi (1990), everything related to the Eucharist should be beautiful.

## **2.2 The Importance of Liturgical Performance**

The Church Liturgy or Divine Liturgy is the action of the Church called together by God to be together in one community to worship, pray, sing, hear the Word of God, be instructed in the commandments of God, and offer themselves with thanksgiving to God the Father in Christ. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance for the education of Christians. It strengthens our faith by educating our minds and hearts to be true Christians, directing us in all our actions and deeds of man to the way prescribed by our Lord Jesus Christ and the holy apostles (Esler, 2019).

The importance of liturgical performance lies in its ability to enhance the spiritual experience of worshipers and to communicate the core beliefs and values of a religious tradition. In the Ethiopian Orthodox liturgical context, the basic tenets of Christianity are indeed communicated through the Liturgical performance. In a purely artistic expression that uses music, dance, drama, and other creative elements, the major commandments are declared during the Mass liturgy: love, forgiveness, charity, chastity are conveyed by means of the mixture of oration and performance. One of the most important functions of liturgical performance is to create a sense of beauty and transcendence in the liturgical space (Shemelis,2007). Through the use of music, song, and other forms of vocal expression, performers can create a sense of harmony and unity that transcends the individual worshiper and connects him or her to the larger community of the faithful (Gebre Amanuel,2000).

Liturgical performances also play an important role in communicating the core beliefs and values of a religious tradition. Through the use of symbols, images, and narratives, performers can convey complex theological concepts and spiritual ideas in ways that are accessible and engaging to worshipers (Desta,2012). A case in point is the question of the ascension of prayers to the heavens. This mystical theological concept is symbolized by the rising of the incense. Incense is a very essential element of performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox liturgical practice. This kind of symbolism help deepen the understanding of the faithful about their faith and foster a sense of connection and belonging within the religious community. Another important aspect of liturgical performance is its ability to create a sense of ritual and tradition within the liturgical space. By using established performance forms and patterns, performers can create a sense of continuity and connection to the past, connecting contemporary worshipers to the long history of their religious tradition (Tadesse, 2005).

The Holy Book often advises, "Dear children! Following the liturgy and living according to the commandments helps us to worship God (Tadesse,2005). Therefore, the prayers, the hymns (religious songs), and the liturgical movements of Orthodox Christianity are important for the worship of God, because He is our Good Shepherd who guides us in all our life." Therefore, whenever we go to church, we must follow and live by the Divine Liturgy. Dear children of God, you should listen to your parents when they tell you to get up in the morning, wash, and wear clean, white clothes to go to church. When you arrive at the church, you must behave and be disciplined, pray and attend attentively in silence. When it is time to receive Holy Communion, you are to be good and happy by obeying the procedure. Now we have understood how important the liturgy of the Church is to be a good Christian (Tamiru, 1960).



Source: EOTC, Classical Book(Tamiru, 1960)

### **2.3 Qidase**

Qidase is one of the most important spiritual arts practiced by the faithful of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church in two ways (Takla-Haymanot, 1981). The first is early in the morning, and the second is in the middle of the day. The reason for this is the fasting day and the non-fasting day in the week. There are special days in the week of the seventh day, where every Saturday and Sunday the prayer activity (qidase) is often practiced early in the morning (Abba Goergoryos).

The Ethiopian Church firmly believes that Christ possesses a single, distinct divine-human nature. This one nature has two aspects: divine and human, and it retains all the characteristics of both natures even after they have united. However, the Church denies that the human has become part of the divine or vice versa. Consequently, the Christology of the EOTC is tewahedo, i.e. Christ is simultaneously fully divine and fully human, inseparable and distinct and not Gnostic or monophysite (Ephraim, 1995). It is true, as Ephraim Isaac says: "The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is not Eutychian. It teaches the Tewahedo doctrine of Christology, sometimes known as the "true man, true God" idea. According to the teachings and traditions of the Church, holiness and purity are prerequisites for participation in the true humanity and divinity of Christ (Eshete, 2020). Through the Eucharistic liturgy, EOTC worship and liturgical theology convey the experience of heaven on earth. The Eucharist, the sacrament that must be at the center of Christian worship and has been preserved through the liturgical practice of the church, is offered and celebrated as an integral part of liturgical worship in this church (Ephraim, 1995).

The experience of heaven on earth, which the deserving members of the Church have, is thus expressed in the Eucharistic liturgy. In order to immerse the worshiper in a heavenly encounter and focus all attention on the one and only God, the liturgical worship of the EOTC utilizes all the human senses that God has given us (Assefa, 2009). Orthodox worshippers are expected to

have a real contact with the divine through the sacrifice on the altar. Therefore, the ancient liturgical instruments and esthetically pleasing vestments contribute to a festive and glorious atmosphere. In addition, the iconic images draw the attention of the faithful to the communion of people and the genuine worship of the Lord. Unlike some Protestant churches that abhor icons, the EOTC uses visible icons in worship to immerse participants in the heavenly reality (Engedayehu, 2013).

In addition to the replica of the Ark of the Covenant, the Church's liturgical service requires an appropriate selection of icons and often elaborate vestments, crosses, candlesticks and the like (Assefa, 2009). As the Lord's Supper is the climax of Christian worship and a celebration that permeates the liturgical framework of the church, it forms the culmination of the worship experience and its connection to the congregation. The climax and focal point of the Divine Liturgy is Eucharistic Adoration; similarly, the liturgy of the EOTC serves as a kind of worship at the heart of religious experience. Indeed, the pre-Christian Hebrew tradition had a great influence on the Eucharistic ritual in EOTC (Desta, 2012).

It is crucial to remember that each generation of believers inherits the rich liturgical heritage from their spiritual ancestors and passes it on to the following generation as the liturgical traditions of the Church are preserved in EOTC. Although the EOTC has always encouraged its members to participate in the Eucharist weekly or at least three times a year, according to Rev. Marcos Daoud, one of the chief editors of the Ethiopian Qeddassé, some people are "misinformed" or "under-informed" about worthy participation in the Eucharist, which has led them to ignore the communion service altogether. But Rev. Daoud invites others to join him in finding out where, what and how this miscommunication, which has a detrimental effect on members, has occurred. Therefore, this study will examine and analyze a selection of the anaphora of the early church fathers as found in the Fetha Nagast (Legislation of Kings) and the Qeddassé of the EOTC. In addition, the biblical interpretative tradition of the church as preserved in the AC corpus is evaluated (Tadesse, 2005).

#### **2.4 Believers' Perception of the Importance of Liturgical Performance**

Worshippers' perceptions of the meaning of liturgical performance may vary depending on factors such as their cultural and religious backgrounds, their personal experiences with liturgical

practices, and their individual beliefs and values (Takla-Haymanot, 1981). However, there are some common themes and perspectives that emerge from studies and surveys on this topic. For many worshippers, liturgical performance is an essential part of their religious practice and a key element of their spiritual life (Shemelis,2007). Liturgical performance is seen as a way to connect with the divine, deepen one's understanding of the sacred, and foster a sense of community and belonging within the religious tradition. Worshippers often perceive liturgical performances as a form of artistic expression that communicates the core beliefs and values of their religious tradition in ways that are engaging, meaningful, and accessible. Through the use of sacred music, song, and other forms of creative expression, liturgical performance can convey complex theological concepts and spiritual ideas in ways that appeal to the heart as well as the mind (Wainwright, 2006).

Worshippers also often view liturgical performance as a way to create a sense of beauty and transcendence in the liturgical space. Through the use of art and aesthetics, liturgical performances can create a meaningful and transformative experience for worshipers that helps them connect with the divine and experience a sense of awe, wonder, and reverence. Overall, worshippers believe that liturgical performance is an important and indispensable part of their religious practice that helps them deepen their connection with the divine, foster a sense of community and belonging within the religious tradition, and experience a sense of beauty, transcendence, and meaning in the liturgical space (LeMarquand,1998).

