

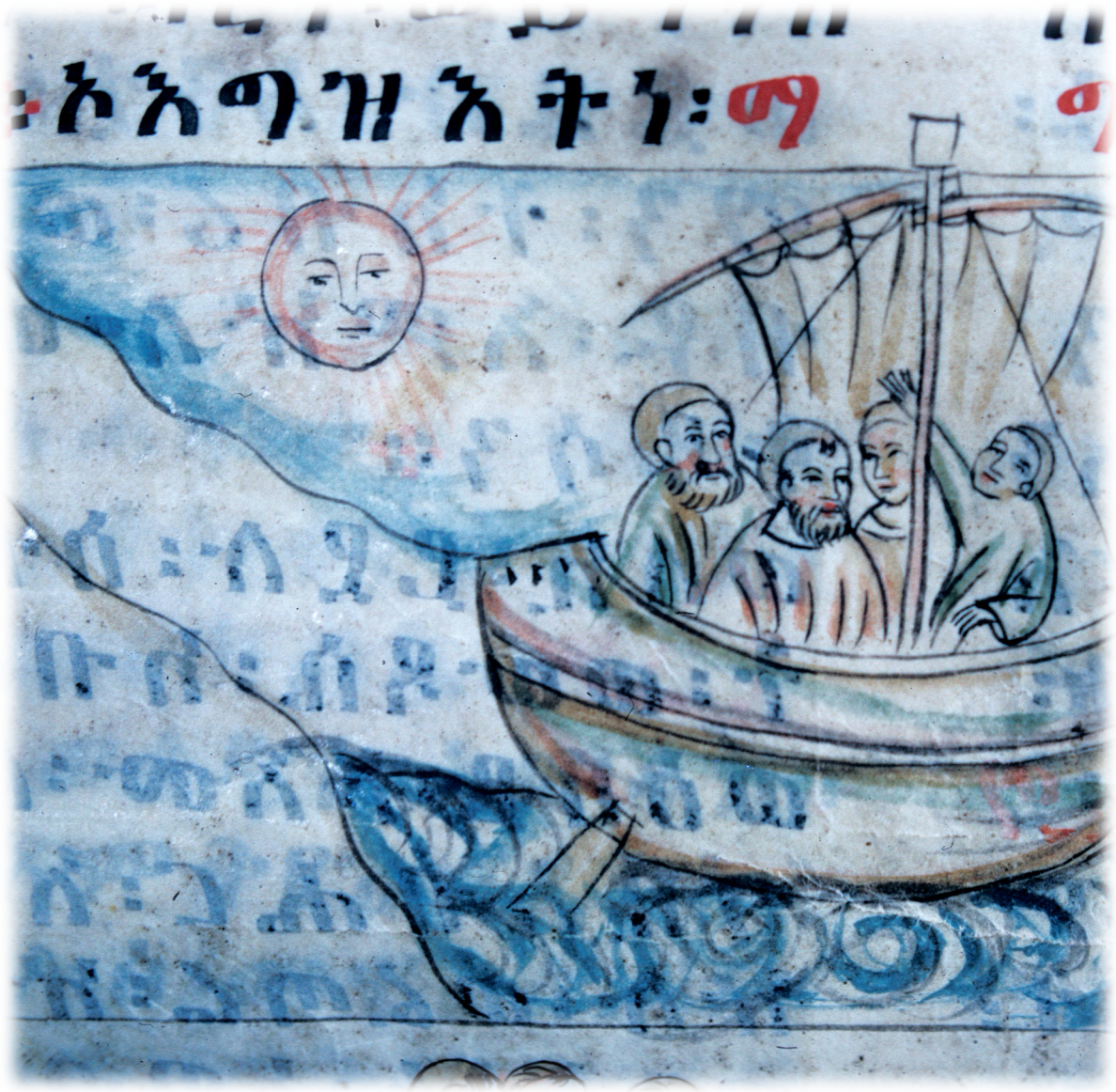
Medieval Ethiopian Diplomacy with Latin Europe