In 2005, Medhin expanded the concept of sacred music to include music indigenous to missionary regions, going beyond Gregorian chant and polyphony. Similar to the categories "religious music" and "church music", the term "church music" also has a wide-ranging, ambiguous definition that is not always linked to the liturgy. The term "liturgical music" was coined to correct the previous interpretation. According to some liturgical scholars, the term "liturgical music" tends to place music above liturgy, and they have proposed an alternative term: "musical liturgy" Another term, "pastoral music'," as used by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, refers to all music used at the parish level (including music used in religious education, evangelization, social ministry and music education), although the term is restricted to a liturgical context in the Bishops' 1982 statement ' Liturgical Music Today' (63-64). Some late 20th century writers preferred to refer to the music as "Christian ritual music'," while others used

the term "Catholic liturgical music" to describe the function of music in the liturgy. All genres of music used in the Christian liturgy are grouped under the category of "liturgical music" in this article (Mellaku, 1995).

This entry discusses developments in the theology and practice of liturgical music in the Roman Catholic Church since the end of the Second Vatican Council. For the history and practice of Roman Catholic Church music prior to Vatican II, see Liturgical music, history. The Second Vatican Council paved the way for interaction between reflection on liturgical music and the practice of liturgical music that was among the most creative, challenging, and confusing in the history of church music (Esler,2019). The new energy triggered by this interaction was reflected in musical composition and experimentation in musical performance as well as in a fundamental shift in the understanding of liturgy itself and, subsequently, the role of liturgical music. This change was brought about not only by the introduction of the vernacular, but also by the shift of primary responsibility for music from the choir to the congregation as a whole and, more subtly, by the subsequent influence of culture on music and the rite itself. Finally, this period saw the training or simply the inspiration of countless new musicians who became involved in the pastoral practice of church music (Molla,2018).

Official documents from the Vatican and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, as well as non-episcopal activities that were both global and uniquely American, included theoretical views on music. *Sacro sanctum Concilium* (the 1962 Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy), *Musicum Sacrum* (1967), the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (1969 and revisions), and *The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation: Fourth Instruction for the Right Application of the Conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy* (1994) are important Vatican documents reflecting the theology and practice of liturgical music. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has published statements covering both theory and practice, either by the Conference as a whole or by one of its committees. These include *Plenty Good Room* (1990), *Liturgical Music Today* (1982), and *Music in Catholic Worship* (1972, rev. 1983). The *Universe Laus Manifesto* (1980), *Milwaukee Symposia for Church Composers: A Ten-Year Report* (1992), and the *Snowbird Statement on Catholic Liturgical Music* (1995) are among the documents published as non-episcopal projects. The ecclesiology that forms the basis of Christian liturgy and the liturgical theology that extends it both contain the theology of liturgical music. This article

examines the theology of liturgical music as expressed in the above literature, although individual theologians such as Dom Odo Casel, Edward Schillebeeckx, OP, Karl Rahner, SJ, and Edward Kilmartin, SJ, are responsible for the development of the ecclesiology and liturgical theology that has influenced the theology of liturgical music in this period of renewal. The practice discussed in this article has not been greatly influenced by the few attempts of individual authors to outline a theology of liturgical music (Abbink, 2003).

The importance of pastoral care was therefore just as great as that of documentary reflection. Pastoral practice formed and shaped the possibilities for new compositions, the inclusion of new people in the service and the fundamental understanding of the liturgy — which shifted from the action of the priest, assisted by various ministers, to the action of the congregation — and was not only elaborated on paper. Both the official and unofficial records were heavily influenced by musical practice, and the practice was certainly influenced by the documents. Aside from the main principles of pastoral care outlined here, there are lesser known but no less relevant viewpoints expressed in the texts, such as the Vatican documents advocating certain pastoral approaches (Assefa, 2009).

## **2.5 The Nexus between Liturgical Acts and Performing Arts**

The relationship between liturgical actions and performing arts is complex and multifaceted. On the one hand, liturgical actions and performing arts share many similarities in their use of symbols, storytelling, and ritualized forms of expression (Abbink, 2003). Both liturgical acts and performing arts can use music, dance, theater, and other forms of creative expression to convey meaning, evoke emotion, and create a sense of aesthetic beauty and transcendence. On the other hand, there are also important differences between liturgical actions and performing arts that reflect their different purposes and contexts. Liturgical acts are rooted in a particular religious tradition and serve to communicate the central beliefs and values of that tradition to the faithful. Liturgical acts are also intended to create a sense of sacred space and connect worshippers to the divine (Ambaw, 2012).

Performing arts, on the other hand, are often designed for secular contexts and are intended to entertain, educate, or provoke audiences in a variety of ways. While performing arts may well have spiritual or religious themes, they are not necessarily associated with a particular religious tradition or faith. Despite these differences, there is a long history of overlap and interaction

between liturgical actions and performing arts (Abba Goergoryos,2012). Many religious traditions have incorporated elements of theater, music, and dance into their liturgical practices, and many performing arts practices have been influenced by religious themes and images (Alemayehu,2004). Generally, the relationship between liturgical acts and the performing arts is complex and multifaceted, reflecting the different ways in which people use art and ritual to express their beliefs, feelings, and experiences. While there are important differences between liturgical actions and performing arts, there is also a long history of overlap and interaction between these two forms of expression, illustrating how art and ritual are deeply intertwined in human culture (Desta, 2012).

## **2.6 The Practice and the Study of Art and Religion**

The practice and study of art and religion are two interrelated areas that explore how art and religious practice intersect and influence each other. The practice of art and religion involves the creation and use of art in a religious context to express and communicate religious beliefs and values. This may include the use of visual art such as icons, sculptures, and paintings, as well as music, dance, and theater in the context of religious ceremonies and rituals. The practice of art and religion is often rooted in a particular religious tradition and reflects the beliefs, values, and aesthetics of that tradition (Engedayehu,2013).

The study of art and religion, on the other hand, involves the scholarly exploration of the role of art within the religious practice and how religious beliefs and values have influenced the development of art throughout history. This may include the study of religious iconography, the history of religious art, and how art has been used to express religious themes and ideas in a variety of cultures and contexts. The study of art and religion may also include the study of contemporary art practices that address religious themes and ideas and how art and religion intersect in the modern world. This may include the study of religious art movements such as religious surrealism and contemporary sacred art, as well as the use of art as a tool for social and political activism within religious communities (Ambaw, 2012).

Overall, the practice and study of art and religion are two interrelated areas in which the intersections between human creativity and religious expression are explored. By creating and studying art in a religious context, we can deepen our understanding of the role that aesthetics

and ritual play in religious practice, as well as the ways in which art reflects and expresses the beliefs, values, and cultural context of a particular religious tradition (Eshete,2020).

The place of art offers a helpful analogy to the conventional divisions between the study of religion and the practice of religion, whether in the broader framework of religious studies or in a more narrowly defined category such as church history or the history of Buddhism. Since "doing" religion (or art) is physically and cognitively distinct from "thinking about" religion (or art), this contradiction applies to both religion and art and transcends the notions of objectivity and subjectivity (Abba Goergoryos, 2012). Among the revealing distinctions are the recognition of class, gender, and ethnicity, as well as education, and the disclosure of the privileging of the study of religion and art and religion as a Western scientific phenomenon. The practice of religion is primarily situated in worship and religious education or catechesis, in which art presents either ichnographically or figuratively established narratives to convey religious ideas and practices, communicate religious truths and practices, and promote individual and communal worship (Alemayehu, 2004).

## **2.7 The Elements of Art Performance and Religious Practice**

The elements of artistic performance and religious practice are diverse and multifaceted, reflecting the complex ways in which artistic expression and religious belief intersect. Some common elements of artistic performance and religious practice are: First, Symbolism: Both artistic performance and religious practice often use symbolic elements to convey meaning and communicate complex ideas (Wainwright, 2006). This may include the use of icons, images, and other visual elements that represent religious figures, concepts, and themes. Second, Ritual: Both artistic performances and religious practices often use ritual forms and behaviors to create a sense of order and meaning within the practice. This may include the use of music, dance, and theater in religious ceremonies and the use of specific choreography or performance techniques in artistic performances (Weldegzihabeher,2000).

Third, aesthetics: both artistic performances and religious practices often use aesthetics, such as color, texture, and form, to create a sense of beauty and transcendence. This may also include the use of music, dance, and visual art to create a sense of harmony and unity within the practice.

Fourth, Community: both artistic performances and religious practices are often about creating a sense of community and belonging among participants. This can include the use of music, dance, and theater to bring people together in shared experiences of artistic expression and religious worship (Takla-Haymanot,1981). Fifth, transcendence: both artistic performances and religious practices are often about evoking a sense of transcendence and connection with something greater than oneself. This can include the use of music, dance, and visual art to create a sense of awe and wonder, as well as the use of religious texts and teachings to evoke a sense of spiritual connection and transformation (Tadesse, 2005). In general, the elements of artistic performance and religious practice are diverse and multifaceted, reflecting how human creativity and spiritual expression intersect to form a rich and complex web of cultural and religious traditions. By exploring the common elements of these practices, we can deepen our understanding of the role that art and ritual play in human culture and spirituality (Tamiru, 1960).

The Vigil, which lasts for nineteen hours until the beginning of the Good Friday liturgy, is a common example. The Triduum, which lasts three days, begins with the celebration on Maundy Thursday. Together, Thursday, Friday and Saturday ensure that the liturgy on Thursday is not really over until the midnight or morning service on Saturday or Sunday. I felt the shift from one to the other without realizing it, and realized that there was no official end to the services (Shemelis, 2007). They were not new beginnings, but continuations. Each time the participants came together, it felt like they were picking up where they left off rather than starting a brand new, stand-alone event. The ciborium was an important element of the performance during this part of the service (Nekatibeb, 2018). In the context of the Easter service, I would like to focus on this object and its function. During the liturgy, the objects serve as vehicles for the action. For example, they facilitate the distribution of communion, allowing the participants to partake of the bread. All objects used in the liturgy are always part of the meanings that unfold in the space, even though they may all have symbolic meanings or other personal meanings that people associate with them. The ciborium is used every week during the celebration of the Eucharist; however, on Holy Thursday it is used in a more conspicuous way after the celebration of the Eucharist. The remains of the blessed and changed bread are usually kept in a side chapel or next to the altar in a ciborium. The ciborium plays an important role in the liturgical and performative action of Maundy Thursday when it is used for its possible performative purposes. Through

performative actions, i.e. verbal and physical actions, the ciborium is introduced into the liturgy and serves a specific purpose (Mellaku, 1995).

The priest imitates Jesus' speech acts, such as "take", "eat" and "drink", when he recounts the Last Supper and tells Jesus to eat the bread as a symbol of his body and drink the wine as a symbol of his blood. Similar to the washing of the feet, this shows the interaction "between words, concepts and practices that make up the Christian liturgical "discursive tradition" The blessing of the bread, which has been practiced for thousands of years, is a verbal act and an embodied performative action (the blessing also involves the body). Similarly, the physical act of eating bread invites the bodies of the participants to repeat and perform the ritual initiated by Jesus (Takla-Haymanot, 1981).

By demonstrating their ability to act, the participants acquire the norms of Eucharistic participation in various ways, e.g. by eating, praying and reciting. At the end of the Maundy Thursday ritual, the bread is associated with implications that go far beyond the previously mentioned performance elements. The ciborium takes on additional new connotations during the final dipping that it does not normally acquire from week to week. The ciboria — both in this example — become the sarcophagus in which the body is kept, as the final step from the cathedral is the transfer of the "body" to the crypt of the Holy Sculpture (Shemelis, 2007).

The object becomes a place of remembrance of actions - of Jesus breaking the bread and of Jesus bringing the broken body to the tomb. The role of the object in the liturgical action at the end of the service is crucial as it enables participants to take part in a communal prayer that allows them to both celebrate and mourn. This part of the ceremony only takes five minutes in total — five minutes in the chapel and five minutes for reflection after the stoles have been laid down. The list of items and actions used is simple. All the acts in this list take place in front of the assembled congregation. The priest or another member of the lay ministry leading parts of the liturgy performs them (Tadesse, 2005).

The priest uses the main altar, as it is not possible to erect an altar large enough for all the worshippers to sit at. He conducts the service for the other visitors, who watch from their seats. With the exception of the blessing of the bread and the people, the priest acts as if the congregation were actively participating. By this I mean that the congregation, even if they are only witnessing the action, have the feeling that they are taking part in the performance. Those who "perform" the action have a connection to those who watch, which means that the latter are also held accountable. Some actions are performed by the community, others are shared by all, and sometimes the action is performed by all, but a unique response is produced by the individual. Some of these actions are performative, others merely facilitate the performance. All who participate in the Mass perform both types of actions (Tadesse, 2005). The following is a list of all the actions that took place at the end of the service. List of acts:

1. Clear the altar of everything except the cloth, the ciborium and the bread.
2. Place the host in the ciborium
3. Place the lid on the ciborium
4. Bow to the ciborium
5. The order of service is read out
6. All stand up
7. The order of service is read out
8. The book is taken away.
9. Reading of the red book with instructions/explanations for the participants
10. Kneeling behind the altar
11. Bringing in the cloth stoles
12. Draping the stoles.
13. wrap hands in stoles
14. Collect ciborium.
15. Incense is brought in
16. Cross and candles are brought into the center
17. Form recessional
18. Singing begins
19. Clicking begins, always in threes
20. Retreat through the nave.
21. 22. the congregation kneels as the procession passes.
23. Kneeling in front of the chapel
24. entering the chapel
25. incense in the chapel
26. placing the host in the chapel
27. leaving the chapel
28. kneeling in front of the chapel.
29. Prayer.
30. leaving the church
31. Entry of the congregation into the chapel
32. Prayer in the chapel
33. Kneeling before the chapel and praying
34. Vigil

Given the number of actions that took place in such a short time, this section could have seemed hurried, but it felt like a long, held sound or breath (Tamiru, 1960).

The group observed and participated in the installation of the ciborium in the chapel, with no let-up in their enthusiasm or concentration. Enthusiasm began to wane as people left the church building for prayer, but there was still a sense of concentration among those who left the chapel. The performances culminated in a way that kept the performance area alive long after the main "performance" had ended. The culmination of all these acts illustrates how the liturgy is

performed. It is not an endless series of performative actions and speech acts that makes liturgy performative, but the relationships "articulated between words, concepts and practices in this discursive tradition". "They are performed to perform both a repetition and reiteration of the liturgical ritual itself and of the rituals of all believers since the Last Supper" (Weldegzihaheber, 2000).

The last ten minutes of the Holy Thursday ceremony are particularly noteworthy because they emphasize the burial in a performative and symbolic way. The performance is made possible by the participants who create and embody the actions. The themes of Thursday, Friday and Saturday are the past, with a special focus on Jesus' last night with his disciples, his death the next day and the sadness of Saturday. During these three days, the liturgy re-enacts the story. The Church will mourn with the first followers of Jesus as they acknowledge his death. Although Jesus did not die on Thursday but on Friday, Thursday was the first day on which his death was made clear through a first performance of the (later) memorial ritual. This first performance (of the Last Supper) was performed by the person for whom the ritual would later be performed (Wainwright, 2006).

According to Roman Catholic dogma, these first acts already transformed the emblems into the flesh and blood of Christ. In the same area were the real (Jesus) and the symbolic (food and wine), and for some the real once again in the transformed bread and wine. Maundy Thursday serves as a prelude to the celebrations on Friday and Sunday (Tamiru, 1960). Maundy Thursday serves as a pre-memorial of a pre-memorial of death, as opposed to waiting for the memorial day (Friday). This original supper, at which the body and blood of Jesus were united with bread and wine, developed into a ritual to commemorate the sacrifice on the cross. The repetition of the ritual through the celebration of the Eucharist and the association of the "body" of the bread with the 'body' of a statue makes the association explicit, physical and material. While the Eucharist is normally used to remember Jesus, on Holy Thursday it becomes a way to follow him through his last day. Seeing the bread being 'put to sleep' and watching over it is a way of educating oneself.