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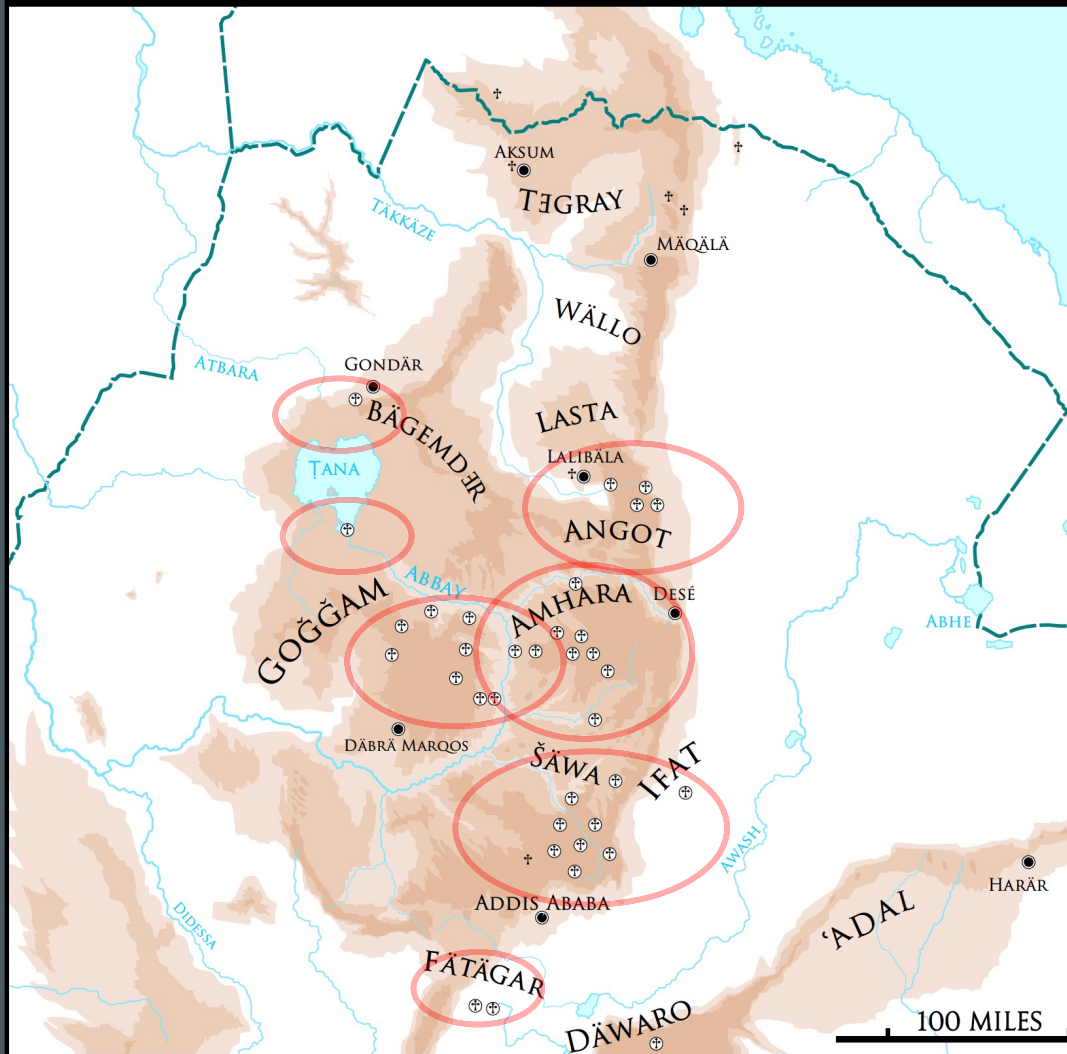
Medieval Ethiopian Kingship

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MAP 1 - LATE MEDIEVAL SOLOMONIC ETHIOPIA & ITS ENVIRONS



LEGEND

- ⊕ ROYAL CHURCH / MONASTERY (APPROXIMATE LOCATION)
 † OTHER IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS SITE ● MODERN-DAY CITY

Solomonic Royal Churches and Monasteries built between ca. 1400 and 1540, (i.e. the reign of *aṣe* Dawit and *aṣe* Ləbnä Dəngəl)