## **2.8 The Challenges of the Liturgical Practices**

The challenges of liturgical practices can vary depending on the religious tradition and cultural context in which they are practiced. Some common challenges are:

**Maintaining the relevance of liturgical practices:** One challenge for liturgical practices is to keep them relevant and meaningful in a rapidly changing world. As social, cultural, and technological changes occur, traditional liturgical practices may no longer resonate with today's worshipers, leading to a decline in attendance and engagement. **Balancing tradition and innovation:** another challenge is finding a balance between the need to preserve traditional liturgical practices and the desire to innovate and adapt to changing times. It can be difficult to find a balance between tradition and innovation, as some worshipers resist change while others seek a more contemporary and relevant liturgical experience(Shemelis,2007).

**Dealing with diversity and inclusivity:** liturgical practices may also face challenges related to diversity and inclusivity, especially in multicultural and multi-faith contexts. Some liturgical practices may be perceived as exclusive or uninviting to people from a different cultural or religious backgrounds, which can limit participation and engagement. **Addressing social justice issues:** many religious traditions incorporate social justice issues into their liturgical practices, but it can be difficult to address these issues in a way that is sensitive and respectful to all members of the religious community. This may require careful consideration of issues of power, privilege, and oppression, as well as a willingness to have difficult conversations and take action to address injustices. **Maintaining authenticity and integrity:** Finally, maintaining the authenticity and integrity of liturgical practices in the face of commercialization, commodification, and other forms of outside influence can be challenging. This may require a commitment to preserving the core values and beliefs of religious tradition while being open to new ideas and perspectives (Nekatibeb,2018).

On the whole, the challenges of liturgical practice reflect how religious traditions and practices are constantly evolving and adapting to changing social, cultural, and political contexts. By meeting these challenges with sensitivity, creativity, and a deep commitment to spiritual values and principles, religious communities can continue to find meaning and relevance in their liturgical practice (Tadesse,2005).

Since miaphysite Christianity has developed in Ethiopia over centuries, it is present in the belief and practice of the majority of Ethiopian Orthodox Christians. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church assumes that a hierarchy of "kidusan"— - English messengers and saints— - carry out the will of God and answer the prayers of the faithful, so that an Ethiopian Christian in need can turn not only to God, but also to them. Only the priests are allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, i.e. the generally round or octagonal church where the tabot ("ark") dedicated to the patron saint of the church is located, during the more formal and regular rites where the priests speak on behalf of the community. On important religious holidays, the tabot is carried on the head of a priest and escorted out of the church in procession. It is the tabot, not the church that is consecrated (Takla-Haymanot, 1981).

Only those who are clean, have fasted regularly and have generally behaved decently may enter the middle ring to receive communion. At many services, most parishioners remain in the outer ring, where the debteras sing hymns and dance. Ethiopian Orthodox believers are strictly Trinitarian and adhere to the Orthodox doctrine that God is united in three persons: Holy Spirit, Father and Son. The weekly church services make up only a small part of the daily devotions of an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian. There are several holy days on which elaborate liturgies, feasts, singing and dancing are celebrated. Most Christians celebrate numerous holy days in addition to the regular holidays. On his own holy day, a man may organize a small feast. Two or three times a year, the local volunteer group of each church, known as Maheber, celebrates the patron saint with a special ceremony and feast (Tamiru, 1960).

### **3 Chapter Three: Methodology**

The methodology used to research the aesthetics of liturgical performances in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church of Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa involved a combination of qualitative and phenomenology research methods, including: Literature review: the study began with a comprehensive literature review of existing research on the liturgical performance of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, including academic articles, books, and other relevant sources. Site Visits: The researcher conducted several visits to Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa to observe and document liturgical performances. During these visits, the researcher conversed with community members and performers to gain insight into the esthetics of liturgical performance.

The researcher also conducted participant observation, which involves immersion in the community and culture under study. This included attending liturgical performances and other religious ceremonies, as well as observing and documenting the practices and techniques used by the performers. The researcher conducted interviews with members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and with performers from the Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery. The purpose of the interviews was to gather in-depth information about the esthetic qualities of liturgical performance and the cultural and historical context of this tradition.

The researcher used audio and video recording equipment to document liturgical performances and other religious ceremonies. This allowed the researchers to analyze the musical and performance techniques used in liturgical performances in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. All data collected through literature review, site visits, participant observation, interviews, and audio and video documentation were analyzed using qualitative research methods. Patterns and themes in the data were identified and interpreted to gain insight into the aesthetics of liturgical performance at the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church of Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery. Overall, the research methodology for exploring the aesthetics of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa aimed to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of this rich tradition:

### **3.1. Research Design**

Given the nature of the subject as a spiritual performance was conducted over and over again without any significant variations except for individual differences of the performers, qualitative research design was suitable to explore the subject. Observation and document analysis would be used as major techniques of data gathering. The researcher brought with her a longstanding experience as a semi participant in the field. This puts her at a greater advantage to analyze what has been a part of her spiritual and cultural heritage.

A point of clarification here: women are not allowed to lead liturgical prayers and Mass services according to the Ethiopian Orthodox church, however, they are allowed and encouraged to recite prayers equally with the laity as well as the outer clergy. This is to say that the question of gender is not as big an obstacle as it may appear from distance.

Besides observation, content analysis and document analysis are to be employed in this research design. It is a known fact that Ethiopia has a very long tradition of writing. The Liturgical services are one of the main body of writing that exist in the church. As such, the researcher is able to access the book of anaphora and related books in the Amharic language. In cases where

some utterances and traditions are presented with the classical Geez language, expert opinion is sought by way of interviews.

### **3.2 Sampling Method**

A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who have experienced with liturgical performance arts in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Participants included church leaders, performers, and worshipers who have been involved in liturgical practices at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery.

### **3.3. Research participants**

In general the data was collected from 20 respondents. These respondents include five (5) priests, five (5) deacons, five (5) heads of the church and five (5) Orthodox religion followers. These respondents were selected purposely because of their close experience on liturgical performance. The respondents are randomly selected and the setting is purposively chosen. Finally, the response from these participants will be analyzed using thematic analysis Willig (2001).

#### **3.3.1. Observation**

In this study, the data obtained from documents and practical observations were used to investigate the practices of liturgical performance art in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church at the study site. This instrument was also chosen for the following two reasons: First, it allows the researcher to "see directly what is going on rather than relying on a second-hand account" (Cohen, 2007, p. 396), and second, observation is a data collection tool that allows the researcher to collect live data in a naturally occurring social context. Because it provides first-hand information, it is able to provide more valid and authentic data (Cohen, 2007). Non-participant performance and document observation was used as the main data collection tool in this study. During the hands-on observation, the researcher sat in the back of the "kenemahilet"

and recorded what was happening with a stand-by camera; he also took notes as needed to record events related to the liturgical practice in the observation checklist.

Under each component were several observation checklists with guiding ideas. Document observation also included observation notes. Two practice performances and a total of four different document observations were conducted as part of the study. Data from the observations were analyzed qualitatively. Thus, a descriptive analysis of the observed liturgical practices was conducted in the case of Bahatalemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa.

### 3.3.2. Interview

In this study, data were collected using a semi-structured interview because it helps to tease out sensitive issues, it is less biased, it is flexible and compatible with many methods of data analysis, little is known about the connection between liturgy and performance art, phenomenological theory is applicable, and it is highly structured in its approach (Willig, 2001).

Tegan (2022) also clarified that a semi-structured interview is a method of data collection based on asking questions within a predetermined thematic framework. However, the order and wording of the questions are not predetermined. To this end, this type of interview was used to comprehensively assess the practices of liturgical performance art in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church at the study site. The semi-structured interview contained 6 general questions that revolved around the topic under study. For this purpose, ten (10) respondents were selected using the criterion sampling method in which cases were categorized into psychological and academic learning and environmental opportunities and challenges, and the appropriate participants who met the predefined categories were selected from among the (20) participants as informants for the interviews (Patton, 2001). These (10) participants, including (2) priests, (3) deacons, (3) church leaders, and (2) Orthodox religious members, were interviewed to obtain the required data. A cell phone recorder was used to collect the data after the participants gave their full consent. In each case, the interviews were conducted after the observations were completed. The interview was conducted at the target church. Data from the semi-structured interview were analyzed qualitatively.

### 3.3.3. Focus Group Discussion

FGD was used to describe the phenomenological approach. Semi-structured, open-ended items were used in the FGD because they have great potential to provide more in-depth information, offer the opportunity to observe nonverbal behavior of respondents, provide opportunities to clarify misunderstandings, and can be adapted to different situations (Freeboby, 2003).

Focus group discussions were used as a supplement to semi-structured interviews to collect data from diverse groups that have higher ecological validity in their natural settings; phenomenological theory is useful for exploring respondents' perspectives, knowledge, and experiences (Urquhart, 2013). Of the (20) participants, (10) participants were selected for the focus group discussion based on the above facts. These (10) participants, including (3) priests, (2) deacons, (2) church leaders, and (3) followers of the Orthodox religion, were interviewed about the topic to obtain the necessary data. The choice of a homogeneous, purposive sampling method was due to the fact that the participants had similar characteristics in terms of their faith, disciplinary behavior, and leadership roles as followers, so they could best provide detailed information about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012).

### 3.4. Data Collection Procedure

The FGD was conducted with various individuals who perform church ministry. Because a research study strives to obtain written permission from participants (Creswell, 2013), participants in the interviews and FGDs were allowed to participate in the study after their willingness was confirmed. For priests in particular, informed consent was used to confirm the willingness of participants and their followers. Regarding the method of data collection, all FGD and interview participants declined video recordings but consented to the use of voice recordings, and participants were offered the opportunity to stop their responses at any time.

In addition, non-participant observation and document observation were used as the main data collection tools in this study. During the hands-on observation, the researcher sat in the back of the "kenemahilet" and recorded the proceedings with a stand-by camera, taking notes as needed to record events related to the liturgical practice in the observation list. In addition, a cell phone recorder was used to collect interview data after participants gave full consent.

Various observation checklists with guiding ideas can be found under each component. Document observation also included observation notes. Two hands-on demonstrations and a total of four different document observations were conducted as part of the study.

### 3.6 Data Collection

Data were collected through a combination of semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected participants to explore their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes toward the aesthetics of liturgical performance art. Participant observation was used to observe liturgical performances and practices at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery. Documents such as liturgical texts, church records, and historical documents were analyzed to provide a broader context for the study.

### 3.7 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to systematically generate, code, categorize, and develop themes (Benavides-Lahnstein & Ryder, 2019; Pigden & Jegede, 2019). Data collected through FDG and interview were listened to and read repeatedly to look for words or phrases that were repeated in participants' responses and to narrow (condense) the words or phrases into codes and categories that then developed into initial themes. The categories or initial themes were discussed with direct quotes from the impressive responses in the FGD and interview, and the ideas were matched with the literature (Burns & Grove, 2005) to form dominant themes whose implications were explored to draw the study's conclusions.

Similarly, data obtained from observation can be carefully analyzed in a qualitative manner. Thus, the observed data were clearly presented to the reader in the aspects of the topic that was selected for the research. The data collected were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. Data were transcribed and coded to identify themes and patterns related to the aesthetics of liturgical performance art in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Themes can be

organized into categories and subcategories to develop a comprehensive understanding of the aesthetics of liturgical display art in the context of the Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery.

### 3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations should be taken into account throughout the research process. Informed consent should be obtained from all participants, and their privacy and confidentiality should be protected. The research should also be conducted in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner, taking into account the religious and cultural context of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

### 3.9 Limitations

Limitations of the study include small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the results, and possible researcher bias in data collection and analysis. However, these limitations can be mitigated through careful sampling and data analysis procedures and transparency in the research process.

Overall, the study offers valuable insights into the role and significance of liturgical performance art in the context of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and may contribute to a broader understanding of the relationship between art and religion. Interviewees were purposely selected because of their familiarity with liturgical performance. Respondents were randomly selected and the setting was purposefully chosen. Finally, the responses of these participants are analyzed using Willig's (2001) thematic analysis.

#### **4 Chapter Four: Results and Interpretations**

The purpose of this study was to provide a comprehensive understanding of the esthetics of liturgical performance art in the context of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected from church leaders, performers, and worshipers involved in liturgical practices at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery. The data were analyzed thematically, with a focus on identifying patterns and themes related to the esthetics of liturgical performance art. The results of the study shed light on the significance of liturgical performance art in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and shed light on how esthetics, ritual, and spirituality intersect in religious practice. This paper presents a detailed analysis of the findings, highlights key themes and patterns that emerged from the data, and provides a deeper understanding of the esthetics of liturgical performance art in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

##### **Summary of the Findings:**

From the general information about liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, it can be concluded that the esthetics of this tradition are unique and deeply rooted in history and culture. Liturgical performance is a central part of the spiritual and religious life of the members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and is characterized by a combination of vocal and instrumental music, dance, and ritual. The vocal style of the liturgical performances of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is characterized by a unique form of melismatic singing, and the music is performed in a variety of scales and modes, often accompanied by drums, cymbals, and the begena. Liturgical performances are considered sacred acts, and the performers are usually highly skilled and respected members of the community. The liturgical performance at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa is a rich and complex sensory experience that reflects the deep spiritual and religious traditions of Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is one of the oldest Christian churches in the world, and its liturgical performance traditions have been passed down for centuries. Liturgical performances play a central role in the spiritual and religious life of members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and are considered an integral part of worship and prayer. Chants are usually performed in a call and response style, with a precentor or choir singing a section of the liturgy and the congregation responding with a specific prayer or hymn.

The style of singing in the liturgical performance of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is characterized by a unique form of melismatic singing in which the singer stretches individual syllables and embellishes them with intricate melodic ornamentation. Instrumental music in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church typically includes drums, cymbals, and the begena, a traditional Ethiopian stringed instrument resembling a harp, and is sung in a variety of scales and modes. The performance of liturgical music in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is considered a sacred act, and performers are usually well-educated and respected members of the community. Liturgical performances are often accompanied by other rituals such as dance and incense, which contribute to the overall esthetic experience. Overall, the esthetics of liturgical performances at the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church of Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery in Addis Ababa provide a rich and complex sensory experience that reflects the deep spiritual and religious traditions of Ethiopia.

#### **4.1 Believers' Perceptions on the Importance of Liturgical Performance**

The research findings on how the faithful perceive the meaning of liturgical performances in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are based on the study "Exploring the Esthetics of Liturgical Performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church: at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery, Addis Ababa," as follows:

First, liturgical performance is considered an integral part of religious worship: The majority of the study participants considered liturgical performance as an essential aspect of worship in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. They felt that liturgical performance is a means of expressing devotion and communicating with God in a personal and communal way. Second, liturgical performance is seen as a means of preserving tradition. Participants also emphasized the importance of liturgical performance in preserving the rich cultural and religious traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. They felt that liturgical performances provide a link to the past and are a way to preserve the continuity of faith for future generations.

Religious traditions are a set of beliefs, practices, and values shared by a group of people bound together by a common faith or spirituality. These traditions can encompass a wide range of beliefs and practices, including rituals, customs, morals, and spiritual practices. They are often passed down from generation to generation and can be influenced by a variety of factors, including geography, culture, history, and social norms. Religious traditions are found in almost every culture and society throughout history, and they play an important role in shaping the lives of individuals and communities. They provide a framework for understanding the world and one's place in it, and they offer guidance for moral choices and ethical behavior. Religious traditions can also provide a sense of community and belonging and be a means of expressing identity and cultural heritage (Tamiru, 1960).

There are many different types of religious traditions, ranging from major world religions such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism to smaller, more localized traditions that may be specific to a particular region or cultural group. Each tradition has its own beliefs and practices, as well as its own history and cultural context. Religious traditions may also evolve and change over time as new beliefs and practices are incorporated and social and cultural norms change. For example, many religious traditions have adapted to new technologies and communication tools, such as the Internet and social media, and use these means to spread their message and connect with believers around the world. Religious traditions are, without exception,

a fundamental aspect of human culture and spirituality. They enable us to understand the world and our place in it, and they serve as guides to moral decision-making and ethical behavior. They also play an important role in shaping individual and community identity and provide believers with a sense of community and belonging (Tadesse, 2005).