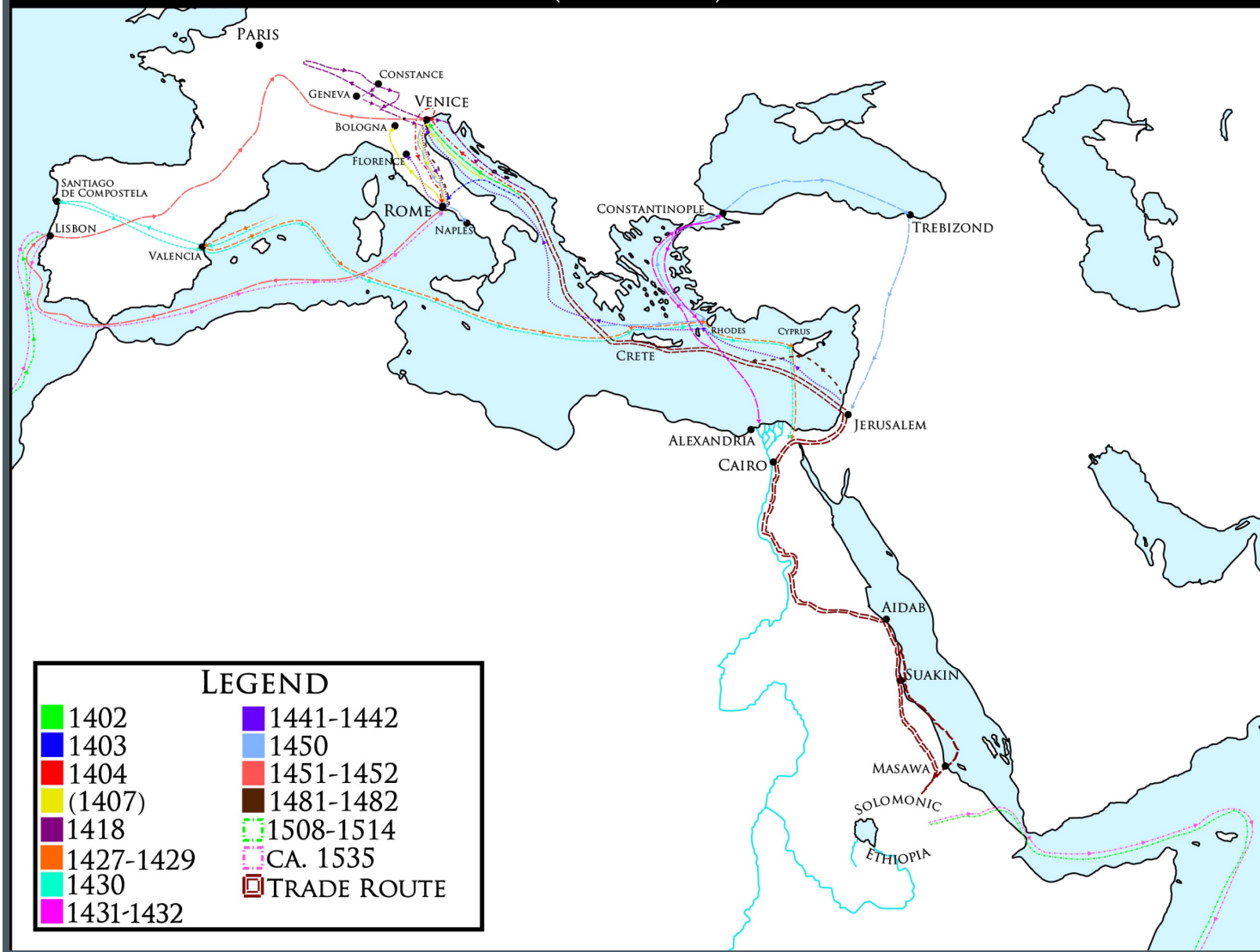
built by Solomonic Kings

- aṣe* Dawit — 1
- aṣe* Yəshaq — 3
- aṣe* Täklä Maryam — 1
- aṣe* Zär'a Ya'eqob — 9
- aṣe* Bā'edä Maryam — 4
- aṣe* Īskəndər — 4
- aṣe* Na'od — 2
- aṣe* Ləbnä Dəngəl — 4

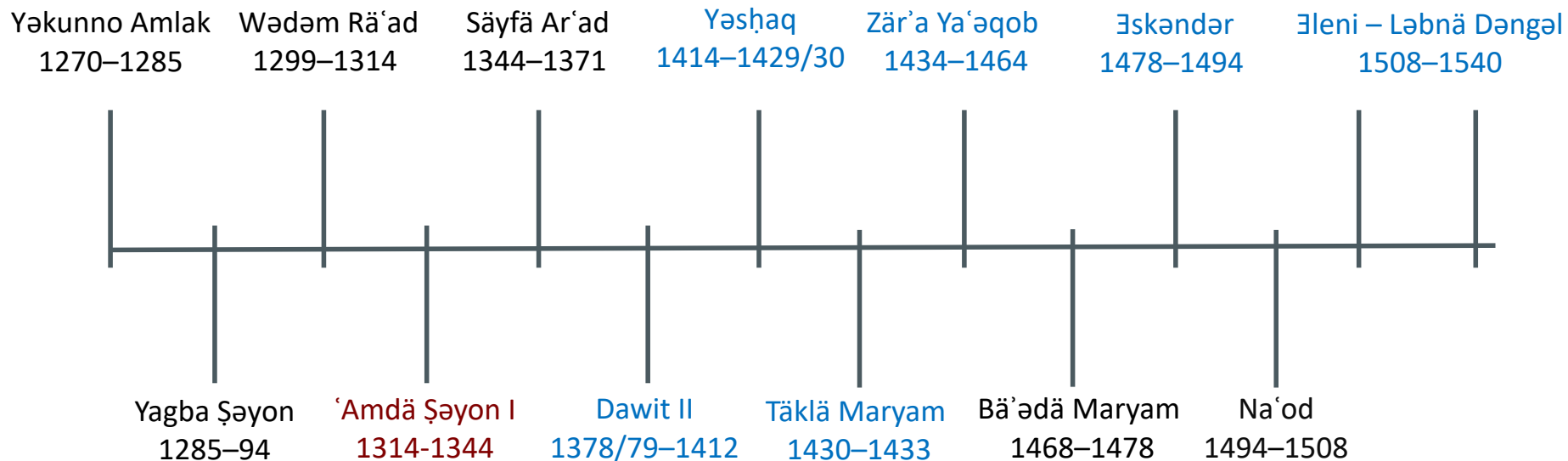
built by Royal Women

- Īleni — 1
- Romna — 1
- Na'od Mogäsa — 3

MAP 2 - ETHIOPIAN PRESENCE AND DIPLOMATIC TRAVEL ROUTES IN EUROPE (1402-1535)



Early Solomonic rulers....



...who sent (formal/informal) delegations to Latin Europe

Renato Lefèvre, 1967

aše Dawit's 1402 mission to Venice caused by a desire to obtain 'masters of art and industry that could raise the civil and technical level of the Ethiopian state, and therefore strengthen its military efficiency'

Taddesse Tamrat, 1972

aše Yəshāq and *aše* Zär'a Ya'əqob sent embassies 'to Europe asking for technical aid', 'the purpose of the delegations sent out to Europe was to ask for more artisans and military experts'. 'The Ethiopians had always been impressed by the political and military aspects of an all-over Christian solidarity against the Muslim powers of the Near East' and wanted to share 'in the superior technical advancement of European nations'.

Dawit's 1402 embassy to Venice

- ❖ A **painter**, a **builder**, a **tile-/brickmaker**, a **carpenter**, a **swordsmith**
- ❖ **Relics**: Piece of the True Cross, Infant killed by Herod in Crystal Reliquary
- ❖ Engraved **chalices, censers, bowls & pitchers** of gold and silver, **mitres**, embroidered **liturgical vestments, robes, tunics** and **headbands, scarlet linen**, a **reliquary**, precious multi-coloured **rugs**, embroidered **blankets**, fabric for **tents**, a 'wondrous' **musical clock**, etc.

Yəshāq's 1427—1429 embassy to Aragon (Valencia)*

- ❖ Thirteen **master-craftsmen** 'in a variety of skills', among them 'masters of irrigation'
- ❖ A letter requesting the acquisition of a **relic**: a Nail of the True Cross
- ❖ Embroidered 'Frankish' **liturgical vestments**, golden **church bells**, plus a letter urging to buy items of **gold-smithery, crosses** and **bells**.

Zär'a Ya'əqob's 1450 embassy to Aragon (Naples)

- ❖ 'masters and artisans' ... 'that furnished Ethiopia with the arts they gave'
- ❖ **Reliquary box** of gilded silver
- ❖ 'brocade fabrics', 'finest woolen cloths', 'vessels of gold and silver', a **silver cross**

*Thanks to new research by Julien Loiseau, Department of History, Aix-Marseille University

Solomonic interests

12x –

Relics, ecclesiastical garments, liturgical items
&

(building-related) craftsmanship and artisans

(1402, 1403, 1404, 1420s, 1430s, 1450s, 1480s, 1509, 1520, 1521, 1522, 1524)