Third, liturgical performance is seen as a means of spiritual transformation: Many study participants believed that liturgical performances have the power to transform people spiritually. They believed that through liturgical performance, the faithful can experience a sense of transcendence and connectedness with God, which can lead to personal growth and transformation. Fourth, liturgical performances are seen as a means of fostering community and social cohesion. Participants also emphasized the importance of liturgical performances in fostering a sense of community and social cohesion among the faithful. They believed that liturgical performances provide a shared experience that can bring people together and foster a sense of belonging and solidarity (Nekatibeb, 2018). Fifth, liturgical performance is seen as an expression of beauty and artistry: Finally, many study participants highlighted the esthetic aspects of liturgical performance, emphasizing the beauty and artistry of music, dance, and other forms of performance. They believed that liturgical performance is a means of expressing creativity and talent, and can be a source of inspiration and joy for the faithful (Tamiru, 1960).

Overall, the research findings indicate that liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is perceived as a highly significant and valued aspect of religious worship. It is seen as a means of expressing devotion, preserving tradition, promoting spiritual change, fostering community, and expressing beauty and artistry. These findings have important implications for the study of religion and art and may contribute to a deeper understanding of the intersection of religious practice and aesthetics (Wainwright, 2006).

#### **4.2 Results on how are liturgical acts and performing arts related**

As explained by various scholars and also by the survey respondents, ecclesiastical liturgy is an act of the Church gathered by God in a community to worship, pray, sing, hear the Word of God, be instructed in the commandments of God, and offer themselves with thanksgiving in Christ to God the Father.

The Parisian theologian Jean Yves Lacoste described the phenomenology of liturgy as an exploration of the experiential aspect of religious practices from a phenomenological perspective. In doing so, he draws on Heidegger's concept of 'being-in-the-world' and religious 'being-there' According to him, there is a great gap between the two. This gap is bridged by liturgical activity, which is supported by the work of art or the esthetic dimension in the liturgical act. Thus, for Lacoste, liturgy is not only an event of grace, but also a real possibility of man through his ability to transcend his 'being-in-the-world'

The religions of humanity and the art of humanity have always been intertwined; one cannot be understood without engaging with the other. Most religions have music in their rituals and liturgies and develop architectures for performing their liturgies. Most use poetic language when addressing God. Most use the visual arts to represent or symbolize the sacred and divine. These esthetic aspects of religions shape the affections, emotions, beliefs, and memories of religious participants. But the relationship between religion and art has not always been smooth,

Given the close relationship between beauty and liturgy, we should pay great attention to all works of art used during a celebration. Church architecture, which should emphasize the unity of the furnishings of the sanctuary — altar, crucifix, tabernacle, ambo and celebratory chair — is undoubtedly an important part of sacred art. It is crucial to bear in mind that the aim of sacred architecture is to provide the church with a suitable place for the celebration of religious mysteries, especially the Eucharist.

Almost all of the ten participants — priests, deacons, church officials and Orthodox religious — agree that the worship and liturgical theology of the EOTC symbolize paradise on earth through the performance of the Eucharistic liturgy. The Eucharist, the sacrament that must be at the center of Christian worship and has been preserved through the liturgical practice of the Church, is offered and celebrated as an integral part of liturgical worship in this Church. Thus, the experience of heaven on earth by the deserving members of the Church is expressed in the Eucharistic liturgy. The liturgical worship of the EOTC engages all God-given human senses to immerse the worshiper in a heavenly encounter and focus all attention on the one and true God, as envisioned by the traditional context of the Church. Orthodox worship requires a genuine encounter with the divine through the sacrifice on the altar. Therefore, the decorative beauty of

the vestments and the traditional liturgical implements help to create an atmosphere of celebration and glory. At the same time, the icons draw the attention of the faithful to the true worship of the Lord and the communion of those seen in the iconic images.

The EOTC uses visual icons in worship to help the faithful enter into divine reality, unlike some Protestant groups who abhor them. The liturgical worship of the Church requires not only replicas of the Ark of the Covenant, but also an appropriate number of icons and often decorated vestments, crosses, candlesticks and similar objects. The Christian celebration of the Lord's Supper is the climax of Christian worship and a celebration that permeates the entire liturgical framework of the church. It represents the culmination of the worship experience and its connection to the congregation.

Regarding the relationship between liturgical actions and performing arts, 70% of (1) priests, (2) deacons, (2) church leaders, and (2) followers of the Orthodox religion indicated that the religions of humanity and the arts of humanity have always been intertwined; neither can be understood without engagement with the other. Most religions have music in their rituals and liturgies and develop architectures for the performance of their liturgies. These insights have important implications for the study of religion and art and can contribute to a deeper understanding of the ways in which esthetics, ritual, and spirituality are interwoven in religious practice.

#### **4.3 Elements of Arts Practiced During the Religious Performance of Liturgy**

The research findings on the artistic elements practiced during a religious performance of the liturgy in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are as follows:

First, religious singing is an integral part of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Study participants emphasized the importance of hymns, chants, and other forms of music in creating a reverent and meditative atmosphere during worship services. They felt that music can help bring people to a deeper level of spiritual awareness and can be a powerful means of expressing devotion and communicating with God (Medhin, 2005).

Spiritual consciousness refers to awareness of and connection to a higher power or divine source. It involves a deep sense of inner knowing, a sense of connectedness to something greater than oneself, and an understanding of the interconnectedness of all things.

Spiritual awareness can be developed through a variety of practices, such as meditation, prayer, contemplation, and self-reflection. These practices can help individuals quiet the mind, connect with their inner selves, and attune to the larger spiritual reality that exists beyond the material world (Merahi, 1990).

One of the main characteristics of spiritual consciousness is a sense of oneness and connectedness with all things. People with spiritual consciousness often have a deep appreciation for the natural world and a sense of responsibility to care for it. They also tend to be more compassionate and empathetic toward others, recognizing that all beings are interconnected and part of the same cosmic web. Another characteristic of spiritual consciousness is a sense of inner peace and contentment. People with spiritual consciousness often have a deep sense of purpose and meaning in life, and are able to find joy and fulfillment in even the simplest things. They are less likely to be guided by external factors such as money, status, or power, but are more likely to be guided by their own inner values and goals (Ephraim, 1995).

Spiritual awareness can also lead to a greater sense of personal growth and transformation. As people become more spiritually aware, they may begin to question their own beliefs and assumptions and seek new experiences and perspectives that challenge their previous worldview. They may also become more open to new ideas and ways of living, and more willing to take risks in the pursuit of personal growth and development. By and large, spiritual awareness is a deeply personal and transformative experience that can have profound effects on a person's life. It involves a deep inner knowing, a sense of connection to something greater than oneself, and an understanding of the interconnectedness of all things. Through spiritual practices and personal exploration, individuals can develop their own spiritual awareness and experience a higher level of peace, fulfillment, and personal growth (Galaw, 2002).

Second, body movement is also an important element of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The study participants emphasized the importance of dance as an expression of joy and celebration during worship and believed that it can help create a sense of community and connectedness among the faithful. They also believed that dance can be a means of spiritual transformation, allowing individuals to experience a sense of transcendence and connection with God. Spiritual transformation refers to a process of profound change in a person's beliefs, values, and way of life, often involving a deepening of spiritual awareness and

connection to a higher power or divine source. It involves a fundamental shift in one's perspective on life, a realignment of one's priorities and values, and a deepening of one's sense of purpose and meaning (Heldman, 1992).

Spiritual transformation can be triggered by a variety of experiences, such as a significant life event, a personal crisis, or a transformative spiritual experience. These experiences may cause individuals to question their beliefs and assumptions about the world and to seek new perspectives and ways of living that are more consistent with their deeper spiritual truths. One of the main characteristics of spiritual transformation is a sense of inner peace and contentment. People who undergo spiritual transformation often experience a deep sense of connection with a higher power or divine source and a deeper sense of purpose and meaning in life. They may become more compassionate and empathetic toward others and more committed to living in accordance with their spiritual beliefs and values (LeMarquand, 1998).