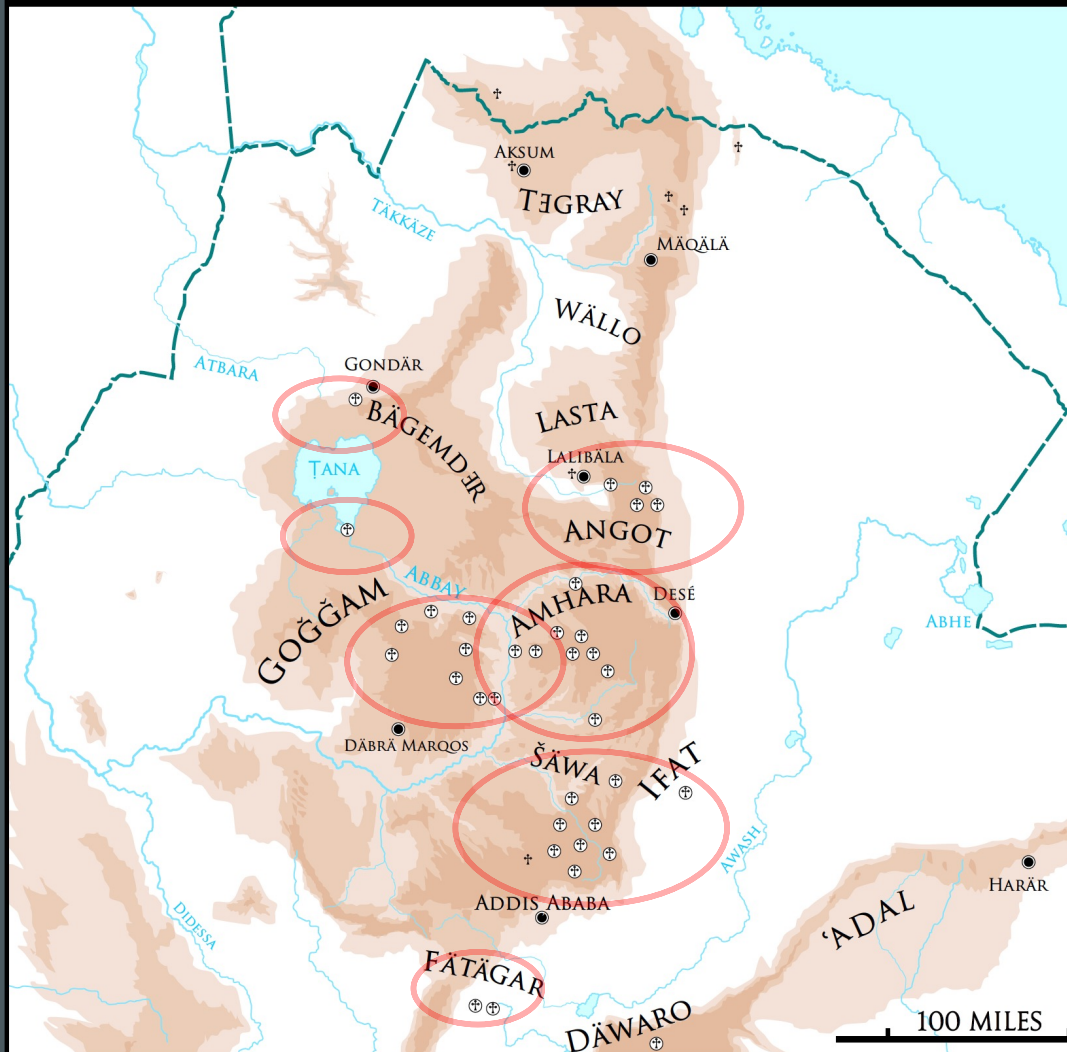
2x –

offer of marriage alliance

(1420s, 1509)

Military alliances only in the 16th century; demand for gunsmiths and weapons only found in the 1520s, and only in the Portuguese and Latin version of letters, absent in Gəʿəz copies.

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Solomonic Kings

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Royal Women

- Īleni — 1
- Romna — 1
- Na'od Mogäsa — 3

King Solomon of Israel to King Hiram I of Tyre

2 Chronicles 2, 7

“So now send me an artisan skilled to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue fabrics, trained also in engraving, to join the skilled workers who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom my father David provided.”



**Madonna della
Consolazione Icon Panel**
Crete, ca. 1500

Identified in an a
superscription as having been
donated by *aše Ləbnä Dəngə*
(1508-1540) to a monastery
in Təgray



**Pseudotriptych of a Madonna della Consolazione Icon set in a
Renaissance frame, Crete, ca. 1500**

acquired by Princess Marta, *aše ʾĪskändər's* daughter
Getesemane Maryam Monastery, Gojjam, Amhara



Painted Enamel

*Very early 1500,
France or Northern
Italy*

Commissioned by the
wife of *aše Na'od*,
depicting her husband
and son (the future
king *Ləbnä Dəngəl*)

Thank you very much!