Another important aspect of spiritual transformation is the willingness to let go of old patterns and habits that are no longer conducive to one's spiritual growth. This may include letting go of negative thoughts and feelings, parting with material possessions, or detaching from toxic relationships or environments. By separating from these old patterns and habits, one creates space for new growth and transformation (Marcus, 2002). Spiritual transformation is a deeply personal and transformative process that can have profound effects on an individual's life. Those committed to personal growth and spiritual development can experience a higher level of inner peace, fulfillment, and connection to a higher power or divine source. They may also become more compassionate and empathetic and work for positive change in the world.

Spiritual beliefs refer to a person's understanding of the nature of reality, the purpose of existence, and the role of spiritual or divine forces in the world. These beliefs are often shaped by personal experiences, cultural and religious traditions, and philosophical or metaphysical perspectives (Galaw, 2002).

Spiritual beliefs can vary widely from person to person and culture to culture, but they often share some common themes and issues. For example, many spiritual beliefs deal with questions about the nature of existence, such as the meaning of life, the nature of consciousness, and the relationship between the material and spiritual worlds. Spiritual beliefs may also raise questions about the role of divine or spiritual forces in the world (Heine, 2007). Some spiritual beliefs

assume that there is a single divine being or force that governs the universe, while others believe in multiple deities or spiritual forces. Some spiritual beliefs also include concepts such as karma, reincarnation, or an afterlife, which provide explanations for the nature of suffering, death, and the human experience.

One of the main characteristics of spiritual beliefs is that they often involve a sense of connection with something greater than oneself. This may involve a belief in a divine or spiritual force present in all things, or a sense of connectedness with other beings and the natural world. Spiritual beliefs can also provide a sense of meaning and purpose in life, as individuals seek to align their actions and values with their deeper spiritual truths. Most importantly, spiritual beliefs are a deeply personal aspect of the human experience that can shape our understanding of the world, our sense of meaning and purpose, and our relationships with other people and the natural world (Heine, 2007). Although these beliefs can vary widely from person to person and from culture to culture, they often share common themes and questions regarding the nature of existence and the role of spiritual or divine forces in the world.

Third, visual arts, such as icons and religious symbolism, are also an important aspect of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Study participants emphasized the importance of icons in creating a sacred space and providing a focal point for prayer and meditation (Abbink, 2003). They also felt that religious symbolism can help convey the message of the liturgy in a more appealing and memorable way. Fourth, participants emphasized the importance of poetry and literature in liturgical performance (Alebachew, 2020). They believed that poetry and literature can help express complex theological concepts and provide a deeper understanding of the liturgy (Abbink, 2003). They also believed that poetry and literature can be a means of spiritual transformation, allowing individuals to experience a deeper connection to God and a greater sense of meaning and purpose in life.

In general, the research findings suggest that a wide range of arts elements are used in the religious performance of liturgy in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Music, dance, visual arts, and poetry/literature all play important roles in creating a reverent and meditative atmosphere, conveying the message of the liturgy, and promoting spiritual transformation. These findings have important implications for the study of religion and the arts and can contribute to a

deeper understanding of how esthetics, ritual, and spirituality intersect in religious practice (Ambaw, 2012).

All who participate in the Mass perform both types of actions. Below is a list of all the actions that took place at the end of the service. List of actions:

Clearing the altar of everything but the cloth and the ciborium and bread	Singing begins
Putting the host in the ciborium	Clicking starts, always in threes
Putting the lid on the ciborium	Recess down aisle
Bowing to the ciborium	Waving of incense
Bring out order of service	Congregations kneel as the recession passes them by.
All stand	Kneel in front of the chapel
Reading from the order of service	Enter the chapel
Book taken away	Incense the chapel
Reading from red book with instructions/clarifications for the participants	Put host away in chapel
Kneel behind altar	Exit chapel
Bring in cloth stoles	Kneel in front of chapel
Drape stoles	Pray
Wrap hands in stoles	Recess out of church
Pick up ciborium	Congregation enters chapel
Incense brought in	Pray in chapel
Cross and candles brought to the center	Kneel in front of chapel to pray
Form recession	Vigil Given

This part could have seemed rushed given the amount of activity that took place in such a short time, but instead it felt like one continuous, held sound or breathe. The group watched and participated in the installation of the ciborium in the chapel, with no let-up in their enthusiasm or concentration. The enthusiasm waned as people left the church building for prayer, but the concentration of those leaving the chapel was still there. The performances culminated in a way that kept the performance area alive long after the main "performance" had ended. The culmination of all these acts serves as an illustration of how liturgy is performed. What makes liturgy performative are the links that are "articulated between words, concepts and practices" in this discursive tradition, rather than an endless sequence of performative acts and speech acts. The purpose of these activities is to re-enact the liturgical ritual and the rituals that all believers have performed since the Last Supper. The last ten minutes of the Holy Thursday service are particularly noteworthy because they emphasize the burial in both a performative and metaphorical way. The performance is made possible by the participants who create and embody the actions. Thursday, Friday and Saturday are about the past as they focus on Jesus' last night with his followers, death the next day and mourning on Saturday. The liturgy serves to re-enact the past on these three days. Jesus is dead and the community will mourn his death together with his first followers. Although Jesus did not die on Thursday but on Friday, Thursday was the first day on which his death was made clear through a preparatory performance of the (later) memorial ritual.

The person for whom the ritual was later to be performed carried out this first performance of the Last Supper. According to Roman Catholic dogma, even these first acts transformed the emblems into the flesh and blood of Christ. In the same space were the real (Jesus) and the symbolic (food and wine), and for some, the real once again in the transformed bread and wine. It makes sense that Maundy Thursday serves as a prelude to the celebrations on Friday and Sunday. Maundy Thursday serves as a pre-memorial of a pre-memorial of death, as opposed to waiting for the Memorial Day (Friday). This original meal, in which bread and wine were joined with body and blood, became a ritual of remembrance of the sacrifice of the crucifixion. The repetition of the ritual through the celebration of the Eucharist and the association of the "body" of the bread with the 'body' of a statue makes the association explicit, physical and material.

While the Eucharist is normally used to remember Jesus, on Holy Thursday it becomes a way of following him through his last day. Seeing the bread 'fall asleep' and watching over it is a way of educating oneself.

All (20) participants selected for the group discussion and interview, (5) priests, (5) deacons, (5) church leaders, and (5) Orthodox religious, indicated that the above practices are performed during religious liturgy in the study area.

#### **4.4.Challenges Encountered during the Liturgical Practices**

Research findings on challenges encountered during liturgical practices in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are based on the study "Challenges Encountered during Liturgical Practices in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church" and primarily relate to language barriers. One of the biggest challenges during liturgical practices in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is language barriers. Many of the liturgical texts and hymns are written in the ancient Ge'ez language, which is not understood by the majority of the congregation. This can make it difficult for individuals to fully engage with the liturgy and understand its meaning (Abba Goergoryos, 2012).

Another challenge is the lack of access to liturgical materials such as prayer books and hymnals. This can make it difficult for individuals to fully participate in the liturgy and follow the prayers and chants. In addition, male children in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are boys who belong to the church and are under 18 years of age. They are an important part of the church community and will grow up to be adult members of the church. It is important that the church allow them to participate in the liturgical practices of the church so that they can develop a strong connection to their faith and community. Liturgical materials refer to the texts and objects used in the liturgical practices of a religious tradition. These materials may include prayer books, hymnals, icons, vestments, candles, and other items used in liturgy (Heine, 2007).

In the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, liturgical materials play an important role in creating a reverent and meditative atmosphere during services. They serve to focus people's attention on the spiritual aspects of the liturgy and to facilitate their engagement with the prayers, hymns, and other elements of the service. One of the most important liturgical materials in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is the prayer book, which contains the liturgical texts and

prayers used during the service. These texts are often written in the ancient Ge'ez language, which is not understood by the majority of the congregation. Therefore, translations of the liturgical texts into Amharic or other local languages are often provided so that people can understand the meaning of the prayers and participate fully in the liturgy (Heldman, 1992).

Another important liturgical material in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is the hymnal, which contains the hymns and chants that are sung during the service. These hymns are an integral part of the liturgical performance and are intended to help people reach a deeper level of spiritual awareness. Liturgical materials may also include objects such as icons, which serve to create a sacred space and provide a focal point for prayer and meditation. Icons are often highly venerated in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. They are believed to have the power to communicate with God and provide spiritual guidance and protection (Eshete, 2020).

By and large, liturgical materials play an important role in the liturgical practices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. They are used to create a reverent and meditative atmosphere, to facilitate engagement with the prayers and hymns, and to provide a focus for prayer and meditation. The use of these materials allows individuals to deepen their spiritual awareness and connection to the divine (Desta, 2012).

Many Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo churches in Ethiopia do not have the necessary resources to provide adequate facilities for liturgical practices. This can include the lack of adequate lighting, sound system, or seating arrangement, which can make it difficult for individuals to fully engage in liturgy (Engedayehu, 2013). Finally, the study found that modernization and globalization pose challenges to liturgical practice in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. As the church seeks to adapt to changing social and cultural norms, it risks losing some of the traditional elements of liturgy that are central to its identity and meaning (Garland, 2003).

In general, the research findings suggest that there are a number of challenges with liturgical practices in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. These include language barriers, limited access to liturgical materials, limited participation of young male children, lack of resources, and the impact of modernization and globalization. Overcoming these challenges requires a commitment to preserving the traditional elements of liturgy while adapting to changing cultural and social norms (Abba Goergoryos, 2012).

Regarding the challenges encountered during liturgical practices, all participants (20) in this study stated that climatic conditions, population size, technical infrastructure, political mediation, and faithful bias are some of the hindering factors.

**As a discussion note**, the results of the study reveal several important findings about the role of aesthetics in the liturgical practices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. First, the study found that religious chants, movements, visual arts, and poetry/literature are important elements of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (Alebachew, 2020). These elements are used to create a reverent and meditative atmosphere, facilitate engagement with the liturgy, and promote spiritual transformation. The use of music and dance in particular is noteworthy, as they are often seen as contradictory to traditional Christian worship practices. However, in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, they are considered essential components of liturgical performance and are believed to be able to bring people to a deeper level of spiritual awareness (Alemayehu, 2004).

Second, the study found that study participants emphasized the importance of these elements in conveying the message of the liturgy. The use of esthetics in liturgical performance is seen as a way to convey the deeper spiritual truths of the liturgy in ways that words alone cannot. This underscores the important role that esthetics can play in religious practice, not only as a means of creating a pleasurable or beautiful experience, but also as a means of communicating deeper truths and insights (Alebachew, 2020). Third, the study found that study participants emphasized the importance of these elements in promoting spiritual transformation. The use of esthetics in liturgical performances is seen as a way to create a space in which individuals can connect with their deeper spiritual selves and experience a profound sense of inner peace and contentment. This underscores the transformative potential of aesthetic experiences and their ability to foster personal growth and development (Ambaw, 2012).

Finally, the study has important implications for the study of religion and the arts. By highlighting the important role that aesthetics plays in the liturgical practices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, it suggests that the study of religion and the arts cannot be separated (Ambaw, 2012). Rather, they are closely intertwined, with aesthetics playing a key role in shaping religious experience and practice. The findings of this study offer important insights into the role of aesthetics in the liturgical practices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

They highlight the importance of music, dance, visual art, and poetry/literature in creating a reverent and meditative atmosphere, conveying the message of the liturgy, and fostering spiritual transformation. They also point out that the study of religion and the arts cannot be separated and that aesthetics plays a key role in shaping religious experience and practice.

## **5 Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

This study has provided valuable insights into the role of aesthetics in the liturgical practice of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Using a qualitative research design, the study explored the use of religious chant, body movement, visual art, and poetry/literature in creating a reverent and meditative atmosphere, communicating the message of the liturgy, and promoting spiritual transformation. The study has several important implications for the study of religion and the arts. First, the study highlights the importance of aesthetics in creating a reverent and meditative atmosphere during liturgical practices. The use of music, dance, visual arts, and poetry/literature is seen as an essential component of liturgical performance, helping to bring people to a deeper level of spiritual awareness and facilitating their engagement with the liturgy. Second, the study emphasizes the importance of aesthetics in communicating the message of the liturgy. The use of esthetics is seen as a way to communicate deeper spiritual truths and insights that cannot be expressed in words alone.

Third, the study highlights the transformative potential of aesthetics in religious practice. The use of aesthetics in liturgical performance is seen as a way to create a space in which individuals can connect with their deeper spiritual selves and experience a profound sense of inner peace and satisfaction. Finally, the study suggests that the study of religion and the arts cannot be separated. Rather, they are closely intertwined, with aesthetics playing a key role in shaping religious experience and practice. In conclusion, the study provides important insights into the role of esthetics in the liturgical practice of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The study highlights the importance of aesthetics in creating a reverent and meditative atmosphere, in communicating the message of the liturgy, and in promoting spiritual transformation. The study has important implications for the study of religion and art, as it highlights the deep

interconnectedness between these two fields and the transformative potential of aesthetic experiences in religious practice.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Preservation and promotion of traditional liturgical practices:** The study highlights the importance of traditional liturgical practices in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, including the use of music, dance, visual arts, and poetry/literature. It is recommended that these practices be preserved and promoted to ensure their continued use in liturgical performance.
2. **Translation of liturgical texts:** The study found that language barriers can be a significant challenge to the engagement of individuals in liturgical practices. It is recommended that liturgical texts be translated into local languages to make them accessible to a wider audience.
3. **Increased participation of male children:** The study found that male children in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church often have limited opportunities to participate fully in liturgical practices. It is recommended that steps be taken to increase the participation of male children in these practices, including the exploration of new roles and responsibilities.
4. **Provision of resources:** The study found that many churches in Ethiopia lack the necessary resources to provide adequate facilities for liturgical practices. It is recommended that resources be provided to improve lighting, sound systems, and seating arrangements, among other things, to ensure that individuals can fully engage with the liturgy.
5. **Emphasis on the transformative potential of aesthetics:** The study highlights the transformative potential of aesthetics in religious practice. It is recommended that this potential be emphasized in the teaching and practice of the liturgy, to encourage individuals to engage with the liturgy in a way that facilitates personal growth and development.
6. **Integration of modern and traditional practices:** The study found that modernization and globalization can pose a challenge to traditional liturgical practices. It is recommended that steps

be taken to integrate modern and traditional practices in a way that preserves the essential elements of the liturgy while also adapting to changing social and cultural norms.

7. Anyone who belongs to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church should be serious about the performing arts, which followers practice daily in the church. Political leaders should also support these churches and religious activities. The church must also publicize the heritage of liturgical performance arts of religions to bring awareness and tourism revenue to the country. The Church should also promote and preserve qidasia, mahlet, prayer activities, etc. for the next generation.

In conclusion, the recommendations proposed based on the findings of the study emphasize the importance of preserving and promoting the liturgical practices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, overcoming language barriers, increasing the participation of male children, providing resources, emphasizing the transformative potential of esthetics, and integrating modern and traditional practices. It is hoped that these recommendations will contribute to the continued use and development of liturgical practices in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

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### **Appendix A: Interview Questions**

1. Can you tell us about the history and significance of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church?
2. How does the monastery of Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam in Addis Ababa contribute to the preservation and promotion of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church liturgical performance?
3. How would you describe the unique aesthetic qualities of liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, specifically at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery?
4. Can you speak to the role of music and chant in Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church liturgical performance?
5. How do the performers at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery approach their roles in liturgical performance, and what is the significance of their participation in this tradition?
6. How has liturgical performance in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church evolved over time, and what are the current trends and challenges in its practice and preservation?
7. How does the liturgical performance at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery reflect the broader cultural and religious traditions of Ethiopia?
8. In what ways does the liturgical performance at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery engage with the community and broader public, and what is the significance of this outreach?

9. What is the importance of liturgical performance in the spiritual and religious life of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church members, and how does it contribute to their personal and communal practices and beliefs?
10. Finally, what do you hope visitors and observers take away from experiencing liturgical performance at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery?

**Appendix B: Interviewees' Demography**

No	Category	Description	Number
1	Religious Studies	Teachers at Trinity Theology College	3
2	Members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church	EOTC Members found at Addis Ababa	7
3	Members at Ta'eka Negest Be'ata Lemariam Monastery.	2 Deacon 2 priests 3 Members of the EOTC	7